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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PENCE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 11, 2004.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MIKE PENCE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) for 5 minutes.

CALLING FOR THE RESIGNATION OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, Vice President CHENEY has told the Nation that people ought to get off Secretary Rumsfeld's case and let him do his job. President Bush has called him ''really good'' and ''superb'' in the last week alone.

There are many reasons why Mr. Rumsfeld should resign from his position as Secretary of Defense. It is not just because he engaged in a cover-up in keeping the atrocities at the Abu Ghraib Prison from the Congress of the United States when he had full knowledge about it, but it is also his incompetency to appreciate and understand the political firestorm that would be set off across the Islamic and Arab world by the humiliation that was taking place, or even the suffering and the humiliation that Americans would feel when they saw these out-of-control soldiers engaging in that conduct.

But it is also because he is reigning over the most incompetent and mismanaged occupation of the country of Iraq, because his arrogance would not allow him to pay attention to those prestigious institutions and people who had actual experience in peacekeeping and restoring democracy to countries, who had done it without taking casualties of American soldiers. They pushed ahead with an inadequate number of resources in terms of soldiers and equipment; they pushed ahead with inadequate resources in terms of paying for this, and for the force protection, his number one responsibility, the force protection of our soldiers.

Because of his actions and because of his rush to war, as the Pentagon Joint Chiefs of Staff study tells us in Lessons Learned, they failed to provide for the protection of these soldiers. More recently, that failure has been translated by the Pentagon to say because of improper equipment for the personal protection of soldiers, because of the improper kind of mix of equipment in terms of non-armored Humvees, one out of four of the casualties was unnecessary, had we been properly prepared with the proper equipment, the training, for our soldiers. One out of four of the casualties was unnecessary, according to the Pentagon, another reason why Secretary Rumsfeld should resign.

HEALTH CARE AND AMERICAN PROSPERITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) is recognized during morning hour debates.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, this week, the House will make history, taking up the first of eight components of the most ambitious and forward-looking economic agenda in a generation. For the next 8 weeks, the House will debate and pass legislation that will begin the process of remaking our economy for the new century.

Rather than treating individual policy initiatives in a vacuum, the American Careers Initiative takes a comprehensive approach, treating health care, energy, education, taxes, regulation and lawsuit abuse reform as parts of a broader economic agenda.

For the next 2 months, the House will focus on one of the eight components of the Careers Initiative each week, starting tomorrow with Health Care Security.

First, we will pass legislation to reform medical malpractice liability laws to protect good doctors, nurses, and hospitals from predatory trial lawyers and their abusive lawsuits, lowering the cost of health care.

Second, we will pass the Small Business Health Fairness Act, which will allow small businesses to enjoy the same economies of scale now used by large corporations, organizations, and labor unions in their health plans.

Third, we will make Flexible Spending Accounts even more flexible, by allowing account owners to hold on to some of their unspent health savings year to year or even roll some of that money into a new health savings account.

We will do all of these things not simply because they are good health care policies, but because they make for greater economic policies.

By reducing the threat of abusive lawsuits, more doctors will continue to see patients and thereby help to reduce the crisis in health care access. By allowing small businesses to reduce the

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cost of employee health insurance, those businesses will in turn use their savings to invest in new products and hire new employees. And by expanding the utility of Flexible Spending Accounts, we will promote more health care competition and help Americans save money on their insurance costs.

All of these new policies will help break down the barriers between the American people and the affordable quality health care that they demand. And they will also break down the barriers between them and the thriving competitive and prosperous 21st-century economy that they deserve.

FULFILLING OUR DUTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, before I discuss the legislation that will be considered on the floor this week, I want to comment briefly on the continuing revelations about the abuse of Iraqi detainees in American custody and the need for vigorous congressional oversight through full and open committee hearings.

I could not disagree with my friend, the majority leader, more when he says the idea of a congressional investigation is like, and I quote, ''saying we need an investigation every time there is police brutality on the street.''

The abuse of Iraqi detainees, as we are learning, is, unfortunately, not isolated, and responsibility extends up and down the military chain of command. We must not abdicate our constitutional responsibility as an independent, coequal branch of government, as some Members of the other body have stated.

For example, the Senate majority leader is quoted today in Congressional Quarterly as saying, ''The Senate will continue to do its duty. We had several hearings last week. We will continue to maintain a close watch on the unfolding situation.'' In fact, they are having hearings this week.

This shocking episode demands a full and open inquiry. It demands a bipartisan approach. I urge the Republican leadership to work with this side of the aisle in getting to the bottom of these abuses, in holding the responsible parties accountable and ensuring that it never happens again. The world expects no less, and we should expect no less ourselves.

Now, Mr. Speaker, while the other body exercises vigorous oversight, this body will consider a Republican bill that will actually increase the budget deficit, which is projected at more than half a trillion dollars this year alone, and three health care bills that would do virtually nothing to help the uninsured.

This Republican majority is not responding to America's needs. We can, we must, do better.

The Republican bill to make the 10 percent income tax bracket permanent could win overwhelming, perhaps unanimous, support if it were paid for. Instead, it would add an estimated $218 billion to the national debt. Our children and grandchildren will pay that debt.

The Democratic substitute, in contrast, is paid for. Unfortunately, Republican leaders believe that tax cuts are a freebie. In fact, the chairman of the House Committee on the Budget, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE), said in March, and I quote, ''We don't believe that you should have to pay for tax cuts.''

It is that mathematically challenged philosophy, that denial of reality that continues to stall negotiations on the 2005 budget. House Republicans refuse to pay for tax cuts. House Democrats, a bipartisan majority of the Senate and the chairman of the Federal Reserve, Mr. Greenspan, fully support pay-as-you-go budget rules. In fact, if my Republican friends missed the comment of Chairman Greenspan last week, let me repeat it. He said, ''The free lunch has still not been invented.''

This week, the Republican leadership will also put three health care bills on the floor, apparently in recognition of Cover the Uninsured Week.

Today in America, the richest, most powerful Nation on the face of the Earth, 44 million Americans do not have health insurance; and that figure has increased by 4 million since President Bush took office. Yet none of the Republican health care bills directly addresses this growing problem.

We have already passed two of these three bills, on medical liability and associated health plans, almost in exactly the same form; so we are simply repeating that which we have already done, presumably for political purposes as opposed to substance. The third, on Flexible Savings Accounts, would mostly benefit those who are already insured.

House Democrats, by comparison, will introduce three health care bills this week that, together, would provide health insurance for more than half of the 44 million uninsured. These bills are aimed, Mr. Speaker, at three growing groups of uninsured: those with low income, retirees, and small businesses and the self-employed.

I say to my friends on the Republican side, our constituents did not send us here to pretend to legislate, to repeatedly pass legislation so that it could go to the Senate. They sent us here to solve problems and fulfill our duty. This week, there is ample evidence that we are doing neither.

DOUBLE STANDARDS APPLIED REGARDING TERRORISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, the infamous Iraqi prison photographs with which we are so familiar portray deplorable scenes for which we will apologize. I am concerned that these inappropriate practices occurred, but I am further concerned regarding the double standards that many countries apply regarding terrorism, and I will discuss that in detail herewith.

Much attention has been directed, Mr. Speaker, against America regarding the Iraqi prison matter; but comparatively speaking, little has been expressed against the terrorists.

Who will apologize or express concern for the 9/11 attack and the 3,000 innocent lives lost?

Who will apologize for the first attack to the World Trade Center and subsequent attacks upon our embassies and the U.S.S. *Cole*?

Who will apologize for the recent deadly explosion in Spain?

Who will apologize regarding hostages who were mutilated and hanged from a bridge while onlookers gleefully applauded and laughed obscenely?

These questions are rhetorical, Mr. Speaker, because no apologies are forthcoming, and many do not appear to be concerned about it.

I am told that the majority of Iraqis wanted Saddam removed from power, but they were unwilling and were incapable of doing the job themselves because they feared Saddam and knew the pain and torture he was capable of inflicting upon them.

Incidentally, Mr. Speaker, Saddam's rape rooms are no longer open for business, nor are Saddam's torture chambers. Why do we hear virtually nothing about the rape rooms and the torture chambers having been shut down? They are shut down because America, Great Britain, and coalition members stepped forward and Saddam retreated to his spider hole where he was captured.

Some in Iraq embrace us as liberators, while others, including terrorists from beyond Iraq, reject us as occupiers.

□ 1245

The closer Iraq approaches freedom and democracy, the more impediments and barriers the terrorists will erect.

When the government is handed over to the Iraqi Council on 30 June, many have declared, oh, the Americans must never leave because civil unrest may erupt. Well, I agree, we cannot abruptly depart, but Iraq needs to step up to the plate on 30 June.

Mr. Speaker, there is an expression uttered in the rural South to indicate appropriate timing. This expression is called ''high time.'' So I say today it is high time for Iraq to accept responsibility and express a willingness to govern and stand up to terrorism. If they want us to leave, they can show the world they are capable of governing responsibly. They can show the world they have the fortitude to avoid intimidation by terrorists and the evil practices they dispense.

I am not suggesting that America become the rigid, inflexible, fully supportive rod for the Iraqi spine or backbone, but rather serve as a brace or splint to permit and encourage independent function. I firmly believe that day will come, Mr. Speaker. I pray it will be sooner rather than later.

AMERICA'S UNINSURED

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PENCE). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this week Republicans begin an 8-week public relations campaign in an attempt to sell their special interest agenda to all Americans. Unfortunately, when Americans look beyond all the rhetoric, they will see the Republican proposals do nothing for the middle class. The so-called ''Hire Our Workers'' campaign begins this week with Republicans highlighting three pieces of legislation that they say will help the uninsured find insurance and middle class Americans better afford health care. But, Mr. Speaker, the Republican public relations effort is necessary because their health care proposals do no such thing.

This week is ''Cover the Uninsured Week.'' But unfortunately, nothing the Republican Congress is proposing will help the more than 44 million Americans without health insurance gain any insurance. As health care costs continue to increase way above the rate of inflation, the Republicans' health care proposals this week do nothing to help those Americans struggling to pay these ever-increasing prices.

The three health care bills that Republicans are offering this week are simply a ruse. Furthermore, each of these pieces of legislation has already been passed by the Republican majority and each of these bills have been proven to increase health costs, dismantle the employer-sponsored health insurance base, and increase the number of uninsured Americans.

Republicans will claim their Association Health Plan legislation will lower rates and provide greater access to insurance, but the reality is that AHP legislation would result in less health care access and dramatic increases in premiums for State insurance-based employers. AHPs would fragment and destabilize the small group market, resulting in higher premiums for many small businesses. And the Republican legislation would also allow employers to ''cherry-pick,'' attracting younger, healthier individuals to join AHPs, while leaving older, sicker individuals in the traditional insurance market which results in increased premiums for the remaining pool.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican Health Savings Account legislation creates a tax-favored savings provision with no income limitations. The main reason Republicans want to pass this bill is to create a new tax shelter for the healthy and wealthy while, at the same time, threatening higher health insurance premiums for everyone else.

The Republican PR machine will claim this legislation helps the uninsured by providing a tax credit that would allow the uninsured to set aside up to $2,000, tax free, in a new health savings account to supposedly help pay for health insurance. But unfortunately, it is highly unlikely that most uninsured Americans will be able to take advantage of this program, because they have an extremely difficult time saving $2,000 a year for health care.

Mr. Speaker, the final component of the Republican agenda is medical liability reform. Republicans will claim that this legislation will address the sky-rocketing costs of health care, but Republicans are doing nothing to address spiraling insurance premiums for doctors. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office concluded that ''Malpractice costs account for a very small fraction of total health care spending; even a very large reduction in malpractice costs would have a relatively small effect on total health plan premiums.''

If Republicans truly want to help the uninsured and underinsured, they should set aside their rhetoric and pass three pieces of legislation introduced by the Democrats. First, the Family Care Act expands Medicaid and SCHIP to provide affordable coverage to about 7.5 million working parents. Second, the Medicare Early Access Act provides coverage to 3.5 million people who are over the age of 55, but not yet eligible for Medicare, by allowing them to purchase Medicare coverage. And third, the Small Business Health Insurance Act creates a 50 percent tax credit to help small businesses with the costs of health care.

These Democratic proposals not only offer significant reductions in the ranks of the uninsured, but also rein in spiraling health care costs to our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, Americans deserve results here on the House floor. It is unfortunate that for the next 8 weeks, all they are going to get from the Republican majority is more political spin.

COVER THE UNINSURED WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, in this Cover the Uninsured week, I rise to say that our health care system in this country is falling short on promise and contributing to disabling illness and premature death of the people it is supposed to serve. The picture is worse for African Americans who, for almost every illness, are impacted more severely and disproportionately, in some cases more than all other minorities combined. Every day in this country there are at least 200 African American deaths which could and should have been prevented.

The current strongly held-to ''cost containment'' paradigm, while it sounds good on the surface, has obviously not worked. We now have double digit increases in premiums in an industry that was to rein in costs. What it did instead was create a multi-tiered system of care, both within managed care and without. Those at the lowest rungs of the system got and continue to get sicker. The sicker, and the more costly, were and are still being dropped, and those who are sickest were and remain locked out entirely.

In 2003, health care spending rose to $1.7 trillion, or an average of almost $5,000 per person. As a percentage of the gross domestic product, it grew from 13.1 percent in 1999 to 15.2 percent in 2002. National health care expenditures are expected to reach $2.8 trillion in 2011.

These health care costs are driven by, among other things, lack of preventive care, poor disease management, the consequent use of high-cost care, and the cost burden of uncompensated care.

A recent study by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that the uninsured are 30 to 50 percent more likely to be hospitalized for an avoidable condition, the average cost of which in 2002 was estimated to be about $3,300. Close to 93 percent of the uninsured report having a more difficult time getting access to primary care and, therefore, are coming first to emergency rooms. About 97 percent of them report having medical conditions that have persisted or worsened because of a lack of early intervention or preventive care.

To add insult to injury, these uninsured individuals are also often penalized by being charged higher fees for health care services and not given the discounts afforded insured patients. A Health Affairs article published in 2000 entitled ''Gouging the Medically Uninsured'' found that an uninsured patient paid up to twice as much as the insured patient. A New York Times article titled ''Medical Fees Are Often Higher For Patients Without Insurance'' cited examples of uninsured patients being charged up to 7 times more for a gynecological exam.

Mr. Speaker, lack of health insurance is a major factor in the escalating costs of health care and it affects minority populations more than others. Over a third of Latinos are uninsured, the highest rate among all groups studied, and 2½ times higher than the rate for whites. Nearly a quarter of African Americans and about one fifth of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have no health coverage.

Uninsured rates are lower among Native Americans only due to their ability to receive services through the Indian Health Service, which represents a set of federally provided health services as opposed to coverage, yet the

level of care for them leaves much to be desired as well.

It is because of these and many other grave health statistics that we are asking Congress to pass comprehensive health care reform, understanding that none of the diseases causing disparities can be successfully managed without sustained universal access to health care.

This week, the Democrats will introduce three bills to do just that: the Family Care Act, the Medicare Early Access Act, and the Small Business Health Insurance Promotion Act. There are also other bills that have already been introduced, of which I am proud to be a cosponsor, by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

This week we will take up H.R. 660, the Association Health Plan proposal, which poses, in my opinion, a serious threat to our existing employer-based health insurance system. It would exempt small employer plans from important State regulatory protections, and there is no reason to believe that eliminating these protections will help small employers expand coverage.

Instead, AHPs will be able to design services to cover industries and sectors with the healthiest employees and leave out small businesses with older or sicker workers, those who most need coverage. This ability to cherry-pick would drive up the cost of coverage for small businesses with less healthy profiles of workers who will then be left in the insurance pool by themselves. AHPs would be able to offer less generous benefit packages in order to bring down the costs of coverage. The CBO has already estimated that 80 percent of workers would be worse off under AHPs.

In closing, I urge my colleagues to put politics aside in addressing the issue of coverage as well as in malpractice reform, and the other health care bills we will be considering this week. Let us not opt for the short-term fix that is really no fix at all. Let us not support proposals that do not provide substantive remedies for these problems which affect the life and death of those we represent. And, above all, let us commit ourselves, this week and always, to do no harm.

DISTURBING EVENTS AND DISTURBING REMARKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I must say that I was not only quite disturbed, but concerned about the President's remarks yesterday at the Pentagon, and it goes as so: ''Mr. Secretary, thank you for your hospitality and thank you for your leadership. You are courageously leading our Nation in a war against terror. You are doing a superb job. You are a strong Secretary of Defense, and our Nation owes you a great debt of gratitude.''

I must say that it is good to give commendations and thumbs up when it is time to give a thumbs up. But in the light of what is going on in the Department of Defense right now and in light of congressional hearings that are ongoing in the other body, I think the question mark of our true sincerity, being against the pictures, being against the acts that were carried out on individuals that were being questioned by members of our military in prison in Iraq, that I could say that the statements that are made by the Commander in Chief and also statements that are made by Secretary Rumsfeld and others could and will stimulate additional terrorism.

Now, to say that you are leading our Nation against terror, well, that question is the question of the week and of the month. As the Pentagon admits, Secretary Rumsfeld and General Myers, that we have had knowledge of the ungodly acts that took place in mid-January, and that it was reported from Central Command that this was a big deal, this was a big deal, and that Secretary Rumsfeld and General Myers both admit that they meet 3 to 4 times, maybe 5, using Secretary Rumsfeld's number, a day, and that they meet with the President at least once a week to talk about what is going on in the Pentagon; that anyone that might have seen or heard about these pictures or the acts that were being carried out, that they did not rise to the level of the Presidency of the United States.

Not only were these pictures and this investigation that the Pentagon had within the Pentagon, but the fact that it was not shared with the American people is even further disturbing.

□ 1300

Some folks say, well, Members of Congress are upset because they were not told. We are representatives of the people of the United States of America. Serving on the Committee on Armed Services, seeing week after week Pentagon brass coming before us, Secretary Rumsfeld coming before us and never once mention that something fundamentally wrong, we are investigating it, is going on in Saddam Hussein's prison in Iraq, not only the prison that the President spoke of as it relates to the terror and rape and things of that nature that were going on in that particular prison but including the Secretary of State and Secretary Rumsfeld, he mentioned 18,000 cases that are being heard by the Pentagon a year, 18,000. Well, 18,000 in that particular prison, not 18,000 in the theater of war.

One may say, well, if the Secretary steps down, then the terrorists win. I beg to differ. I feel that it will stop terrorists from recruiting young men and women to carry out acts of terror against Americans abroad and here on the homeland. It will show a true commitment of the fact that we are taking an about-face on what took place.

Some of my colleagues have shared with us that there are six or seven individuals at fault here. I hope that is the case, but I can tell my colleagues that there is a building tide of evidence that proves different. Contractors, we may very well have to bring CEOs of companies before Congress to ask them what role did they have over commanding our American troops. That is disturbing in itself, the fact that a whole branch of our military or the Army unit that was over this particular prison was not trained for doing what they had to do; the fact that we knew and that the Pentagon was called in mid-January to say this was a big deal, not a little deal but a big deal; the fact that we were not informed. I will tell my colleagues the reason why Congress was not informed was because we would not have tolerated the suppression of this information.

At the highest levels of our military, it is very, very important that this information is shared with the American people. At the highest levels of our military, including the Secretary of Defense, it is very important he shares this information.

I will tell my colleagues, let us not stand and say things that will stimulate terrorism. Let us not take one step forward and three steps back.

So, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the House continues to move forth. I, for one, feel that Secretary Rumsfeld stepping down will save American lives and will allow our Pentagon to move forward the courts martial that are before it.

ELIMINATE THE ''YES, BUT'' MENTALITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PENCE). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I came to the well today because I am starting to hear something that I think the American people do not want to hear, and that is, that these terrible things were done by a few individuals in Iraq, but. All too often I am hearing the word ''but'' creeping in.

Mr. Speaker, last night I was listening to Michael Savage. Hundreds of stations around the country carry this man, and he was not just saying ''yes, but.'' He was saying, well, these people are Muslim; Islam is a religion of war, and we have to understand they have always been involved in war and they only understand violence and they only understand this. This is why Saddam had these torture chambers because that is the only way to make them understand.

When I heard that said on national radio, I realized that the ''yes, but''

cannot be tolerated here on the House floor or in the other body or on K Street or on the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is extremely important that we in this body today eliminate that ''yes, but'' mentality. There is no ''yes.'' We must be above torture. We must be above violating the Geneva Conventions, but we must understand that these individuals may not be ''conventional combatants.'' Mr. Speaker, that is not the way America stands for freedom. It is not the way we were brought up. There is no ''but'' after ''yes.''

Yes, we will honor the Geneva Conventions. Yes, every soldier, sailor and Marine in Iraq, in Guantanamo, in Afghanistan and around the world understands or should understand that we hold them to a standard that we would want for ourselves, not the standard that the other side may subject us to. No matter what happens anywhere in the world to Americans, not in Somalia, not in Iraq, not in Afghanistan and not in the Twin Towers of New York, justifies us treating other human beings in a way differently than we would want to be treated.

Mr. Speaker, to me this is the most important message for America to send. Mr. Speaker, I hope in this body, at least from this time forward, there will be no ''but'' after ''yes.'' We hold Americans to high standards.

RHETORIC OF WAR CRUSADE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the previous speakers have talked about the attitude of the American soldier and the American public, and the rhetoric of war is what really gets us to where we are today in the situation in Iraq. When you dehumanize people, you can then do anything to them.

It is my firm belief that this attitude starts at the very top. When we have someone who leads us who says that the leader of the other country is Hitler, raising all those images of a Holocaust and all the rest, or talks about the issues of being on a crusade, which raises all the issues of the various crusades that went through the Middle East back in the 11th and 12th century, we realize that the stage is being set psychologically for everyone in this country.

I was reading the British press. One of their articles started, ''The media in this country is politely shocked at photos of Iraqis being tortured and humiliated by U.S. and British troops. A BBC1 news presenter says the picture seem to have been ''merely mementos.''' Something one would laugh about in the family and then paste in the family album.

Now, those young people, and I have been watching the hearings over in the Senate, the effort to limit this and say it is just seven or eight young people and perhaps a couple of lieutenants up the line but really it is a rogue operation, is simply not true. It runs all the way to the top.

The decisions here have to be signed off. Anybody who has been in the military knows about the chain of command, and somebody does not sign off down at the lieutenant level and not bother to send it up to the captain or to the colonel or to the general. They all go up the line. They have all been signed off, one way or another, or somebody at the top said here is a blank check, do whatever you want, which of course they would deny. They would never say that, but then how do you explain that this behavior went on through this period of time?

Another excuse that I hear thrown around here is that, well, they are not as bad as Saddam. Look what Saddam did. Well, since when is our standard Saddam Hussein? That clearly is not the standard by which we operate; but unfortunately, the attitude of the people who took us into this, the neo-cons in the administration, right next to the President, couple of them, Ken Adelman, Paul Wolfowitz, have spoken of snakes. If you want to talk about Iraqi people as snakes, I guess you can, but you pay a price in your own soul when you think of another human being as a snake or you talk about going over and draining the swamps in uncivilized parts of the world.

The Arabs invented arithmetic. They invented the zero. They were some of the earliest astronomers. Do not tell me they have no civilization. But when you start to dehumanize them and put them down at this low, low level, then you send the message out verbally, nonverbally, whether it is in a memo, whether it is in written form, whether it is how you talk to your troops, you are giving permission to do what was done and to take pictures.

Now, you do not take pictures of this to take home to your family album. Those pictures were done to humiliate. Everybody says, wait a minute, let me comb my hair before I have my picture taken. Everybody knows what a picture does because it grabs the moment in a way that you cannot change it. So when you take a picture of one of these events, you know what you are doing. You are doing it because somebody told you to do it or somewhere you have got the idea that what you were doing was already one or the other. Either that was an order to take those pictures, or else the atmosphere was such that people felt that they could take these pictures.

We have a moment here in this country in which we can examine our own souls and our own hearts about how we let this happen. We all bear responsibility for it. Our leadership from the top on down, they always dehumanized.

I remember during the Vietnam War, we had a lot of names for people who were from Vietnam, not very nice names. You would not use them today; and when that starts happening at the top, it goes down and we cannot end with putting seven soldiers in the brig. That will not be justice.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

In scriptural times, when the psalms were still being written, and their original melodies were being sung, Your people, O Lord, would gather at the city's gates to hear the news and sort out matters of justice.

Lord God, be present in the assembly of the House of Representatives today. Here is the sampling of this Republic. Here the laws of the United States are made. Here is the gate that protects, yet ushers in an understanding of who we are as a Nation and how we interact with others. Where there is vision and no action, it is only a daydream. When there is action and no vision, it is a nightmare. So grant your people wisdom once again.

For we have been warned: ''Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it. Unless the Lord guard the city, in vain does the guard keep vigil. It is vain for you to work day and night only to gain immediate satisfaction when the Lord blesses his beloved even while they sleep.''

Grant us wisdom that we may be Your beloved now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LAMPSON 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.

PEACE TO KASHMIR

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to the issue of Kashmir and an important report that was just released and should arrive at each House office this week. The continued courageous leadership of Prime Minister Vajpayee of India and President Musharraf of Pakistan is vital in moving forward to bring an end to the suffering of the Kashmiri people. I visited the region in January; and the suffering of the people is horrific, all in the midst of a land of great beauty. It is time for this tragic suffering to end.

I would like to recommend this report to my colleagues. The report offers over 60 recommendations for progress in bringing peace to Kashmir, including an end to the use of rape as a weapon of war, promoting education for Kashmiri children and others.

Until the Kashmiri issue is settled, the stability, security, and economic viability of South Asia and the international community are at risk.

AMERICA NEEDS ECONOMICALLY RESPONSIBLE SOLUTIONS

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

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask how the Republicans will provide health care to millions of uninsured and unemployed Americans through the majority's Hire Our Workers program. American families are facing over 2 million jobs lost since January 2001, outsourcing of jobs overseas by companies that do not seem to care about hard-working Americans, and a political party that has dropped the ball on education, seniors, and health care.

It is ironic, then, that the acronym of the Republican plan is H-O-W. Tell me, Mr. Speaker, how do they plan to provide affordable health care to 8.5 million uninsured children? How do they plan to explain the Robert Woods Johnson Foundation report that one in four Texans have no health insurance? It is high time we ditch these short-term fixes and instead focus on long-term, economically responsible solutions for hard-working Americans.

EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR OUR TROOPS

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I felt it necessary to come down to the floor today and express my appreciation for the service of our Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld. More than any other cabinet Secretary, Secretary Rumsfeld has made himself available to this body and its various committees.

Over the past year, I have traveled twice to Iraq, once in August and once in February. I have talked to the young men and women who are working hard in harsh and dangerous conditions. They have a keen sense of mission. They understand why they are there and what they are set to accomplish.

Mr. Speaker, they deserve no less than the continuing leadership of a visionary and a brilliant tactician such as Secretary Rumsfeld.

STOP SCAPEGOATING ENLISTED PERSONNEL

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, because we are Americans, I believe that this question should be asked: If another sovereign nation in the name of war held prisoners of war who happened to be Americans, and unfolding before our eyes were the heinous and horrific pictures that we have seen, would it be accepting if the head of that sovereign nation stood before his or her people and said that the ultimate person of responsibility was doing a superb job?

I am saddened by the comments of the administration because Secretary Rumsfeld has violated his duty. He is in dereliction of duty having not informed the Congress or the President when he first heard. He is also in dereliction of his duty because the enlisted man that will be tried, a scapegoat, was a mechanic being used as a military police. That is a decision of Secretary Rumsfeld.

It is time for a clean sweep; and he must go along with the Deputy Secretary, Paul Wolfowitz. The world must understand that we are sorry for the horrific acts and stop scapegoating the enlisted personnel.

AMERICAN TROOPS WORKING TO IMPROVE IRAQ

(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. Mr. Speaker, while we are all appalled and outraged by the actions of a few soldiers, let us not forget there are 135,000 honorable American troops, along with 23,000 courageous coalition partners, working day and night in Iraq to improve the Iraqis' quality of life. These fine men and women in uniform have built and repaired schools, reopened thousands of run-down hospitals and clinics, restored and improved electricity and water supplies, and put a new currency in place.

The positive progress which I saw firsthand last month in Iraq has been astounding, despite daily terrorist attacks that seek to prevent democracy from taking root. The terrorists know that if freedom prevails in Iraq that it will spell the beginning of the end of their quest for tyrannical hold on the Middle East. Yet their desperate attempts will fail, and the American military will continue their noble work to make sure that Iraqis live in a free Iraq to protect American families from future acts of terrorism.

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

FAILURE FROM THE VERY TOP

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, American soldiers are serving with honor, and we stand behind them. We are grateful for their patriotism, courage and sacrifice, and we continue to support them as they finish their dangerous mission. The disgraceful acts in the Iraqi prisons have endangered our troops and made their mission more difficult to accomplish. They have endangered our chance to succeed in Iraq, and they have endangered our national security.

Reports of mistreatment have been available for a year and a half at least, yet the Bush administration failed to take them seriously. These abuses occurred because soldiers were put into situations they were not trained for and for which they did not have proper supervision. This is a failure from the very top, and it is time for the President and Secretary Rumsfeld to stop shifting the blame and take responsibility. Congress must conduct a full and open investigation.

COMMEMORATING TENNESSEE APPAREL CORPORATION

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commemorate the longstanding commitment of the Tennessee Apparel Corporation to the people of Waynesboro and Tullahoma, Tennessee.

From this company's earliest days in 1901 when it was known as the Sanders Manufacturing Company through its 100-year anniversary and beyond, the Tennessee Apparel Corporation has been at the forefront of supplying our troops with the clothing they need. From dress uniforms to cold-weather gear, Tennessee Apparel has been there for our American fighting men and women. In the last 100 years, they produced nearly 50 million military items. With approximately 480 employees in middle Tennessee, the Tennessee Apparel Corporation provides a tremendous service to our State and our Nation. God's blessing on these fine men and women.

CLEAN HOUSE

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the world is watching and waiting. As bad as it is, things will get much worse if the President and the Pentagon continue to hope it will go away. We need new leadership and a new policy right now. Release every photograph and every videotape. Get it all out in the open. America's only hope for restoring credibility is to demonstrate with its actions, not words, that we will face the truth and punish everyone responsible. We have not done that. All these ''I am sorries'' are not working.

Instead, the administration has launched another ill-conceived offensive to save one of its own. We can see it on television today as they testify before the Senate Committee on Armed Services. Throw some soldiers overboard and hope the world believes they acted alone.

Mr. Speaker, by all accounts, the soldiers arrived in Iraq as good, decent people. Who thinks that now, either of the soldiers or America?

Clean house, from the top down, not just Mr. Rumsfeld. I see them greasing the skids; the President is 1,000 percent behind him. There are some other people that ought to go with him: Wolfowitz and a few others.

JOBS, CAFE AND KERRY

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, last Friday we received more outstanding news on the economy. In April, 288,000 new jobs were created, and that is on top of the 337,000 jobs created in March. And in April, nearly 10 percent of those jobs were in the manufacturing sector. All of this is great news for America and especially good news for my home State of Michigan.

With our manufacturing sector coming back, we cannot allow JOHN KERRY to enact his unreasonable auto fuel economy standards. According to the United Auto Workers, Senator KERRY's CAFE proposal would force the Big Three to curtail production of larger vehicles and cause substantial job losses. They have estimated as many as 100,000 jobs. The UAW has said that the proposal would lead to additional outsourcing of jobs.

Mr. Speaker, Senator KERRY's proposal would be a disaster for Michigan just at the time our economy is coming back. We must stay on the pro-growth, pro-job path being pursued by President Bush and the Republican majority, not the job-killing, additional-outsourcing path proposed by Senator KERRY.

□ 1415

COVER THE UNINSURED WEEK

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, Americans should be confident that they have access to quality health care. So I support the resolution, H.R. 99, promoted by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) which gives guidance to provide insurance to all Americans.

Over the past 3 years, 3.8 million Americans lost their health insurance and 43 million Americans are now uninsured. Health insurance premiums have increased almost 50 percent since the beginning of the Bush administration and four times faster than workers' earnings last year.

In a related issue, minority groups often encounter major obstacles in obtaining health care. Minority groups are less likely to have health insurance and are less likely to receive the appropriate health care services. The Health Care Equality and Accountability Act of 2003 would go far in lifting the shadow of health disparities that fall not only on minority communities but on all Americans. Also, this legislation would make quality health care more affordable, providing coverage for parents and young adults who are currently uninsured.

JOBS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this week the Republican majority here in Congress will begin an 8-week public relations initiative in which they will attempt to draw attention away from their dismal economic record. Instead, House Republicans will do their best to show Americans they are working hard to pass legislation that will put Americans back to work and ease the economic concerns of middle-class Americans. Unfortunately, Republicans are spending more time coming up with names for this new PR effort than actually writing new legislation that might really support their rhetoric.

Republicans are desperate to hide the reality that their economic policies have permitted job losses at levels not seen since the Great Depression. If Republicans really wanted results, they would join us in a bipartisan effort to pass commonsense measures to create jobs. Unfortunately, all the American people are going to get over the next 8 weeks is more Republican spin.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). 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 after 6:30 p.m. today.

TOMOCHICHI UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2523) to designate the United States courthouse located at 125 Bull Street in Savannah, Georgia, as the ''Tomochichi United States Courthouse''.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2523

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

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION.

The United States courthouse located at 125 Bull Street in Savannah, Georgia, shall be known and designated as the ''Tomochichi United States Courthouse''.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the United States courthouse referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Tomochichi United States Courthouse''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2523 was introduced by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BURNS), a distinguished member of the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management, and it designates the United States courthouse located at 125 Bull Street in Savannah, Georgia, as the Tomochichi United States Courthouse.

Tomochichi was a Creek Indian leader, living in what we now know as the Savannah River basin in the early part of the 18th century. In 1733, when General James Oglethorpe arrived leading a group of English settlers at what was to become the new colony of Georgia, they were offered friendship by the Creek chief and assistance in the creation of the new English colony of Savannah. In 1734, Tomochichi traveled with Oglethorpe to England to approve a treaty between the Creek and the English. The friendship between Oglethorpe and Tomochichi endured until Tomochichi's death in 1739 and is regarded by historians as being the key reason for the survival of the Savannah colony. Tomochichi was laid to rest in what is now Wright Square in the city of Savannah.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution honoring an important person in the history of Savannah.

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

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

H.R. 2523 is a bill to designate the U.S. courthouse located at 125 Bull Street, Savannah, Georgia, as the Tomochichi United States Courthouse. The bill was introduced by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BURNS).

In 1650, Chief Tomochichi was born in the small village of Coweta along the Chattahoochee River to the Creek Indian tribe. While he was the chief of the Yamacraw Indians he became a friend of James Oglethorpe, the English settler and leader of the settlers of the fledgling colony in Georgia. He supported Oglethorpe's plan for a new English colony in Georgia to be called Savannah.

Tomochichi was a great warrior, possessing both good judgment and wisdom. As repayment for his sound advice and trusted friendship, Oglethorpe took Tomochichi, his wife, his nephew. And other Indian chiefs to England for 4 months. When Tomochichi died in 1736, Oglethorpe was one of his pallbearers. He is buried in Wright Square, the site of the courthouse to be named in his honor. Tomochichi's actions helped ensure the successful settlement of Georgia and earned him a place in Georgian history. His hospitality is legendary even today. It is most fitting his contributions to American history are honored by this designation.

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

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BURNS), the author of this resolution.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his support of this legislation.

There are many Members of this body that deserve my State's appreciation for bringing this long overdue bill to the floor, honoring a great American, a great Native American and a great Georgian, Tomochichi. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE), chairman of the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management, and subcommittee ranking member, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) were both instrumental in helping this bill advance quickly to the floor. I thank them for their bipartisan support. The gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) should be credited with moving the legislation swiftly so that we can bring closure to a long overdue need in my State and in my district. I believe unanimous approval by this body to be of particular importance to the nature of this bill.

This bill renames the Federal courthouse in my district the Tomochichi United States Courthouse. A glance at who this leader was will indicate his accomplishments and quickly demonstrate why his name deserves the eternal respect of his fellow Georgians and Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I believe Chief Tomochichi, the Mico, or chief, of the Yamacraw nation to be the cofounder of my State of Georgia. This bill will do much to reawaken the memory of a great man in the hearts of both Georgians and all Americans for restoring our honor by recognizing his service to the beginnings of our great Nation.

The English general, James Oglethorpe, first launched Savannah on the Savannah River in 1733. He founded the British colony there and he met Tomochichi as he came up the bluff at what is now the city of Savannah. Unlike the tragic history of conflict between settlers and Native Americans in other colonies, Tomochichi brought lifelong friendship to the infant colony, granting the settlers permission to peacefully settle in the Savannah region. Among Savannahians, as has been pointed out, the hospitality that Tomochichi showed these young settlers is legendary. But Tomochichi's gifts to our State were just beginning.

Thanks to his diplomatic skills, this Yamacraw leader was instrumental in convincing the other Creek tribes in the immediate vicinity to accept the fledgling colony of Georgia. Without his political leadership, Georgia may well have perished in its infancy, with a hostile Spanish administration in what is now Florida, intent on turning Native Americans against English settlers.

Tomochichi and his family then traveled to England where they met with the King and the Archbishop of Canterbury. Upon his return to Georgia, Tomochichi successfully lobbied his new neighbors to establish the first missionary school among the Lower Creeks, recognizing that education was the key to the future as these two cultures became intertwined.

Tomochichi passed away at around 93 years of age on October 5, 1739, at what we used to call the Yamacraw Indian Village, just upstream from Savannah. But before he died, he requested that his body be buried in Savannah among his new friends. He was buried with full military honors in the largest public ceremony of the day, with cannons firing a final salute and his old friend General Oglethorpe serving as a pallbearer. His body was laid to rest in the center of the city's main square at the time, later to become Wright Square, with a traditional Indian burial mound atop his grave. A century and a half later in the 1880s, some shortsighted city officials allowed the mound to be removed and another statue placed on the site. Admirers of the great chieftain responded by placing an inscribed granite boulder in honor of Tomochichi a few feet from his remains, but to this day many believe that we owe our old friend much more.

Today this body can help restore the honor and respect due this great American by renaming the Federal courthouse in Savannah, Georgia, as the Tomochichi Federal Courthouse. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2523.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2523, a bill to designate the United States Courthouse located at 125 Bull Street in Savannah, Georgia as the Tomochichi United States Courthouse.

Chief Tomochichi was born to the Creek Indian Tribe in 1650 in the small village of Coweta, along the Chattahoochee River. He became the Chief of the Yamacraw Indians and was integral to the success of the Georgia Colony.

Tomochichi enjoyed a reputation as a great warrior who possessed sound judgment and wisdom. In 1773, Chief Tomochichi encountered James Oglethorpe, the English settler who founded the Georgia colony. Tomochichi and the Yamacraw greeted the English settlers warmly, and Tomochichi supported Oglethorpe's plan to settle a new English colony in Savannah, Georgia. He aided the plans for the settlement and smoothed relations with the Creek and other nearby Indian Tribes. Tomochichi also warned Oglethorpe about unfriendly tribes. As repayment for his advice and good counsel, Oglethorpe took Tomochichi, his wife, his nephew, and other Indian Chiefs to England where they stayed for four months.

When Tomochichi died in 1739, he was buried at Wright Square in downtown Savannah. Oglethorpe served as one of the pallbearers and gave Tomochichi full military honors at his funeral. The Federal courthouse to be named in Tomochichi's honor is located in this same square.

Tomochichi's friendship with the English settlers helped the Georgia colony develop in peace, and his hospitality is legendary even today. It is most fitting that his contributions to Georgia and to American history are honored by this designation. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2523.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of this important resolution.

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 Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2523.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2523.

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

There was no objection.

AUTHORIZING USE OF CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SPECIAL OLYMPICS LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 389) authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the D.C. Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 389

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZATION OF USE OF CAPITOL GROUNDS FOR D.C. SPECIAL OLYMPICS LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN.

On June 4, 2004, or on such other date as the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate may jointly designate, the 2004 District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run (in this resolution referred to as the ''event'') may be run through the Capitol Grounds as part of the journey of the Special Olympics torch to the District of Columbia Special Olympics summer games.

SEC. 2. RESPONSIBILITY OF CAPITOL POLICE BOARD.

The Capitol Police Board shall take such actions as may be necessary to carry out the event.

SEC. 3. CONDITIONS RELATING TO PHYSICAL PREPARATIONS.

The Architect of the Capitol may prescribe conditions for physical preparations for the event.

SEC. 4. ENFORCEMENT OF RESTRICTIONS.

The Capitol Police Board shall provide for enforcement of the restrictions contained in section 5104(c) of title 40, United States Code, concerning sales, advertisements, displays, and solicitations on the Capitol Grounds, as well as other restrictions applicable to the Capitol Grounds, in connection with the event.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

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

House Concurrent Resolution 389 authorizes the use of the Capitol grounds for the 19th Annual Law Enforcement Torch Run which benefits the District of Columbia Special Olympics. The torch will cross the Capitol grounds on June 4, 2004.

For 31 years, Special Olympics D.C. has provided sports training for citizens with developmental disabilities. Athletic competition provides athletes with increased confidence and self-esteem and allows them to demonstrate courage and experience the joy of sport. There are now more than 2,000 Special Olympics athletes in the District of Columbia. This event is the largest public awareness campaign for the Special Olympics. Last year over 85,000 law enforcement officers from 35 countries participated in the torch run. It is my hope that this trend will continue. The sponsors of the event work with the Architect of the Capitol and the United States Capitol Police to comply with all applicable regulations relating to the use of the Capitol grounds.

I encourage my colleagues to join the law enforcement community in supporting the Special Olympics and join me in supporting this resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this event needs little introduction. 2004 marks the 37th anniversary of the D.C. Special Olympics. The torch relay event is a traditional part of the opening ceremonies for the Special Olympics which take place at Gallaudet University in the District of Columbia. Each year approximately 2,500 Special Olympians compete in over a dozen events and more than 1 million children and adults with special needs participate in Special Olympic worldwide programs. The event is supported by literally thousands of volunteers from the District and the region.

The goal of the games is to help bring mentally challenged individuals into the larger society under conditions whereby they are accepted and respected. Confidence and self-esteem are the building blocks for these Olympic games. I enthusiastically support this resolution and the very worthwhile endeavor of the Special Olympics. I urge support for H. Con. Res. 389.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, the District of Columbia Special Olympics is the premier event in the region that highlights the athletic accomplishments of disabled children and young adults. Thanks to the tenacity of Eunice Kennedy Shriver and her family, thousands of special Olympians see their self-confidence, self-esteem, and health increase by participating in these games.

The goal of the games is to help bring mentally disabled individuals into the larger society under conditions where they are accepted and respected. Confidence and self-esteem are the building blocks for these Olympic games. Better health, coordination, and lasting friendships are the results of participation.

Law enforcement officers, who are part of the extensive volunteer network that supports the games, carry the Olympic torch across the Capitol Grounds through the District of Columbia to Gallaudet University.

These games are a wonderful expression of inclusiveness and a confirmation of individual contribution. I enthusiastically support this resolution and the very worthwhile endeavor of the Special Olympics.

I urge support for H. Con. Res. 389.

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

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of the concurrent resolution.

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 Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 389.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. 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 H. Con. Res. 389.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1430

SENSE OF HOUSE THAT DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SHOULD RECTIFY MILITARY POSTAL SYSTEM DEFICIENCIES

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 608) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Department of Defense should rectify deficiencies in the military postal system to ensure that members of the Armed Forces stationed overseas are able to receive and send mail in a timely manner as well as receive and send election ballots in time to be counted in the 2004 elections.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 608

Whereas the members of the Armed Forces who are currently serving in very dangerous regions of the world deserve a modernized military postal system capable of improving the delivery and tracking of mail to United States forces serving in remote locations;

Whereas the current system relies on outmoded and labor intensive manual sorting processes that result in undue delays and the inability of the Department of Defense to track mail and determine the timeliness of mail delivery;

Whereas the manual sorting of mail intended for deployed members of the Armed Forces unnecessarily requires hours of labor from many troops, which could be used for other, more critical, duties if automation were used;

Whereas the very least our Nation can do for the members of our Armed Forces who are deployed halfway around the world and risking their lives to protect our freedoms is to ensure that they are able to receive the comfort of a letter from those waiting at home;

Whereas mail destined for deployed members of the Armed Forces that is delayed for long periods of time, or not delivered at all, negatively affects the morale of our deployed forces and their families at home;

Whereas the members of our Armed Forces have an unquestionable right to vote in the upcoming election, and the military postal system must not disenfranchise any military absentee voters because of delays in transmitting voting materials;

Whereas with the current military postal system it is not possible to determine the rate of ''Undeliverable as Addressed'' mail, it is therefore not possible to guarantee that all United States forces wishing to vote will be able to do so;

Whereas according to the recent General Accounting Office Report entitled ''Operation Iraqi Freedom: Long-standing Problems Hampering Mail Delivery Need to be Resolved,'' many of the same problems that plagued the military postal system during Operation Desert Storm have continued unabated and are now being experienced in Operation Iraqi Freedom, more than 12 years later;

Whereas according to the same General Accounting Office report, the Department of Defense does not have the ability to adequately assess the timeliness of mail and election ballot delivery because it does not have a reliable, accurate system in place;

Whereas according to the same General Accounting Office report, more than half of sampled members of the Armed Forces were dissatisfied with mail delivery, many waiting 4 weeks or longer to receive mail;

Whereas recent samplings of mail intended for deployed members of the Armed Forces shows that a percentage far exceeding the standard set for domestic mail is ''Undeliverable as Addressed'' and indicates that a large portion of our deployed troops are not receiving their mail;

Whereas the Military Postal Service Agency does not have the authority to formulate and effectively implement a joint service solution to the mail problems in the Iraq Theatre and the Department of Defense has not appointed a single agency to address military postal matters;

Whereas the recent court action in the United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, which granted the government's request to extend Pennsylvania's deadline for receipt of ballots from qualified overseas voters, correctly recognizes that mail operations can significantly impact voting rights and, in addition, is sufficient forewarning that the military mail system needs to be resolved before the next election; and

Whereas for at least 52 years, reformers have been attempting to improve the ability of the members of our Armed Forces to vote, as evidenced by a letter from President Harry S. Truman to Congress, dated from 1952, which clearly echoes the challenges we face: ''Many of those in uniform are serving overseas, or in parts of the country distant from their homes. They are unable to return to their States either to register or to vote. Yet these men and women who are serving their country and in many cases risking their lives, deserve above all others to exercise the right to vote in this election year. At a time when these young people are defending our country and its free institutions, the least we at home can do is to make sure that they are able to enjoy the rights they are being asked to fight to preserve.'': Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) it is in the interest of the United States to immediately resolve long-standing military mail delivery problems so that our troops may receive mail from their families when they most need it;

(2) it is in the interest of the United States to immediately resolve long-standing military mail delivery problems so that our troops are not disenfranchised in the 2004 election;

(3) the Secretary of Defense should establish a system that expedites the delivery of election ballots to the members of our Armed Forces so that they may be counted in the election;

(4) the Secretary of Defense should establish a system that accurately tracks military postal transit times; and

(5) the House of Representatives stands ready to assist in resolving these issues.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES) and the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, in the face of insurgencies in Fallujah and other hot spots in Iraq, what is it that keeps our soldiers fighting for freedom and democracy?

In addition to the trials of war, our soldiers in Iraq wake up with the same problems every other American has. Their lives at home did not stop when they received their orders to ship out. They are mothers and fathers. They have elderly parents to care for. They have bills to pay and college educations to worry about for their children. These soldiers are concerned about how their children are doing in school. They wonder what the score of the last Little League game was, and they question whether they can make that car payment, just like many of us. Only they do all this halfway around the world in a combat zone.

And yet day after day, month after month, our service members wake up, put on their uniform, and they diligently do their duty. Every day they make this sacrifice, knowing they are risking their lives to protect our freedoms and spread democracy. The reason they do this is because they know they are building a safer Iraq and, simply put, a safer Iraq means a safer America for their families.

Ask these soldiers what they look forward to the most and what keeps them steadfast, and they will tell us it is news from home. It is the news from a graduation they were unable to attend, an update on a sick friend, a baby picture of their child's first step. Yet many are not getting this news or are getting it far after it was mailed by their loved ones. A General Accounting Office report received last month found that of a survey of over 100 service members in Iraq, more than half reported they were dissatisfied with mail delivery.

The report, issued in response to over 300 congressional and White House inquiries, also found the same problems that plagued the military postal system during Operation Desert Storm have continued unabated and are now being experienced in Operation Iraqi Freedom, more than 12 years later.

The Department of Defense does not have the ability to adequately assess the timeliness of mail and election ballot delivery because it does not yet have a reliable, accurate system in place.

More than half of sampled members of the Armed Forces were dissatisfied with mail delivery, many waiting 4 weeks or longer to receive mail.

The Military Postal Service Agency does not have the authority to formulate and effectively manipulate and implement a joint service solution to the mail problems in the Iraq Theater, and the Department of Defense has not appointed a single agency to address all of these military postal matters.

This is just unacceptable at this time. The very least we should be able to offer those soldiers fighting for democracy is the comfort of a note from those waiting at home. Mail that is delayed for long periods of time, or not delivered at all, negatively affects the morale of not only our deployed forces but also their families at home. Children at home need to hear why Mommy or Daddy is so far away. Husbands and wives need to hear of each others' love and support. The American public needs to hear the true stories of what we are doing in Iraq. It is now, while resolve against terrorism is being tested, that our deployed troops are in most need of mail from their loved ones.

This is not just a morale problem, however. November is coming and in less than 7 months, ballots for the general election will be mailed out all over the country to our troops all over the world.

If we fail to take action, we will again see the voting problems of the 2000 election. Our men and women on the front lines have unquestionably earned the right to express their views on the direction our Nation should take this November. They should have the same confidence of any other American that their ballot will reach the ballot box. It would be an enormous disservice to fail to count the voices of the very individuals fighting for democracy.

This is not a new problem. We saw it in Operation Desert Storm. It was evident early in the war in Iraq, and we are seeing it now. It is vitally important to the success of our mission and to the strength of our democracy that we correct this problem.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 608 seeks to do the following: call on the Department of Defense to immediately address the longstanding military mail delivery problems by implementing a joint task force to resolve the problem; recommend that the Secretary of Defense establish a system to expedite military ballots for the November 2004, election; call on the Secretary of Defense to establish a system to accurately track military postal transit times.

There are three important reasons why we need to pass this resolution today. First, we need to send a message to the Pentagon that it is time to take

care of this problem. The problem has existed for 52 years, and we need to send a message that we need to fix it today. Second, our troops in Iraq need to know that we think that it is important that they get their mail and equally important that their family members know that we care about their loved ones and that they get their mail. And third, we need to make certain that our electoral system is not just for Americans who happen to be near the ballot box, but that our troops on the front lines deserve to vote as much as any other American.

To guarantee that our military men and women in Iraq receive their mail will require shifting priorities. It will require the dedicated cooperation and swift action of many. But if we can root out Saddam Hussein, if we can rebuild a nation of terror into a nation of freedom, then we can get the troops the news they need from home. It is up to the Department of Defense to fix this longstanding problem, but we stand ready to help. We stand behind our troops and behind our military families, and we stand ready to help them stay the course.

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

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of House Resolution 608 introduced by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES). I would like to recognize the gentleman for his work and interest in ensuring that our military service members stationed overseas are afforded the right to vote.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize the gentlwoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) and the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), who joined with me in cosponsoring House Resolution 608. The postal service is an integral part of the American existence and something that we often take for granted. To the men and women in uniform serving overseas, however, it is a vital connection to home, and they treasure the ability to send and receive packages and letters.

This resolution, Mr. Speaker, draws attention to the continuing problem of ensuring that members of the Armed Forces stationed overseas have access to mail and that they will be able to send in their election ballots in a timely manner. It would be a real shame if our servicemen and women who are fighting to bring democracy to places like Afghanistan and Haiti were themselves denied the opportunity to cast their own vote in November due to a postal delay.

The 2000 Presidential election brought to the Nation's attention the voting barriers that service members and other Americans stationed or living overseas face in the electoral process. Service members living and deployed abroad often find it difficult to exercise their right to vote. Problems with mail delivery, requirements for valid ballots, and just obtaining information is a serious challenge, particularly for those who may be deployed on a submarine for 6 months or are stationed in remote areas around the world.

To ensure that voting rights of service members and Americans serving and living abroad were protected, Congress implemented a number of improvements to the voting process several years ago. The law was changed to improve the system and enhance the opportunity for overseas service members to participate in the electoral process. For example, clarification was provided on voting assistance programs; annual reviews of the effectiveness and compliance by the Department of Defense Inspector General are required; the importance of voting assistance officers was stressed; military personnel have been afforded guaranteed residency; voter registration and absentee ballot application procedures were simplified; and authority for service members to use a single application for all subsequent elections was provided.

However, Mr. Speaker, this year's annual review by the Department of Defense Inspector General found that while improvements have been made, opportunities exist to improve the DOD voting assistance program. The IG found that the Services need to continue to provide command emphasis and improve oversight of the program, as problems still remain.

The General Accounting Office, or more commonly referred to as GAO, also recently conducted a review of the mail delivery to troops serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom and found that while some improvements have been made, many, many of the same difficulties the mail system faced during the first Gulf War, over a decade ago, still exist today. For example, GAO found that problems still exist in conducting joint service mail operations and that inadequate training and late deployments, as well as inadequate postal facilities, equipment, and transportation, have had an adverse impact on the delivery of mail. My constituents often have particular difficulty getting mail delivered as the regular service to Guam is lengthy and erratic. In the field there is often confusion as to whether Guam is included in domestic mail rates, which of course it is.

I had one soldier e-mail me from Iraq, telling me he was made to pay for postage while everyone else was able to mail for free. These are the kinds of inconsistencies that the military postal service should examine and rectify.

While challenges still remain for overseas and military voters, it is interesting to note that absentee service members consistently vote at a higher rate than those eligible in the United States. However, it is vitally important that we ensure that those who volunteer to serve our Nation in uniform are able to exercise one of their most basic rights, and that, Mr. Speaker, is the right to vote.

As a member of the Total Force Subcommittee, I also want to reassure my colleagues that the subcommittee shares the concerns that are raised in this resolution, and we will address these issues in the defense authorization that will be marked up tomorrow.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her work on this resolution and her support today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY), the distinguished chairman of the Readiness Subcommittee of the House Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 608. Few things boast morale in a war zone more than receiving a card, a letter, or a care package from a loved one from back home. And, unfortunately, as more and more men and women in uniform are deployed in support of operations in Afghanistan and Iraqi Freedom, we are hearing countless stories of delays in service members receiving their mail.

On March 24 of this year, the General Accounting Office testified that some of the problems that existed during Operation Desert Storm in 1991 are occurring now in Iraq and Afghanistan. According to the GAO, the current system of delivering mail to service members relies on outmoded and labor-intensive manual sorting processes that result in undue delays. Furthermore, the Department of Defense is unable to track mail and determine the timeliness of deliveries. And since we have known of the problem for so long and we have not gotten it fixed, it tells me that it is not a very high priority of the Department of Defense; and I think that is what this resolution does, is tell the Department of Defense we think this is important and it ought to be a higher priority.

Compounding this situation is the issue of service members serving in war zones that are not able to vote, and we have heard other speakers before me talk about this, but it is serious and it is important. Currently 29 States require absentee ballots to be mailed and returned to the U.S. Postal Service. Since these service members will not be able to utilize fax machines or the Internet to send their ballots, and given the delays in the Department of Defense's mail service, there is a real possibility of a repeat of the military absentee ballot fiasco of the 2000 general election. The potential disenfranchisement of military voters is simply unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 608 would require the Secretary of Defense to establish a system that expedites the delivery of election ballots to members of the Armed Forces.

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Additionally, H. Res. 608 would require the Secretary of Defense to establish a mail delivery system that accurately tracks military postal transmit times, ensuring servicemembers will not have to wait weeks or months to receive a long-awaited letter or package from home.

Mr. Speaker, this is a problem that must be fixed now, both for the morale of the troops and to ensure that our service men and women are given every opportunity to exercise the voting rights they serve to defend. This is why I rise today in support of H. Res. 608.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I wish at this time to urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 608. I do want to take this opportunity to thank the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES) for sponsoring this resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I can just tell you this afternoon that if you asked any soldier, sailor, airman or Marine serving in the Iraq theater what is most important to the morale and welfare of our forces, the answer you will get from them, and you are likely to hear, is mail from home.

The very least our Nation can do for our servicemembers who are deployed halfway around the world risking their lives to protect our freedoms is to ensure that they are able to receive the comfort of a letter from those waiting at home. Now is when our deployed troops need to get mail from their loved ones most.

A recent Chicago Tribune article from May 6 gives real-life examples of why that is so important. One volunteer with Support our Troops Illinois knows the military postal service well. She has mailed out over 2,000 care packages to deployed servicemembers. Now, many of them are stacked up on her front doorstep because they were ''undeliverable.'' She said of the service that she has gotten from the military postal system, ''It is disappointing, because we know how much of a morale boost mail can give the guys.''

Another recent news article stated that the Marines look forward to the nightly mail call because for most it is the only way they can receive a word from home. The article goes on to quote a Marine who says, ''My wife sent me seven boxes, and I've only received one.'' He went on to say that ''the first letter I received from my wife was number six. Since then, I have received five and seven, but I have no idea what happened to the rest.''

Mail that is delayed for long periods of time or not delivered at all negatively affects the morale of not only our deployed forces, but also their families at home. We owe it to our deployed troops to immediately improve the military postal system so that these problems do not continue. We heard from the gentleman from Colorado the importance of getting this fixed for the voting issues that will come up.

Mr. Speaker, I will just close by telling you that this is a problem that began the year I was born. In 1952 a letter from President Harry S. Truman to Congress clearly echoed the challenges that we face still today. He said this: ''Many of those in uniform are serving overseas, or in parts of the country distant from their homes. They are unable to return to their States, either to register or to vote. Yet these men and women who are serving their country and in many cases risking their lives deserve above all others to exercise the right to vote in the election year. At a time when these young men and women are defending our country and its free institutions, the least we at home can do is to make sure that they are able to enjoy the rights they are being asked to fight to preserve.''

Mr. Speaker, it is time to pass this resolution and to correct this problem. I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 608 which states that it is in the interest of the United States to immediately resolve longstanding military mail delivery problems so that our Armed Forces may properly receive their mail and that their participation in the 2004 elections be ensured. Proper mail delivery is a hallmark of our nation, it a form of infrastructure that allows our nation to communicate freely. Therefore, we cannot allow our Armed Forces to have a mail delivery system that is in any way inferior to the one provided to all other Americans.

I want to thank Representative FORBES of the Armed Services Committee for bringing this matter to the floor. There are many reasons why proper mail delivery is essential for our Armed Forces. The most evident reason is that the members of our Armed Forces deserve to know that their correspondence is secure. The transmittal and receipt of mail is the most basic link that our brave men and women fighting abroad have to their loved ones back home. Often, due to the rigors of their duty, mail is the only form of communication our soldiers have access to. Furthermore, our Armed Forces often have lives back home that they leave to fight abroad. This means they have affairs they must put in order and again the mail is the most commonly used way to attend to these affairs. Of course, it is more difficult to ensure proper mail delivery to our Armed Forces since many of them are stationed abroad and often in places of conflict. However, while ensuring proper mail delivery to our Armed Forces is more difficult, it is far from impossible. Indeed, it is frustrating that while private mail delivery companies can guarantee international delivery of packages within a matter of a few days we cannot ensure proper delivery of mail to our men and women fighting abroad.

Perhaps more disturbing than the idea of personal correspondence being mishandled, is the idea that members of our Armed Forces could effectively be excluded from participating in the upcoming elections because of a questionable mail delivery system. Members of the Armed Forces stationed abroad must vote by absentee ballots, which require proper mail delivery in order to guarantee that those votes are counted. Especially after witnessing the closely contested 2000 Presidential elections in which absentee ballots played a major role, it is inconceivable that we would allow a weakness in the system to continue. Just like every other American, members of our Armed Forces, both foreign and domestic, have a right to know that both their mail and their ballot are secure and accounted for.

It is time that we fully modernize the system being used to deliver and receive mail to our Armed Forces. The current system is often unreliable and highly labor intensive. In fact, the current system does not even allow us to know how much mail goes undelivered. Our Armed Forces deserve better; furthermore, they need a better system, for the effective flow of communication is essential in all sectors and the Armed Forces are no different. It is time that we help create a more modern and effective postal system for our Armed Forces.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 608.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. FORBES. 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.

MARY ANN COLLURA POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3939) to redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 14–24 Abbott Road in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, as the ''Mary Ann Collura Post Office Building''.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3939

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

SECTION 1. REDESIGNATION.

The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 14–24 Abbott Road in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, and known as the Fair Lawn Main Post Office, shall be known and designated as the ''Mary Ann Collura Post Office Building''.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Mary Ann Collura Post Office Building''.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3939.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3939. This legislation is naming a post office in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, after Officer Mary Ann Collura. She was the first woman to serve as an officer in the Fair Lawn Police Department. H.R. 3939 fittingly honors the tremendous service of an individual fallen peace officer.

Officer Collura was an outstanding 18-year veteran of the Fair Lawn Police Department and a respected community role model. On April 17, 2003, Officer Collura was called in to back up fellow officers involved in a chase with three young men in a car. The chase fatally ended outside a Fair Lawn church as one of the men shot Officer Collura in the chest after she pursued the men on foot. The assailant then stole Officer Collura's patrol car and drove over her body as he made his escape.

Mr. Speaker, everyone in the Fair Lawn area who knew Officer Collura knew she served her community with the highest esteem. Earlier this spring, as steps were being taken to ensure a proper memorial for Officer Collura, the local journal, the Fair Lawn News, quoted a local resident who emotionally said, ''I knew her. She was superior as an officer and as a person.''

Mr. Speaker, Officer Collura's heartbreaking story even attracted President Bush's attention. At the Peace Officers' Memorial Day Service outside this Capitol last year on May 15, the President mentioned Officer Collura as a law enforcement officer who tragically lost her life in the past year.

The President cited a quote from one of Officer Collura's fellow officers, who later said about her, ''There are probably 100 cops like this who did everything right and still have their names on the wall,'' of the National Law Enforcement Memorial. The Officer went on to say, ''You put your faith in the hands of God every day when you go out there.''

Mr. Speaker, the wicked events of April 17, 2003, remind all of us of the dangers of police work. Officers of the peace, like Mary Ann Collura, earn our perpetual respect each and every day for their brave efforts to protect all of us.

This post office naming will posthumously commemorate Officer Mary Ann Collura's service to our Nation. Unquestionably, this is a highly warranted honor, and I strongly urge all Members to support the bill's passage.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN) for his meaningful work on H.R. 3939.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Committee on Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleague in consideration of H.R. 3939, legislation naming the postal facility in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, after Mary Ann Collura. This measure was introduced by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN) on March 11, 2004, and unanimously reported by our committee on April 1, 2004. It enjoys the support and cosponsorship of the entire New Jersey delegation.

Officer Mary Ann Collura was a dedicated police officer, a woman who made a difference in her hometown of Fair Lawn, New Jersey. According to news accounts, Mary Ann had wanted to become a police officer since junior high school. She was 25 when she joined the force, and served for 18 years until her tragic death.

On April 17, 2003, Officer Collura was fatally shot while helping a fellow officer arrest three suspects after a car chase.

Officer Collura was an active and devoted member of the Fair Lawn Police Department. She loved her work and looked forward to helping those in need. Designating the post office in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, is an excellent way to honor the memory of Officer Mary Ann Collura.

Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague for sponsoring this measure and urge swift passage of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this Saturday, May 15, nearly 20,000 peace officers are expected to gather in Washington D.C. to honor their fallen comrades for National Peace Officers Memorial Day. In keeping with this sentiment today, this body will pay tribute to one of the 166 police officers killed annually in the line of duty.

By redesignating the Fair Lawn post office as the Mary Ann Collura Post Office Building, we honor the life of Officer Mary Ann Collura and the extraordinary sacrifice she made to protect her community.

I would like to thank my esteemed colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN), for introducing this legislation. This legislation has special significance for me because Officer Collura was the aunt of my campaign manager, Scott Snyder. After having had the opportunity to hear Scott speak about his aunt, I have greater appreciation for this extraordinary woman and how tragic it is she has been taken from this world far too soon.

Though I have never had the opportunity to meet her, I am humbled by the remarkable life she led. One family member remarked to me, ''Mary Ann was a 6-foot tall female cop who loved motorcycles and taught me how to throw a baseball. But when I look in the mirror and see our resemblance, I can't help but judge myself against her standards, knowing that if I come close, that means I have achieved something great with my own life.''

Through the thousands of stories that have been told about her deeds and personality, the one ringing truth is that she represented a person we all long to be. She was the kind of warm person that could light up faces with a smile, the virtuous type that viewed everyone around her as a potential friend, and the forgiving type of person that can truly see the best in the worst of us. She accomplished this without even knowing, without the official commitment or the sacred vows. She lived from her heart.

Over the course of her career, Officer Collura had received numerous rewards, including a departmental Meritorious Service Award and the Hackensack University Medical Center EMS Excellence Award for her life-saving skills. Furthermore, she had received numerous commendation letters from the community for her prompt, courteous, and thoughtful service.

After dutifully serving for 18 years on the Fair Lawn Police Department, Officer Collura was fatally shot on April 17, 2003, in the line of duty. She was only 43 years old.

Mary Ann did not begin a life of aiding others when she became a police officer. She became a police officer so she could make a living doing what she really had already done, being our protector. For those who knew her, Mary Ann lived by her own rules; and though her death tore deep in the hearts of so many people who continue to grieve, it was her way: on the job, protecting her fellow officers and protecting all of us.

Thanks to the courageous acts of people like Officer Mary Ann Collura, countless Americans can go about their daily lives in a freer and safer society. Police Officer Collura's tragic death should serve as a reminder to all of us how fortunate we are to have such heroic individuals looking over us.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from the Ninth District of New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN), the author of this legislation.

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

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois for yielding me time. I thank our chairman, the

gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS), and I thank our ranking member, the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN), for moving this bill so expeditiously through the House. And I thank our fellow Senators from the other body for their cosponsoring of my legislation in that body as well.

I rise in support of H.R. 3939, a bill to rename the main post office in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, the town I live in, within my district, as the Mary Ann Collura Post Office.

It has been a year since we lost Mary Ann, who served on the Fair Lawn Police Force for 18 years. She was the first female police officer in Fair Lawn history. She was killed in the line of duty on April 17, 2003.

Mary Ann was backing up another police officer from the district of the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), Steven Farrell, who was in the course of arresting three men charged with robbery following a car chase that ended outside a church in Fair Lawn, New Jersey.

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It was at that point that Officer Farrell was wounded and Officer Collura was fatally wounded.

Throughout her life, as the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) so eloquently said, Mary Ann embodied what is best about the people in our communities in New Jersey, and perhaps in all of America. She was kind, she was generous, she was courageous, she was a pioneer, and she was a person who truly cared about her community. She was the kind of a police officer who all the kids in the school system knew they could go to if they had a problem, especially a problem that they felt uncomfortable talking to their teachers or their parents about. She was a pioneer. She grew up always wanting to be a police officer, and when she got sworn in, it was the happiest, most proud day of her life. There was no obstacle that would stand in her way. She was going to protect the people of Fair Lawn, New Jersey.

She had this special desire, among many other things, innovations of hers, to protect kids during Halloween. So she spearheaded the effort to give each child in Fair Lawn, New Jersey a glow stick so that while they were walking through the streets trick-or-treating, they could be seen by people driving their cars and perhaps their parents following somewhat behind since, of course, it is very embarrassing, as my children say, to be walking with your own children, or have your own parents walking with you. That led, as a matter of fact, to my reintroducing a bill to move daylight savings time one week later after Halloween so that kids could trick-or-treat in an extra hour of daylight.

But it was Mary Ann's love for her community and love for those children that put forth that particular effort and made her a mentor, a mentor to young police officers, men and women, who saw her as a true leader.

She loved motorcycles, and the day after her memorial service, 2,500 police officers, and others, 2,500 motorcyclists rode through Fair Lawn, New Jersey in honor of Mary Ann Collura. It was a sight to behold.

To commemorate the life of Mary Ann Collura and her outstanding service to the people of the community of Fair Lawn, New Jersey, I introduced legislation to rename the Fair Lawn Post Office the Mary Ann Collura Post Office at Fair Lawn, New Jersey, so that when future generations who never had the privilege of knowing her or never read the stories about her, when a child walks into the post office in the future with their mom or their dad, they would say, Mommy or Daddy, why is this plaque here? Who was Mary Ann Collura? And then the story of Mary Ann Collura, her bravery, her great service to the people of Fair Lawn would be retold from generation to generation and onward ever forward, because she truly was a great role model, not just for young women, but for everyone.

As we come together to celebrate National Police Week and National Peace Officers Memorial Day this Thursday, we remember that in life and death, Mary Ann Collura and so many other fallen officers remind us of a difference that one person can make in making this world a safer and better place. We know that Mary Ann is looking down upon us from heaven, and that while Fair Lawn and the people of Fair Lawn may have lost one of their bravest protectors, they have gained and the world has gained another angel.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for this piece of legislation, and I know that the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) joins with me and will have some remarks as well.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers at this time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he might consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) from the Eighth District.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in very strong support of H.R. 3939. This bill is to redesignate a postal facility in Fair Lawn, New Jersey in honor of Mary Ann Collura, a wonderful, wonderful woman who I knew personally, a brave officer who was shot down in the line of duty while protecting her hometown and coming to the assistance of another police officer from another town. She was in every sense of the word a first responder all the time, every day.

I want to congratulate my neighboring Congressman, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN), on moving this forward.

Mary Ann Collura defied the odds. She lived her dream by becoming Fair Lawn's first female law enforcement officer. She set her mind to doing it, and she did it.

Officer Collura was a credit to her community, partly because she broke the mold by becoming that first female police officer, and partly because she served an impressive 18 years. But her greatest quality was her attachment and proven dedication to the community of Fair Lawn. She grew up there. She knew that community, and she loved it, and they loved her. No citizen can ask for more from their community police officers.

This was a woman whose service was not restricted by the hours that she worked. When Mary Ann Collura was in Fair Lawn, on duty or not on duty, the public could depend on her vigilance. Many in my town of Patterson knew all about how she cared. We even called her ''Ma.''

Some of my favorite stories about Mary Ann's heroism revolve around her willingness to face fires. Though she was not a firefighter, Mary Ann had that firefighter instinct, was never hesitant to enter a burning building in order to protect her community. She once saved an elderly woman that was trapped in a burning house following a cooking accident.

On April 17, 2003, the day Mary Ann was killed, she was assisting an officer from Clifton, New Jersey, police officer Steven Farrell. Once the apprehended suspect left the district and reached Fair Lawn, the suspect abandoned his car and started to run by foot. Officer Farrell and Officer Collura attempted to pursue and arrest the suspect. Four shots were fired, both officers were shot, but it was Officer Collura who suffered fatal wounds.

Mary Ann Collura's story is humbling. I will never forget the help that she lent to Officer Farrell and the Clifton Police Department. Officer Collura made the ultimate sacrifice to ensure the safety of her loving community, and it is for this that we honor her.

Naming a post office after Officer Collura is only a small token of our deep appreciation. It is my hope that the redesignation will provide that her name and inspiring story will always be remembered.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the House to pass this fitting tribute to Officer Collura. As the story that the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN) shared with me earlier this afternoon, someday in the future, that little child will be walking past this Post Office with his parents and will ask, what is that name all about, and the parents will know and will tell the story of Mary Ann Collura.

God bless her and her family, and God bless this Congress.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is clear from the comments of my colleagues from New Jersey that Mary Ann Collura is indeed a legend in her community and surrounding areas.

Mr. Speaker, we have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I have been touched as well by all of the comments about Mary Ann Collura. Sometimes an incident happens like that in a State and in the Nation that touches everybody and, certainly, naming this Post Office after this fantastic American is an appropriate thing.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of the Members to support the passage of H.R. 3939.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PUTNAM). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3939.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DR. MIGUEL A. NEVAREZ POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4299) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 410 South Jackson Road in Edinburg, Texas, as the ''Dr. Miguel A. Nevarez Post Office Building''.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4299

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

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF DR. MIGUEL A. NEVÁREZ POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 410 South Jackson Road in Edinburg, Texas, shall be known and designated as the ''Dr. Miguel A. Nevárez 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 ''Dr. Miguel A Nevárez Post Office Building''.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Committee on Government Reform, I rise in support of H.R. 4299 that designates a post office in Edinburg, Texas as the ''Dr. Miguel A. Nevarez Post Office Building.'' All of the members of the Texas State delegation have cosponsored this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Miguel Nevarez has been president of the University of Texas-Pan American in Edinburg for the last 23 years. In 1981, Dr. Nevarez inherited a small university of only 8,000 students. But today, UT-Pan American boasts more than 15,000 students and 600 faculty members. Dr. Nevarez's 23 years of service makes him the longest-serving Hispanic university or college president in the entire Nation.

A distinguished educator, Dr. Nevarez is a vice-chair of the Council of Public University Presidents and Chancellors, and he is a member of the American Council of Education and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Nevarez retires this Friday, May 14. President Nevarez led his final spring commencement exercises just last weekend, as over 1,200 students from UT-Pan American received their degrees. House passage of this legislation will provide Dr. Nevarez and his family with a timely honor for his contributions to all past, current, and future students of UT-Pan American.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support H.R. 4299.

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

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 Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleague in consideration of H.R. 4299, legislation naming a postal facility in Edinburg, Texas after Dr. Miguel A. Nevarez.

This measure, which was introduced by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) on May 6, 2004 enjoys the support and cosponsorship of the Texas delegation.

Dr. Miguel A. Nevarez has served as President of the University of Texas-Pan American for 23 years. The University of Texas-Pan American is the leading institution serving underserved and underrepresented students in the south Texas community. The university is home to a high concentration of Hispanic students. Currently Hispanic enrollment is 87 percent of the student body.

Throughout his tenure as president of the university, Dr. Nevarez has made a difference in his community and profession by providing and improving higher educational opportunities to south Texas residents. For his efforts, Dr. Nevarez has received numerous accolades. He was named Outstanding Educator by President Reagan in 1985, and has worked closely with many United States Presidents on education reform and Hispanic education initiatives.

□ 1515

Dr. Nevarez has testified in Congress on the contributions of America's Hispanic-serving institutions. He has been named one of the 100 Influential Hispanics by Hispanic Business Magazine and has been credited with creating a Hispanic middle class in south Texas.

Dr. Miguel A. Nevarez is retiring this year. By way of recognizing his many years of dedicated service, the university is hosting a special dinner on May 14, 2004, in his honor.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join my colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA), in honoring the enormous educational and professional contributions of Dr. Nevarez. Designating the post office in Edinburg, Texas, is an excellent way to pay tribute to Dr. Miguel A. Nevarez.

I urge swift passage of this bill.

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, we have no other speakers at this moment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he might consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA), the sponsor of this bill, from the 15th Congressional District of Texas.

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

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4299, a bill that will rename the post office in Edinburg, Texas, home of the University of Texas Pan American, in honor of Dr. Miguel A. Nevarez. I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Chairman TOM DAVIS) and the gentleman from California (Ranking Member WAXMAN) for their assistance in bringing this legislation to the floor so quickly.

I want to congratulate and thank one of the great modern heroes of south Texas, Dr. Miguel A. Nevarez, my good friend, who is retiring this year from the presidency of the University of Texas Pan American.

Dr. Miguel A. Nevarez has presided over a sea change in south Texas. His leadership of the University of Texas Pan American has transformed the region. In fact, he laid the infrastructure that will transform south Texas.

Dr. Nevarez has guided this institution from the days when this was still a position called Associate Dean of Men and only 8,000 students, many in remedial education, to today when UTPA is a full-fledged research institution, offering 56 undergraduate programs, 42 master's programs and three doctoral programs. Today, in 2004, UTPA enrolls over 15,000 students.

The growth and development of south Texas are inextricably linked to the growth and development of UTPA. Dr. Nevarez has risen to the challenge and has made south Texas and its south Texans proud. He has mentored faculties, students, and administrators.

He has built the capacity of the institution both physically and intellectually. UTPA is one of the most beautiful and well-equipped campuses in the State of Texas, and it is on the cutting edge in new research and technologies.

As UTPA has matured, so has south Texas. This is a dynamic region with dramatic growth in population and jobs in all areas of economic activity; and UTPA, with Dr. Nevarez as the university president, is at the center of it all. This is his legacy.

Furthermore, Dr. Nevarez has been the longest-serving Hispanic president of a college or university. He was one of the pioneers that paved the way for Federal support for Hispanic-serving institutions. His leadership and advocacy on behalf of HSIs helped create a specific designation in the 1998 higher education reauthorization. This designation has resulted in increased Federal funding by all Federal agencies for HSIs nationwide. These colleges and universities open the doors of higher education to half of the Latinos attending college in the country.

Dr. Nevarez's leadership has laid the foundation for the educational advancement of the fastest-growing, largest minority group in the country, Hispanic Americans. Raising the level of educational attainment for the Hispanic community is of paramount importance to our future security and prosperity.

I want to also acknowledge and recognize Dr. Nevarez's family. First, his beautiful wife Blanca Medina Nevarez who has been a very loving and strong supporter of her husband. Second, I have seen his three children, Miguel III, Annette and Marc, who have had to share their father with so many people. His duties and responsibilities may have kept him from participating in some important family gatherings, but rest assured that his family's sacrifices have not gone unnoticed. I thank them for supporting Miguel's efforts.

I am happy for my friend. He has earned his retirement. He has given so much of himself to the great State of Texas, to the Hispanic community, and to our great Nation. His efforts and his accomplishments will long be remembered. The post office in Edinburg, Texas, an all-American city, shall bear the name of Dr. Miguel A. Nevarez. He is ready to pass the mantle of leadership for UTPA and south Texas as we move into the 21st century; and thanks to him, we are ready.

Que Dios le bendiga! May God bless you.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he might consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT), a representative from the 10th Congressional District of Texas.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Though we honor the life's work of Dr. Miguel Nevarez by designating a post office with his name, his real legacy is reflected in the lives and the careers of the students that he has helped for over a quarter of a century with his leadership and service, mostly as president of UT Pan American.

Dr. Nevarez is the first Hispanic president of UT Pan Am and the longest seated Hispanic president of any four-year institution of higher learning. He has a total of over 30 years of service to UT Pan Am, including his tenure as a professor in the education department, associate dean of men, vice president for student and university affairs and, of course, as president and leader of the university.

Dr. Nevarez has repeatedly been recognized for his leadership, including being named one of the ''100 Most Influential Hispanics in America'' and as one of the ''50 Most Influential Hispanics in Business Technology.'' His commitment to education has fundamentally and forever changed not only the Rio Grande Valley but elsewhere across our Nation as UT Pan Am graduates have assumed positions of leadership.

It is not surprising to any of us who have worked with Dr. Nevarez that, after a much-deserved sabbatical, he will be returning to work with Dr. Velma Menchaca and the outstanding faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership. There, he will return to teaching, and he will be working primarily with the doctoral and master's programs involving higher education, organizational behavior and organizational management, programs that came into being through his leadership as the president at UT Pan American.

Just as the commencements that we are celebrating across America represent both an end and a beginning, so does this announcement by Dr. Nevarez. The opportunity is there for us to step up to the challenge of giving students all the education for which each is willing to work. We can honor this legacy of Dr. Nevarez not only by the quite appropriate naming of a post office down the street in his honor, but by giving our public institutions of higher learning the financial support that they need to do the job to which he has dedicated his life, and particularly, in preparing our students for quality jobs upon graduation, by giving them the financial assistance that they deserve.

With the overwhelming majority of students at UT Pan American qualifying for student financial assistance, but with too many unable to receive the assistance that they need at current funding levels, it would be particularly appropriate to honor Dr. Nevarez with the further tribute of extending and expanding that financial assistance. I believe that we must double the maximum amount of Pell Grants in order to achieve that objective.

Dr. Nevarez already has the grateful thanks of a community that he has served for decades. Today, as we designate this post office with his name, this body, the United States Congress, affirms our gratitude for his life's work in service, not just to the Rio Grande Valley but to our entire Nation in developing the leaders who will guide our country in the future.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he might consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ).

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity also to rise on behalf of the Texas delegation and congratulate the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) on these efforts.

Let me share with my colleagues that H.R. 4299, which designates the facility of the United States Post Office that will be located at 410 South Jackson Road in Edinburg, Texas, as the Dr. Miguel A. Nevarez Post Office Building, is fitting and proper.

Let me just say that I had the opportunity to serve in the Texas House for 11 years in the higher education committee; and during that period of time, I had the opportunity to work with the doctor there, and there is no doubt that his tenacity, his perseverance, and his dedication were displayed.

I also want to take this opportunity to congratulate him on the efforts not only at Pan Am but in higher education throughout Texas. During that period of time, we have found ourselves in Texas in the crossroads of lacking a lot of resources, and one way was to start capping enrollment and was to begin to expand the opportunities for south Texas; and I know Dr. Nevarez was there for us as a whole, making sure that those opportunities were there.

When we started to sue the State of Texas during that time, he was there to make sure that we followed through; and the results of those efforts resulted in a piece of legislation that allowed opportunities for the expansion not only at Texas Pan Am but also the 4-year institution at Brownsfield, the 4-year institution at Downtown San Antonio, the 4-year institution at Corpus Christi, the 4-year institution at Laredo, the expansion at A&I in Kingsville and others.

□ 1530

And he played a significant role in those efforts.

So I rise today in support of the naming of the United States Post Office for Dr. Miguel Nevarez and to congratulate his service.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to advise my colleague that I have no further requests for time. I would simply congratulate the gentleman for his introduction of the bill and urge its passage.

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I urge all Members to support the passage of H.R. 4299. I also understand that Dr. Nevarez will actually be an honoree at a dinner reception on Friday night in McAllen, Texas. And certainly on behalf of all the Members of this body, I want to thank and wish Dr. Nevarez the very best in his retirement, and I specifically want to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) for introducing this legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PUTNAM). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4299.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

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.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 622) supporting the goals and ideals of Peace Officers Memorial Day.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 622

Whereas the well-being of all people of the United States is preserved and enhanced as a direct result of the vigilance and dedication of law enforcement personnel;

Whereas more than 957,500 law enforcement personnel, the highest amount ever in the United States, serve their fellow citizens as guardians of peace;

Whereas peace officers are on the front line in preserving the right of the children of the United States to receive an education in a crime-free environment, a right that is all too often threatened by the insidious fear caused by violence in schools;

Whereas 145 peace officers across the Nation were killed in the line of duty during 2003, well below the decade-long average of 166 deaths annually, and a major drop from 2001 when 230 officers were killed, including 72 officers in the September 11th terrorist attacks;

Whereas every year, 1 out of every 9 peace officers is assaulted, 1 out of every 25 peace officers is injured, and 1 out of every 4,400 peace officers is killed in the line of duty;

Whereas section 136 of title 36, United States Code, requests that the President issue each year a proclamation designating May 15 as Peace Officers Memorial Day in honor of Federal, State, and local officers killed or disabled in the line of duty; and

Whereas on May 15, 2004, more than 20,000 peace officers are expected to gather in Washington, D.C. to join with the families of their recently fallen comrades to honor those comrades and all others who went before them: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Peace Officers Memorial Day to honor Federal, State, and local peace officers killed or disabled in the line of duty; and

(2) calls upon the people of the United States to observe such a day with appropriate ceremonies and respect.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Res. 622, the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 622 supports the goals and the ideals of Peace Officers Memorial Day. This Saturday, May 15, is Peace Officers Memorial Day, a day that serves as an important remembrance of Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials who were killed or disabled in the line of duty during the past year.

According to the text of the resolution, 145 peace officers were killed during 2003. Mr. Speaker, remarkably, nearly 1 million Americans serve their country in some law enforcement capacity today. Their daily professions remain inherently dangerous, therefore all Americans must recognize and cherish their contributions to our liberty and to our security.

Mr. Speaker, this week is National Police Week, which occurs each year during the calendar week in which Peace Officers Memorial Day falls. Thousands of law enforcement personnel and their families will attend several events in the Washington, D.C. area during this week, culminating with the 23rd annual National Peace Officers Memorial Day services at noon on Saturday, May 15, at the west front of this revered building, the United States Capitol building.

We all owe our Nation's peace officers a tremendous debt of gratitude for their commitment to the safety of every citizen. Therefore, today, I am pleased the House is considering House Resolution 622 during this meaningful and somber week for those who defend our homeland.

Mr. Speaker, I highly commend the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) for shepherding House Resolution 622 to the floor today. Primarily, I wish to thank him for his work to recognize the sacrifices of the men and women of American law enforcement.

This is a solemn piece of legislation, and I encourage every Member of the House to support it.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, each day, police officers nobly protect our families, friends, and neighbors from crime. While it is impossible to suitably thank these brave Americans for the tremendous sacrifices they make, we pause to salute them for their courage, dedication, and service, and to pay our respects to those who have fallen in the line of duty. Peace officers work to improve the quality of life for all of us. For that, they deserve our sincere appreciation and our respect.

Every year, one out of every nine peace officers is assaulted, one out of every 25 is injured, and one out of every 4,400 is killed. In the last year alone, 145 police officers were killed in the line of duty. And while this number reflects a decrease in officers killed, each death is a tragedy and a loss to the community, and especially to the families.

Sergeant Philip J. O'Reilly of Chicago was killed in an automobile accident while on patrol at 5 a.m. Sunday, March 16, 2003. Sergeant O'Reilly was assigned to the Foster Avenue Police District and had been with the Chicago Police Department for 16 years. He is survived by his wife, six children, and seven siblings.

Sergeant O'Reilly's fellow officers remember him as a devoted officer, a tremendous father, and a great man. It is our duty as Americans to honor the service of men and women like Sergeant O'Reilly who made the ultimate sacrifice so that we may all sleep a little easier at night knowing that our community and our world is a safer place.

On Saturday, May 20, Sergeant O'Reilly's name will be among the 362 fallen officers who will be officially added to a memorial at a candlelight vigil. I support the goals and ideals of Police Officers Memorial Day to honor Federal, State, and local peace officers killed or disabled in the line of duty. And I call upon the people of the United States to observe such a day with appropriate ceremonies and respect.

You can never give more than your life, and these men and women give the very best of what they have.

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY), the sponsor of this resolution.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time, and I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) for pushing this through in time for the actual memorial.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the more than 20,000 peace officers from around the country who will come to Washington, D.C. this next week, and in fact all the peace officers, the 1 million or so peace officers of one kind or another throughout the Nation. They are coming for National Police Week to commemorate the lives, as we have already heard, the 145 peace officers who died last year in the line of duty.

Today, we recognize May 15 as National Peace Officers Memorial Day and pay tribute to the commitment, sacrifice, and public safety services these officers provide for all Americans on a daily basis.

As we all know, September 11, 2001 stands out as one of the most tragic days in American history. On that fateful Tuesday, we lost 72 police officers, the largest loss of law enforcement personnel in a single day in our Nation's history. While September 11 offered an extreme glimpse of law enforcement's services and sacrifice, similar acts of heroism, individual acts of heroism and valor, are performed every day in every community by police officers across our great Nation.

Last year, more than 145 officers are killed in the line of duty nationwide, and, thankfully, these police officers killed last year is well below the decade-long average of 166 deaths, and slightly less than in 2002. The deaths have decreased in each of the last 2 years, and, hopefully, this is a lasting trend.

Peace officers in every community have an admirable record of services and sacrifice, yet too many Americans lack true understanding and appreciation, I feel, of law enforcement's work. That is why I worked a few years ago to help establish the National Law Enforcement Museum in Washington, D.C., and this week, 362 names of brave men and women will be added to the memorial, 145 from 2003 and 217 from prior years.

Unlike most other jobs, peace officers face unprecedented risks while bravely protecting our communities and our freedoms. I hope my colleagues will join me today in paying tribute to our Nation's fallen officers and expressing our gratitude for the work these men and women perform.

We feel very strongly here in the Congress, I think, about paying honor to the brave men and women in uniform. And when we say that, we usually mean those that serve in the Armed Services of our country. But there are other brave men and women in uniform we need to pay tribute to, and that is why I offer this resolution today.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I would simply congratulate the gentleman from Colorado for his introduction of this legislation and urge its passage.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I also want to thank the gentleman from Colorado for his work on House Resolution 622. It is a great piece of legislation, and I urge its adoption.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the well-being of all people of the United States is preserved and enhanced as a direct result of the vigilance and dedication of law enforcement personnel. More than 957,500 law enforcement personnel, the highest amount ever in the United States, serve their fellow citizens as guardians of peace.

Peace officers are on the front line in preserving the right of the children of the United States to receive an education in a crime-free environment, a right that is all too often threatened by the insidious fear caused by violence in schools. 145 peace officers across the Nation were killed in the line of duty during 2003, well below the decade-long average of 166 deaths annually, and a major drop from 2001 when 230 officers were killed, including 72 officers in the September 11 terrorist attacks.

As chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I express my deep appreciation for what the Peace Officers do support the children of America, by focusing on crimes against our children. Every year, 1 out of every 9 peace officers is assaulted, 1 out of every 25 peace officers is injured, and 1 out of every 4,400 peace officers is killed in the line of duty.

On May 15, 2004, more than 20,000 peace officers are expected to gather in Washington, D.C. to join with the families of their recently fallen comrades to honor those comrades and all others who went before them. I am pleased to be joined by my colleagues in the House of Representatives to support the goals and ideals of Peace Officers Memorial Day to honor Federal, State, and local peace officers killed or disabled in the line of duty. Also, I want to call upon the people of the United States to observe such a day with appropriate ceremonies and respect.

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of House Resolution 622, "Supporting the Goals and Ideals of Peace Officers Memorial Day." Now more than ever our nation relies on the valor and commitment of our peace officers to protect our families and communities each day and in times of crisis. I am privileged to know many fine police officers, including my Uncle Les, a dedicated and long time officer with the Chicago Police Department.

Last year, 145 police officers were killed in the line of duty. While this is a significant drop from previous years, the death of any officer is a tragedy and loss felt deeply in our communities. I join with my colleagues in honoring the memory and sacrifices of these heroes, and I applaud the continued service of law enforcement and all public safety workers who face danger every day to protect our streets and our schools.

As Members of Congress, we have a responsibility to support our nation's law enforcement officers and supply them with all of the tools and resources they need to ensure their safety and ours. Our support means action, not just empty rhetoric. The men and women in blue have asked us to take action on renewing the 1994 Assault Weapons Ban, set to expire on September 13th. Indeed, a broad coalition of law enforcement advotates, including the membership of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Association of Police Organizations, the International Brotherhood of Police Officers, and the American Probation and Parole Association are among many others who have urged Congress to pass an extension of this legislation, which has proven an effective and life-saving law. To date, their call for this common sense remedy to gun crimes has gone unanswered.

These organizations and the police officers they represent support the ban because it works. Before the 1994 Assault Weapons ban, one in five police officers killed in the line of duty were attacked with assault weapons. The year after the ban passed, that figure dropped to zero. This single statistic speaks volumes for its effectiveness. Another case in point: In 1991, assault weapons were used in eight percent all gun crimes. By 2003 it was only one percent. If we allow the ban to expire, our peace officers will be subjected to the proliferation of assault weapons and their lives will be needlessly placed in greater danger.

This past Sunday—Mothers Day 2003—thousands of women gathered on the west lawn of the Capitol to mourn the death of children lost to gun violence. This coming Saturday, 20,000 peace officers will gather at the same place to remember their fallen brothers and sisters. What better way to express our support for them than by renewing the assault weapons ban. I believe Congress should go a step further by closing the gun show loophole and enacting sensible safety protections. We owe it to the families of our fallen heroes to pass these life-savings measures.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Gentleman from Colorado for introducing this important resolution, and I urge my colleagues to vote for it. I also urge the leadership to bring the Assault Weapons Ban to the floor for a vote. That would be the most meaningful and effective demonstration of our support and to honor America's peace officers and their invaluable role in the safety of our families and communities.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 622.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

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.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF VIETNAM HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to resolution (H. Res. 613)

recognizing and honoring the tenth anniversary of Vietnam Human Rights Day.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 613

Whereas May 11, 2004, is the 14th anniversary of the issuance of the Manifesto of the Non-Violent Movement for Human Rights in Vietnam and the tenth anniversary of Vietnam Human Rights Day, as designated on May 11, 1994, by Public Law 103–258;

Whereas Vietnam Human Rights Day recognizes the important contributions of the author of the Manifesto, Dr. Nguyen Dan Que, and uncounted numbers of innocent Vietnamese, including religious leaders and ethnic minorities who have been tortured, imprisoned, or held under house arrest by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam because of their nonviolent struggle for freedom and human rights;

Whereas the Manifesto, which calls upon Hanoi to respect basic human rights, accept a multiparty system, and restore the right of the Vietnamese people to choose their own form of government through free and fair elections, reflects the will and aspirations of the people of Vietnam;

Whereas the leaders of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam are expanding diplomatic and trade relations with the rest of the world; and

Whereas the United States, as leader of the free world, has a special responsibility to safeguard freedom and promote the protection of human rights throughout the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) honors and recognizes the 10th anniversary of Vietnam Human Rights Day;

(2) supports the designation of a ''Vietnam Human Rights Day''; and

(3) urges all Americans to share in this commemoration so as to have a greater appreciation of the role Vietnam Human Rights Day has played in helping to defend and further the liberties and freedom of all Vietnamese people.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Res. 613, the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago, the Congress designated May 11, 1994, as Vietnam Human Rights Day through a joint resolution that became Public Law 103–258. The resolution was introduced in response to the issuance of the Manifesto of the Nonviolent Movement For Human Rights in Vietnam. That manifesto, written by the great human rights leader Dr. Nguyen Dan Que, intended to push pressure on the Socialist regime in Hanoi to respect the human rights of all Vietnamese citizens.

This is the tenth anniversary of the Vietnam Human Rights Day, which is the focus of House Resolution 622, before us today. The distinguished chairman of the Committee on Government Reform, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS), brought forth this important resolution, and I commend him for introducing this important measure.

Mr. Speaker, while progress has been made in the fight for a free and democratic Vietnam, the regime there continues to imprison, to attack, torture, kill, and otherwise persecute many of those who publicly express their views. This resolution aims to generate valuable awareness to Hanoi's uncivilized treatment of political dissidents, and I am pleased the House is considering it this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, it is easy to take for granted our Nation's priceless freedoms of speech and expression and, conversely, to lose track of the reality that countless people around the world in fact pay a great price to express their view. On its tenth anniversary, the principles of Vietnam Human Rights Day continue to act as an important defense of the liberties and freedoms of the Vietnamese people.

Mr. Speaker, 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 rise in support of H. Res. 613 and commend the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS), chairman of the Committee on Government Reform, for his introduction of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, as an American, I take great pride when I see that nations value human rights. It brings me a great deal of joy to stand before you on the anniversary of Vietnam Human Rights Day and to honor the nation of Vietnam for its commitment to human rights. Ten years ago, in Hanoi, a brilliant man by the name of Dr. Nguyen Dan Que wrote a manifesto that called upon the people of Vietnam to respect human rights, to accept a multiparty system, and to restore the right of the Vietnamese people to choose their own form of government through free and fair elections.

Today we honor that manifesto, as well as the many innocent people who were tortured, imprisoned, or held captive against their will for their peaceful protests against oppression by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Those of us in the United States were reminded last week that we are not perfect. In fact, we are far from it. Because we are imperfect, it is important that we recognize the struggles other nations have undertaken in the pursuit of freedom so that we may never forget what a special privilege freedom is.

I stand before my colleagues today as a Member of this honorable body to honor and to recognize the tenth anniversary of Vietnam Human Rights Day and to urge all Americans to share in this commemoration so that we may all have a greater appreciation of the role that Vietnam Human Rights Day has played in helping to shape, defend, and to further the liberties and freedom of all Vietnamese people.

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Government Reform.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time, and I rise today to support H. Res. 613, recognizing and honoring the tenth anniversary of Vietnam Human Rights Day.

Vietnam Human Rights Day serves as an important commemoration of the extensive struggle the Vietnamese people have endured for many years in their ongoing fight for basic human rights and freedom.

□ 1545

Ten years ago, the United States ended its trade embargo with Vietnam and normalized relations with Hanoi. While the U.S. continues to open diplomatic relations with Vietnam, we must remember that many issues remain unresolved, including human rights violations, lack of religious freedom, and government corruption.

I traveled to Vietnam in 1998 to learn about these issues firsthand, as well as to raise these concerns with high-level officials. In addition, the large Vietnamese-American community in the 11th district, which I represent, continues to update me on continuing concerns.

As a member of the Vietnam Caucus, I am dedicated to promoting awareness and public policy debates among the U.S. Congress, the American public, and the international community about the greater need for fundamental human rights in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

House Resolution 613 recognizes the important contributions made by Nguyen Dan Que, the author of the Manifesto of the Non-Violent Movement for Human Rights, and uncounted numbers of innocent Vietnamese for their nonviolent struggles for freedom and human rights.

Dr. Que is one of the most vocal advocates for freedom, democracy, and human rights in Vietnam. Since 1975, Dr. Que has refused to leave Vietnam, and he has turned down an offer to resettle in the United States or to live in exile. He has consciously chosen to stay in Vietnam to speak out and defend human dignity and the rights of all Vietnamese people. He is a profile of courage.

The Vietnamese Communist government has arrested Dr. Que three times for his unrelenting pursuit of human

dignity and freedom. He has been imprisoned off and on for nearly 20 years, beginning in 1978 through the present. During Dr. Que's captivity, he was imprisoned without trial, tortured, beaten, and put into solitary confinement in chains, accused of trying to overthrow the government, charged with espionage, and is now being held in strict incommunicado.

Undaunted, during his time he remained the strongest voice inside Vietnam for equality and dignity. On May 11, 1990, Dr. Que founded the Nonviolent Movement For Human Rights, issuing a manifesto that appealed to individuals and groups inside Vietnam and throughout the world for support of his moderate, nonviolent struggle to establish human rights for all Vietnamese people.

The arrests of Dr. Que, along with many others, demonstrate the ongoing human rights abuses and lack of religious freedom in Vietnam. We must continue to bring attention to these issues, generate pressure on Vietnamese officials, and hold the Vietnamese Government accountable.

It is only through the hard work and effort of individuals such as Dr. Que and the support of the international community that we can bring an end to human rights abuses and religious persecution in Vietnam. My resolution urges all Americans to share in the commemoration of Vietnam Human Rights Day and to have a greater appreciation of the role it has played in helping to defend and further the liberties and freedom of all Vietnamese people.

I am hopeful H. Res. 613 will serve as a small stepping stone towards the ultimate liberation and freedom of the Vietnamese people. However, at the least, I believe it will bring much needed additional awareness to the atrocities committed by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam every day on its own citizens. I urge my colleagues to join me in the passage of this important resolution.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ).

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 613, the resolution which recognizes the 10th anniversary of Vietnam Human Rights Day, which is today, May 11. I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) for sponsoring this resolution and allowing me to be an original cosponsor; and I am proud to share with the gentleman membership in the Vietnam Caucus, along with the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH). The initiatives of the caucus, including this bill, are examples of what we can accomplish when we decide to work together in a bipartisan manner.

Mr. Speaker, I represent the largest Vietnamese community in the world outside of Vietnam in Orange County, California. It is fitting then to speak on the House floor about this anniversary of Vietnam Human Rights Day. More importantly, it is the 14-year anniversary of the Manifesto of the Nonviolent Movement For Human Rights. This was written by a courageous and bright man, Dr. Nguyen Dan Que. I have had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Que. In fact, I went to his home in 1998 when I was in Vietnam. As we were meeting, his home all locked up, the military police came to the home to try to get me out of there. Of course we had locked up the house, and we continued our conversation.

One of the things that Dr. Que said to me was that it was important for America and Americans to continue to push for human rights in Vietnam. What type of human rights are we talking about here? Well, the right to assemble as we do here today, that is not allowed in Vietnam. The right to choose your own God and the way you want to worship that God, that is not allowed. You have to only do it through the official church or churches that the state of Vietnam approves. The right to free press. Every piece of paper written to be distributed must be done by the state in Vietnam. In fact, when I was meeting with the cardinal of the Catholic Church of Vietnam, he said one of the things that he cannot do is to hand out a newsletter to people that come to church on Sunday. The right to collectively bargain one's labor for decent wages and a decent place to work.

All of these things are not allowed in Vietnam, and this is what Dr. Que speaks to. He speaks to the human rights issues within Vietnam. I guess the most important thing that Dr. Que said to me that day in 1998 was that the reason we need to keep pushing for human rights in Vietnam is that it inspires and it gives hope and it gives courage to those within Vietnam who are fighting for basic human rights. Religious leaders like the Venerable Tic Kwzug Doh; a geologist like Gizug; and General Do, whom I had an opportunity to meet with, who had been a former communist and understood what was going on in the country and decided he would speak out; and, yes, Dr. Que.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few of the dissidents within Vietnam who speak every day; and yet each and every one has been imprisoned, either taken away without charges or with false charges, or imprisoned in house arrest.

I hope today we will vote this unanimously to send a strong message that human rights are important in every country, and in particular for those who have not seen them for a long time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I just also note that yesterday was my father's 93rd birthday, and I take this opportunity to wish him a happy 93rd birthday, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today to recognize, House Resolution 613, recognizing and honoring the tenth anniversary of Vietnam Human Rights Day. H. Res. 613 observes the fourteenth anniversary of the issuance Manifesto of the Non-Violent movement for Human Rights.

Vietnam Human Rights Day serves as an important commemoration of the extensive struggle that Vietnamese have endured for many years, in their ongoing fight for basic human rights.

H. Res. 613 recognizes the important contributions made by Dr. Nguyen Dan Que, the author of the Manifesto, and uncounted numbers of innocent Vietnamese, including religious leaders and ethnic minorities who have been tortured, imprisoned, or held under house arrest by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam because of their nonviolent struggle for freedom and human rights.

This measure urges all Americans to share in this commemoration so as to have a greater appreciation of the role Vietnam Human Rights Day has played in helping to defend and further the liberties and freedom of all Vietnamese people.

These arrests demonstrate the increasing human rights abuses and lack of religious freedom and free speech in Vietnam. As we consider our ongoing economic relations with Vietnam, our goal in Congress must be to continue to bring attention to these issues, generate pressure on Vietnamese officials, and hold the Vietnamese government accountable.

We all realize that U.S. economic relations with Vietnam have improved in recent years. In 1994, the United States lifted its trade embargo with Vietnam and normalized relations with Hanoi. However, I will continue to fight for better human rights for all Vietnamese people and the right for families from Vietnam to reunite with their families in America.

H. Res. 613 indicates how far Vietnam has come in its struggle for human rights. This is an anniversary that deserves to truly be celebrated.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, during the month of May, we celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage to commemorate the contributions Asian Pacific Americans have made to the fabric of our communities and to this nation as a whole. I could easily spend this month, and longer, describing the tremendous accomplishments of Asian Pacific Americans.

However, today is the tenth anniversary of Vietnam Human Rights Day and we sadly must recognize that Vietnam has not come far enough in respecting the human rights of its citizens.

Just one month ago, on Easter Week, Human Rights Watch reported that peaceful protests by indigenous minority Christian Montagnards turned violent when police used tear gas, electric truncheons, and water cannons on protestors. Reports indicate that police arrested several individuals, many whose whereabouts are currently unknown. Worse yet are reports of torture, police beatings, and deaths associated with this crackdown on the Montagnards.

Today, my colleagues, Congressman CHRIS SMITH, TOM DAVIS, LORETTA SANCHEZ and I

are introducing a Congressional resolution recognizing the countless number of innocent Vietnamese "who have been tortured, imprisoned, or held under house arrest by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam."

Also today, Congressman SMITH is leading an effort, with over 100 cosponsors, to pass House Concurrent Resolution 378 to call on Vietnam to immediately release Father Thaddeus Nguyen Van Ly and condemn the "violations of freedom of speech, religion, movement, association, and the lack of due process afforded to individuals in Vietnam."

Ten years ago, the Congress and the Senate passed a resolution designating today, May 11th, as Vietnam Human Rights Day, recognizing that "the United States, as the leader of the free world, has a special responsibility to safeguard freedom and promote the protection of human rights throughout the world."

Unfortunately, President Bush and his Administration have not heeded that responsibility to safeguard human rights. Although this Administration tells me they are "deeply troubled by the restrictions that the government of Vietnam places on its citizens' freedom of expression, as well as other human rights," this Administration has been initiating a new friendly relationship with the communist regime in Vietnam without demanding protection of human rights as a condition of our friendship.

The Bush Administration's hypocrisy and apathetic attitude towards human rights is unacceptable. As long as the people of Vietnam are oppressed, abused, and imprisoned, our President should first demand protection of human rights before getting friendly with a communist regime that oppresses its people.

On this 10th Anniversary of Vietnam Human Rights Day, I urge our President to condemn the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for violating human rights and I call on the Vietnamese government to protect the human rights of its citizens.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PUTNAM). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 613.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING CONTRIBUTIONS OF PEOPLE OF INDIAN ORIGIN TO UNITED STATES AND BENEFITS OF WORKING TOGETHER WITH INDIA

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 352) recognizing the contributions of people of Indian origin to the United States and the benefits of working together with India towards promoting peace, prosperity, and freedom among all countries of the world.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 352

Whereas India is the largest democratic country in the world and enjoys a close and mutual friendship with the United States based on common values and common interests;

Whereas people of Indian origin who have for decades immigrated to the United States have made extraordinary contributions to the United States, helping to make the United States a more efficient and prosperous country;

Whereas these contributions have spanned disciplines ranging from science, technology, business development, and public service, to social justice, philanthropy, literature, and the arts;

Whereas generations of doctors and nurses of Indian origin have attended to the sick in large cities as well as in rural regions of the United States that are otherwise underserved;

Whereas people of Indian origin have designed defense systems that protect United States naval ships while at sea, and have contributed to engineering, designing, and participating in the United States space shuttle program, at great personal sacrifice;

Whereas people of Indian origin have invented many of the technologies that power the computer and the internet, have created and directed laboratories that produced significant breakthroughs in modern medicine, and have taught at, and are leaders of, many United States institutions of higher learning;

Whereas people of Indian origin have made invaluable contributions to the vitality and viability of the United States economy through creative entrepreneurship and leadership in both large and small businesses;

Whereas people of Indian origin have shared and integrated their rich culture into the fabric of American daily life;

Whereas trade with India integrates a democratic country of more than one billion people into the flow of commerce, offering the United States a large and rapidly growing market and unlocking vast reservoirs of talent;

Whereas the United States is India's largest trading partner and a major source of foreign direct investment and foreign institutional investment in India;

Whereas United States exports to India are growing at 25 percent, making India one of the fastest growing foreign markets for United States goods and services;

Whereas India's industrial tariffs have fallen from 150 percent in 1988 to a peak rate of 20 percent today;

Whereas United States exports to India will accelerate as India continues reducing tariffs and instituting liberalization measures in its trade and investment regime, thereby expanding the trade relationship of the two countries and bringing mutual benefits;

Whereas India has been a key partner in the war against terrorism;

Whereas India and the United States have agreed to increase cooperation in the areas of nuclear activities, civilian space programs, high-technology trade, and missile defense;

Whereas multi-faceted cooperation between India and the United States will strengthen the bonds of friendship and commerce between the two countries, lead to the peaceful use of space technology, and increase global stability and security; and

Whereas United States efforts, whether in combating global HIV/AIDS, pursuing nuclear non-proliferation, promoting democracy, enhancing stability of the world economy, eliminating poverty, fighting terrorism, and expanding and strengthening global trade, will be more effective and successful with India as a strategic partner: Now therefore, be it

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

(1) honors the contributions of people of Indian origin to the Untied States, and

(2) is committed to working together with India towards promoting peace, prosperity, and freedom among all countries of the world.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER).

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H. Con. Res. 352 recognizes the contributions of people of Indian origin to the United States and the benefits of working together with India toward promoting peace, prosperity and freedom among all countries of the world. This is a noncontroversial resolution which was easily approved by the Committee on International Relations. It points out the many areas and disciplines to which Americans of Indian origin have contributed to a stronger America. Indeed, in communities throughout the U.S., we can find Indian Americans who are active citizens participating in all avenues of life. America is strengthened by ethnic diversity and a climate of achievement and progress.

This measure points out the ever-growing relationship between India and the United States and the benefits to each country resulting from increases in trade, cultural exchange, and the sharing of democratic values. This is indicative of U.S. relationships with the other countries of South Asia. These relationships are evolving; and we should encourage this progress, not only for the individual benefits to each country in the region but because it supports the collective goals of regional stability and economic development. I urge a strong "aye" vote on this measure.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and thank the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER); the chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH); the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA), the ranking member; and the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) for bringing this important

resolution before us. And I particularly want to commend my neighbor and colleague, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD), for introducing this very important resolution. She has been a true leader on Indian-Americas issues, and we are all grateful to her.

Mr. Speaker, America is a Nation of immigrants and is the world's preeminent power because of the diversity of its people and the strength each ethnic group has brought to our Nation. It is hard to think of an ethnic group that has made such an enormous contribution to our Nation in such a short period of time as America's more than a million and a half citizens of Indian descent. In business, in science, in academia, in medicine, Indian Americans have assumed leadership roles; and they have given back to the communities in which they live.

In the field of medicine alone, our Nation is blessed to have over 35,000 Indian-American physicians, many of whom work with residents of rural and inner city communities. Another 10,000 Indian-Americans are currently in medical school or are working as interns. Indian-Americans have also made enormous contributions to the economy of our country, and to my district in particular. Technology firms in Silicon Valley depend heavily on the brain power of our Indian-Americans. Over 300,000 Indian-Americans are working in cutting-edge technology firms, and they play a critical role in generating new start-up companies.

In academia, more than 5,000 Indian-Americans today serve as faculty members at institutions of higher learning. Two Americans of Indian ancestry have been awarded the Nobel Prize, one in medicine, one in physics.

In the cultural world, millions of Americans have relied upon self-help books and spiritual teachings of men like Deepak Chopra or enjoyed the cinematic productions of M. Night Shyamalam.

□ 1600

Of course, Mr. Speaker, we all remember the unique contribution and sacrifice made by Dr. Kalpana Chawla, the first Indian American to fly in the U.S. space shuttle. While Dr. Chawla perished in the horrendous Columbia shuttle disaster, we must never forget her enormous contributions to science and to our space program.

Indian Americans have also worked to further develop the political, economic and security ties between the United States and India. These ties between our nations are unbreakable. After all, the world's largest democracy and the world's oldest have much in common. India has become a vital American ally in the fight against global terrorism. In the same manner that the United States and India have forged strong economic and commercial links, so too have we strengthened our partnership for peace and our collaboration to battle terrorist groups who wish to destroy freedom and democracy both in India and the United States.

Mr. Speaker, we currently have over 75,000 Indians studying at our institutions of higher learning. I have no doubt that these young Indian men and women will be the next generation of leadership in India's political, economic and cultural worlds. Their experience in the United States will ensure positive relations between our two great nations for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of our colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 352.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding me this time. I rise in strong support of this resolution honoring the contributions of Indian Americans in the United States and honoring our strong U.S.-India relations. As a cosponsor of this bill, I urge all of my colleagues to support this much-needed and well-deserved legislation.

As the founder and former cochair of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans, I have for a number of years advocated on behalf of my Indian American constituents and worked toward creating stronger U.S.-India policies.

India is the largest democracy in the world and shares common ideologies with the United States which has led to our natural relationship as allies. India has also been an important ally in the war against terrorism and has historically served as the key stabilizing force in the volatile south Asia region. Our economic, political, and defense relations with India are now more important than ever and I am pleased that our cooperation in the areas of nuclear activities, civilian space programs, high-technology trade, and missile defense continue to grow.

In addition, people of Indian origin who have emigrated to the U.S. serve as an outstanding community within American society. 1.8 million strong, their contributions are tremendous and span fields such as engineering, technology, business development, health and medical care, public service, social justice, education, philanthropy, literature and the arts. Whether it is combating domestic and global HIV/AIDS, pursuing nuclear nonproliferation, promoting democracy, advocating for health and education rights, enhancing stability of the world economy, eliminating poverty, fighting terrorism or expanding and strengthening global trade, Indian Americans are on the forefront and these goals can be achieved by maintaining India as a strategic partner.

Again, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H. Con. Res. 352 in an effort to honor the contributions of the Indian Americans and to commit to working together with India in promoting global peace and prosperity.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), a member of the Committee on International Relations.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for yielding me this time. I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 352. As the cochair of the Caucus on India and Indian Americans and the representative of the second largest concentration of Indian Americans in the United States, I would like to speak in strong support of the gentlewoman from California's resolution recognizing the contributions of people of Indian origin to the United States and the benefits of working together with India. I know firsthand the contributions that Indian Americans are making to the United States because of my close relationship with my constituents and the Indian-American community across the country.

One Indian American that many Members may not know is the first and only Indian American ever elected to Congress. His name was Dalip Singh Saund. Congressman Saund first came to the United States to study at the University of California where he received his master's and Ph.D. Even with Congressman Saund's high level of education, he had little job opportunity because of the prejudice that existed against Asians at that time. Despite the prejudice that existed, Congressman Saund went on to become politically active, to give something back to his community and was influential in working with Congress to pass the Luce-Cellar Act which was signed into law by President Truman in 1946. This act gave Asian Indians the right to become naturalized citizens.

Congressman Saund was elected to the House of Representatives in 1952, just 6 years after his work to secure citizenship for Indian Americans. He served as a distinguished Congressman from California for three terms before he suffered a stroke during his campaign for a fourth term in the House. This is just one Indian American that has made a major contribution to the United States.

I would like to thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) for introducing this resolution. I am proud to be supportive of it and an original sponsor of it.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be here this afternoon, and I want to especially thank my good friend, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) for her work in bringing us together here to recognize the contributions of people of Indian origin to the United States and the benefits of working together with India.

Mr. Speaker, there are vital Indian-American communities in Texas. In fact, Texas's Indian-American community is one of the leading ethnic groups in my home State, and its members have made important contributions to the local economy and culture.

As the largest immigrant group other than Mexicans, Indians account for 4.3 percent of North Texas's foreign-born population. Indian immigrants in this area come from all over the subcontinent, but especially the western Gujarat province.

Many of Texas' Indian-Americans are professionals who play key roles in sectors like the technology industry and the field of medicine. Many others are business owners.

About 1 million Indian-Americans live in the United States. Many Americans assume that Indian-Americans, because they are often well-educated, do not face the same problems as other minorities. They are wrong. In many parts of this country Indian-Americans are victims of hate crimes and racial harassment. They are victims of discrimination in business and in education. We in Congress cannot allow people who come to this country seeking out the American Dream to be victimized or subjected to bigotry.

Indian-Americans are proud of the tremendous strides their homeland has made. By the year 2050 India will be the most populous democratic country in the world. India and the United States today represent the greatest democracies on the face of the earth: the oldest and the largest.

The United States is also one of India's largest trading partners. India's economy has been advancing rapidly, with a large stock market and strong high-tech enterprises like aircraft, a computer industry, and its own space program. We must promote greater understanding between the United States and India, particularly in the economic, political and cultural areas.

Mr. Speaker, again I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude and appreciation to the Indian-American community. I know my colleagues join us in recognizing the profound contributions Indian-Americans have made to American society and their descendants throughout the world.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by commending Congresswoman MILLENDER-MCDONALD for introducing this bipartisan bill. H. Con. Res. 352 recognizes the contributions of people of Indian origin to the United States and the benefits of working together with India towards promoting peace, prosperity, and freedom among all countries of the world.

As the world's 2nd most populous nation and the largest democracy in the world, India and the United States have forged a long-lasting friendship. For the past month, peoples from all over the country of India went to the polls and marked their choice for Parliament. This act of citizenship shows India's neighbors, and nations across the world, that democracy works. Reports indicate that over 50 percent of the population voted in this year's elections.

India shows us that the commitment to democracy is strong and that the ties between India and the United States are even stronger. The everlasting bond that is forged by the 1.7 million Indian-Americans living in the United States is a shinning example of our commitment to one another. Indian-Americans lead thriving lives in communities throughout the U.S.—the contributions to our society demonstrate the resilience and fervor of the Indian-American spirit. It is that spirit that holds the future between our two nations together.

Mr. Speaker, following the September 11th cowardly and evil terrorist attacks on the United States, Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee offered to cooperate with the Bush Administration "in the investigation of this crime and to strengthen our partnership." The following day, the Indian Cabinet Committee on Security voted unanimously to offer the United States the use of Indian facilities for any U.S. military operation in pursuit of the perpetrators of the terrorist attacks.

Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld states that, "the United States and India share important interests in fighting terrorism. . . ."

In the past two years, the United States and India have held numerous joint exercises involving all military branches. Last September U.S. and Indian special forces soldiers held a two-week joint exercise in Ladakh near the India-China border, and the largest-ever "Malabar 2003" joint naval exercises off the southern coast of India that included an American nuclear submarine.

In the 2002 report of the National Security Strategy of the United States, the White House made the following statement: "The United States has undertaken a transformation in this bilateral relationship with India based on a conviction that U.S. interests require a strong relationship with India. We are the two largest democracies, committed to political freedom protected by representative government. India is moving towards greater economic freedom as well. We have a common interest in the free flow of commerce, including through the vital sea-lanes of the Indian Ocean. Finally, we share an interest in fighting terrorism and in creating a strategically stable Asia." I could not agree more.

Another great example of this fruitful bond is the fact that trade between India and the United States has shown a healthy growth in recent years. Last year, U.S. exports and imports from India totaled $5.0 billion and $13.1 billion, making India the 24th largest U.S. export market and the 18th largest supplier of U.S. imports. With a GDP of $390 billion and an annual growth rate of 6.8 percent, India is not only an important ally in defense, but also a key ally in international trade. Bilateral trade now stands at around $15 billion, with software exports at another $3 billion—emphasizing the true relationship between our two countries.

As the world comes together and joins forces to help its people, I am positive that the strong ties between India and the United States will serve as an example of fruitful and positive bilateral relations.

Mr. Speaker, H. Con Res. 352 is truly fitting. I stand here and pay special recognition to the proud and resilient people of Indian origin in the United States. Their devotion and hard work have brought great prosperity to countless communities in the United States. I am proud to be cosponsor of this bill and proudly congratulate all peoples of Indian origin for their perseverance.

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to rise today to join my colleagues in recognizing the many contributions made by people of Indian descent and in celebrating the strong allegiance we share with the nation of India. In Northwest Indiana, like the rest of the Nation, Indian-Americans have shown themselves to be leaders in every field and in every endeavor. It is my pleasure to join today in expressing my admiration and gratitude to these Americans, as well as my hopes that our relationship with India remains strong and productive.

As a proud member of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans, I am well aware of the importance of our nation's commitment to cooperation. It is the strength of this commitment that will lead us both toward our mutual goals of peace, prosperity, and freedom among all countries of the world. We stand shoulder to shoulder with the government of India in combating the challenges facing the international community.

While the nation of India has been a trusted friend in international affairs, people of Indian descent who have chosen to immigrate to this Nation have consistently contributed to our prosperity at home. Through their participation in the U.S. space shuttle program, their technological contributions that power the computer and the Internet, and their significant breakthroughs in modern medicine, Indian Americans have helped to make the United States the world leader in countless fields. Furthermore, Indian-Americans teach at, and are leaders of, many U.S. institutions of higher learning, thus passing on their legacy to our future world leaders.

In my home district of Northwest Indiana the contributions of the Indian-American community are no less great. I would like to name but a few of the outstanding leaders, educators, and citizens who help to make the Indiana First such wonderful place. Doctors Bharat Barai, Panna Barai, Vijay Gupta, Padma Neelaveni, Vijay Dave, Shaun Kondamuri, Avtar Dhindsa, Beno Sikand, Harish Shah, Vidya Kora, Jagdish Patel, Kalpna Patel, Ravi Kanakamedela and Sandhya Kanakamedela have given tirelessly of their selves to serve our community and improve the health and well-being of my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing and paying tribute to India and Indian-Americans. Again, I express my hopes for continued cooperation between our nations, and my gratitude for the role that Indian-Americans have played in making this Nation great.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I urge a strong, unanimous vote for the resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYES). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 352.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

RECOGNIZING 50 YEARS OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 577) recognizing 50 years of relations between the United States Government and the European Union, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 577

Whereas on May 9, 1950, 6 countries of Europe, committed to promoting a united Europe, founded the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), which has evolved into the European Union (EU);

Whereas in November 1953 the United States sent its first diplomatic observers to the European Coal and Steel Community;

Whereas in 1954 the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community commissioned the United States law firm of Clearly and Gottlieb to open an Information Office in Washington, District of Columbia, thus establishing the first official presence of the precursor to the European Union in the United States;

Whereas on November 18, 2003, Secretary of State Colin Powell, while in Brussels, Belgium, dedicating a plaque commemorating 50 years of cooperation between the United States and the European Union stated that ''the United States embraces the European Union as a global partner for peace and security . . . and that the world's best hope for meeting [global] challenges still rests, in large part, on a deep, broad, and lasting partnership between Europe and the United States'';

Whereas although differences of opinion have existed on a broad array of issues over the past 50 years, there remains an important foundation of shared values across the Atlantic which reaffirms that the current strengths and common interests of the United States and the European Union far outweigh the differences;

Whereas an effective political partnership between the United States and the European Union has continued to develop over the past 50 years in many areas of vital common interest which has resulted in the United States and European Union consistently and effectively working together for prosperous, stable, and democratic world;

Whereas the events of the past several years, including the events of September 11, 2001, have increased the need for forceful and coordinated strategic cooperation between the United States and the European Union on economic, trade, and domestic and foreign security matters;

Whereas the economic foundations for the United States-European Union partnership are a central and irreversible reality of the world economy;

Whereas to effectively manage the United States-European Union partnership, closer institutional linkages and other mechanisms to facilitate more direct and continuous United States-European Union dialogue are necessary; and

Whereas in May 2004, an event commemorating 50 years of relations between the United States and the European Union will take place in Washington, District of Columbia: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) celebrates the 50th anniversary of relations between the United States and the European Union;

(2) commends the United States mission to the European Union and the mission of the European Commission to the United States for the professional representation of the interests of the United States and European Union over the past 50 years;

(3) recognizes that continued cooperation between the United States and the European Union is essential to resolving international disputes, promoting peace, expanding global economic opportunity, combating global threats, and being prepared to respond to unforeseen events; and

(4) encourages enhanced United States-European Union strategic discussion and institutional cooperation, including increased discussions between representatives of the United States Congress and the European Parliament through the Transatlantic Legislator's Dialogue.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. 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 Nebraska?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 577, as amended. I would note for my colleagues that two amendments were made to the original text of this resolution. One more precisely addresses the history of the EU and one notes that an event at the Department of State regarding the anniversary has now taken place.

Mr. Speaker, 53 years ago, in an effort to rebuild and integrate a war-devastated economic system throughout Europe, six nations of Europe came together and signed the European Coal and Steel Community treaty (ECSC) in Paris on April 18, 1951. Since then, the coal and steel community has evolved to become what we now refer to as the European Union. In 1953, the United States government sent its first diplomatic observers to the European Coal and Steel Community and one year later, in 1954, the High Authority of the ECSC established its first official presence in the United States. This resolution which we have under consideration today recognizes 50 years of formal relationship between the United States and the European Union.

Mr. Speaker, relations with Europe have been an integral part of our own history. The importance of that relationship became even more clear as the Euro-Atlantic community entered the postwar period in 1945. During that period and throughout the Cold War, the United States and Europe developed a strong set of shared values, common interests, mutual political goals, and fully integrated economies. The cooperation which has developed between the United States and Europe has resulted in an effective partnership which has met the global challenges of building a peaceful, secure, democratic and prosperous world.

Yet as we all know, the relationship has not always been cordial. We have had our differences of opinion on many issues. The relationship has had what some might consider ''defining moments.'' But as we have seen over these past 50 years, the melding of our common interests and the strength of our partnership has far outweighed the differences we have encountered.

Last November, the U.S. Mission in Brussels, led by Ambassador Rockwell Schnabel, held an event to kick off the 50th anniversary of relations between the United States and the European Union. Secretary of State Colin Powell attended the ceremony and dedicated a plaque commemorating the anniversary. In his statement, the Secretary noted that the ''United States embraces the European Union as a global partner for peace and security and that the world's best hope for meeting global challenges still rests, in large part, on a deep, broad and lasting partnership between Europe and the United States.''

Last week, on May 6, a similar event was held here in Washington at the Department of State which continued the celebration. One difference between the November event and this month's event is the fact that by virtue of the enlargement of the European Union which took place on May 1, the celebration here in Washington was with 25 nations of Europe rather than 15. As we welcome those 10 new members of the European Union, we welcome the opportunity to develop an even stronger partnership with the EU and its member states.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, H. Res. 577 recognizes the 50th anniversary of U.S.-EU relations. It reaffirms the importance of cooperation between the United States and Europe. It encourages closer institutional linkages in order to facilitate a more direct and continuous dialogue with Europe and its union. Finally, the resolution supports an enhanced dialogue between this institution, the Congress, and our colleagues in the European Parliament.

I urge the adoption of this resolution.

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

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

I want to commend the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), chair of the Subcommittee on Europe, for this excellent resolution. I also want to thank our colleagues who played a role

in bringing this resolution forward: the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER), the ranking member of the subcommittee; the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS), chair of the Transatlantic Legislators Dialogue, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT), and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Mr. Speaker, May 1, 2004, was a historic day. Ten days ago, the European Union expanded to a total of 25 member countries with the addition of 10 new member states to the European Union. This was the largest expansion in the organization's almost half a century of history. Most remarkably, 8 of the 10 countries became new members of the European Union that were formerly members of the Soviet bloc. Having seen on countless occasions firsthand the trials and challenges these countries faced in the 50 years following the Second World War, I am personally delighted and encouraged at the prospects that this new union will give to these countries.

The 10 new member states bring an additional 75 million citizens to the European Union. The population of the European Union, as we all know, now surpasses that of our own country. The economic output of the 25-member European Union is very near to our own. With open and free borders, common economic policies and shared security objectives, the new European Union can and will become an even stronger economic and political force globally.

Mr. Speaker, this expansion of the European Union extends the zone of economic and political stability and security hundreds of miles to the east.

□ 1615

It anchors the new member states in an economic and political union that is committed to democratic values and respect for civil and human rights and the rule of law.

The new member countries which were formerly part of the Soviet sphere have had more limited experience with democratic governments and the free market economy. Their participation in the EU will provide new experience and a stronger commitment to these vital values that we share with the European Union.

Mr. Speaker, while the effects of this EU expansion will be different for every one of the new member states, it is clear that there is potential benefit for the United States in this historic development. We in the Congress welcome this new expansion of the European Union, and we reaffirm our desire to continue the positive relationship that we have had with the European Union and its predecessor organizations over the last half century.

The U.S.-European relationship is critical to stability and security throughout the globe. To the extent that we cooperate and work together, the entire world will be a safer and more prosperous place. But to the extent that our political and economic relations are in disarray, the entire world will suffer.

Mr. Speaker, in the economic sphere I call upon the united European Union, and particularly the new member states as well as our own government, to focus our relations on working together to resolve the trade and economic differences that occasionally divide us. Our economic ties are far too important to be dominated by minor disputes.

In the political and security sphere, it is critical that we cooperate in dealing with the threat of terrorism and the challenges that face all of our societies. I urge all member countries of the European Union to work with the United States to assure that our significant mutual interests take precedence over less important irritants that have strained our relations in recent times.

Mr. Speaker, our resolution welcomes a historic change in the European Union. We in the United States stand to gain much from this change, and we should all welcome it. I urge all of my colleagues to support H. Res. 577.

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS).

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, to the chairman and the ranking member I want to thank them for bringing this resolution to the floor. I have had a chance to speak in a Special Order and tie the EU expansion also to NATO expansion. And what it does is it brings a Europe whole, united, and free; and I think it brings great opportunity for the world, stability in the region, the ability for the European Union countries to help be more active in their backyard as they have committed to bolster their ability to respond based upon the Petersburg task but also a commitment to NATO in the Article V self-defense relationship that makes the transatlantic nations so important. It ties the North American continent to Europe in a stronger fabric that I think will really benefit the Nation and democratic institutions for years to come.

As we know, there are constant threats to democracy and liberty around the world. So I think I speak for many of our colleagues who will get a chance to either vocally vote ''yes'' or to do it through a registered vote by saying wherever democracy, liberty, freedom, the rule of law prevail, we as a country and as a world are stronger because of that.

So I, too, want to welcome the new members to the EU. I also want to applaud the old members for their reaching out and the invitation for these new members; and I want to tie that to the great self-defense organization that we know and have loved for so long, which is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. That transatlantic link will serve us both well from now and into the future.

I want to applaud the ranking member; I want to applaud the chairman. And I thank the chairman for yielding me this time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, as I was listening to the distinguished gentleman from California, I was thinking how remarkable this must look to him in particular since as a boy and a young man, he grew up in a very different part of Europe and a different kind of system in Hungary and what a contribution the gentleman has made. I recall in my second or third term, I became, fortunately, a member of what we then called the U.S. House-European Parliamentary Exchange, and the gentleman was the chairman for all of those years in which his party was in the majority; and I remember the outstanding leadership and education he gave this Member in those years.

And I think back to how remarkable it is for all of us, but perhaps especially for the gentleman, that the line drawn across Europe at Yalta which brought down the Iron Curtain to which Winston Churchill referred. It separated the countries that had been a part of a whole, and now gradually we have seen that curtain lifted and we have a united Europe.

Just this morning I had a chance to examine a proposed welcome from one of our Slovak parliamentary colleagues, Josef Banas. Mr. Banas was preparing his welcome to our spring meeting of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, which will be in their capital city, Bratislava, Slovakia, over the Memorial Day recess to drive his point home how much things have changed and how much joy is in his country as one of the 10 new members of the European Union, one of the seven new members of NATO.

He talked about his mother, who has lived and is yet living in a small village near Bratislava. She was born in that village before World War I, and he was tracing how many different countries and different political systems she has lived under in her time, even though she has never moved from that village. It has been that kind of remarkable change in Central Europe which we have witnessed in the years since World War I, but especially remarkable changes since World War II.

I want to thank the gentleman for his leadership all these years on European issues, and I want to say that I am enthusiastic about the current leadership, both Democrat and Republican, on what is now called, and I am still having a hard time with the new name, the Transatlantic Legislative Dialogue. And the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS) has a statement which will be submitted under General Leave. She would have liked to have been here today to participate in this dialogue, and I very

much wish the gentleman well as he continues this dialogue with European parliamentarians.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BEREUTER. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, let me first thank him for his most generous observations, and let me again say how deeply we will miss his enormous contributions to this body as he assumes new and bigger responsibilities.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his kind remarks, and I know that Europe will be in good hands. That is why I am moving my focus to a different continent.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, today, the House will debate H. Res. 577, a resolution recognizing 50 years of relations between the United States and the European Union. I hope the House overwhelmingly approves this resolution.

The U.S. and EU not only have shared values and an indisputable friendship, but also shared global responsibilities. Responsibilities that are grave in light of the terrorist threat facing our world today. The U.S. and EU must continue to work together to root out terrorism around the world, and seek to promote peace and stability. I am pleased to note that members of the EU and the U.S. are currently working alongside each other in both Afghanistan and Iraq to combat terrorism, and to ensure that these countries successfully make the transition toward democracy.

In addition to our shared interest in promoting global security, the U.S. and the EU share economic interests. The U.S. and the EU have the largest bilateral trading and investment relationship in the world with transatlantic flows of trade and investment amounting to roughly $1 billion a day.

Mr. Speaker, President Bush has stated that strong ties between America and Europe are essential to peace and the prosperity of the world. I believe that both sides will remain committed to fostering the relationship so that together the U.S. and the EU can promote their common goals and interests in the world much more effectively.

Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 577 noting the 50th Anniversary of formal relations between the United States and the European Union.

Fifty years ago the United States government sent its first diplomatic representatives to what was then the European Coal and Steel Community because the U.S. Government was fully supportive of the integration of Europe's economic systems as a way to help rebuild a war-torn continent. One year later, in 1954, the High Representative of the Coal and Steel Community opened an office here in Washington.

In November, the United States Mission in Brussels held a ceremony marking the beginning of the anniversary. Last week, a similar ceremony was held at the State Department to continue the celebration. H. Res. 577 reminds us that over these past five decades, we and Europe have worked to develop a common bond based on values, shared views of the need to promote democracy and market reform and a commitment to stability and peace throughout the world. As our Europe Subcommittee Chairman has said, the relationship has not always been easy or friendly. We have had some serious disagreements. Nevertheless, it should be clear to this House that a strong and mature transatlantic relationship is critical to the long-term political, economic and security interests of the United States. It is also clear that one of the central ingredients to a successful transatlantic partnership is a stable, integrated and dynamic Europe.

Recently, I traveled to Europe with a delegation of our House Colleagues to participate in the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue. Our meetings with our Colleagues from the European Parliament were frank, but cordial. It reaffirmed the need for continuous dialogue and understanding of how we each view those common challenges which face us and how we should respond. I appreciate the fact that H. Res. 577 notes that the TLD is an important aspect of this U.S.-EU relationship.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I want to remind my Colleagues that on Saturday, May 1st, we witnessed yet another historic event in the evolution of the European Union. On that day 10 new nations of Europe joined the European Union. What began just fifty-three years ago as a Union of 6 has now become a Union of 25. As the U.S. Chairman of the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue, I look forward to meeting and working with the Parliamentarians of these newest members who soon take their seats in the European Parliament and who will be part of the next fifty years of U.S.-UE relations.

I urge adoption of this Resolution.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this symbolic and commemorative resolution that speaks to our commitment to the establishment of continued and ever-growing ties with the European Union (E.U.). Especially given the dangers that plague the international community as a whole, it is important that we do everything we can to break bread with our international partners to form alliances against those who threaten to do our families harm.

The European Union and the United States are the two largest economies in the world and jointly account for about half the entire world economy. The E.U. and the U.S. have also the largest bi-lateral trading and investment relationship. Transatlantic trade and investment amount to around $1 billion a day, and jointly, our global trade accounts for almost 40 percent of world trade. By working together, the U.S. and the E.U. can promote their common goals and interests in the world much more effectively.

According to information gathered by the European Community's Trade Directorate General, the United States and the European Union have had the most prolific commercial relationship in the world and have been each other's largest trade and investment partners. In 2002, E.U. exports to the United States were estimated at $227.9 billion, representing 24.1 percent of total E.U. exports. E.U. imports from the United States totaled $166.1 billion, representing 17.7 percent of total E.U. imports.

Investment of E.U. firms in U.S. markets has been growing consistently. In fact, direct investments in the U.S. amounted to $863 billion in 2002. Together, both nations employ about 4 million respectively.

In a similar trend, American investment in the E.U. totaled $700 billion in 2002. The initiation of the Economic and Monetary Union on January 1, 1999 improved and facilitated American investment by providing a maturing Single Market.

The relationship between the E.U. and the U.S. exists even on a nation-to-state level. In December 2001, the European Union Center, one of 15 such Centers in the entire U.S., was established at Texas A&M University and was supported by funding from the European Commission to form a Network of European Union Centers.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) launched its Container Security Initiative (CSI) in the area of maritime security after the attacks of 9/11. Our main concern was the possibility of containers being used for terrorist attacks either against ports of the United States or against a participant in maritime transport. As a first step, the U.S. has invited about twenty mega-ports worldwide to join this initiative.

As a Member of the House Select Committee on Homeland Security, I applaud the fact that the U.S. has signed declarations of principle (bi-lateral agreements) on the application of its Container Security Initiative (CSI) in individual ports with eight E.U. Member States—the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, United Kingdom and Sweden. These bilateral agreements propose to shortly involve the stationing of U.S. customs officials in many of the ports that have significant container traffic to the United States.

In terms of formal agreements between the E.U. and the U.S., the two have executed the Transatlantic Declaration, the New Transatlantic Agenda, and the Transatlantic Economic Partnership.

The Transatlantic Declaration was adopted by the U.S. and the E.U. in 1990. This document set forth principles for greater E.U.-U.S. cooperation and consultation in economy, education, science, and culture.

In 1995, the New Transatlantic Agenda (NTA) and the E.U.-U.S. Joint Action Plan were adopted. The NTA and the Joint Action Plan stimulated partnership and cooperation under four areas: promoting peace and stability, democracy and development around the world; responding to global changes; contributing to the expansion of world trade and fostering closer ties; and building bridges across the Atlantic.

The Transatlantic Economic Partnership (TEP) was executed at the London summit in May 1998. The TEP is an extension of the spirit and premise behind the NTA. It includes both multilateral and bilateral elements. Bilaterally the purpose is to tackle technical barriers to trade. The purpose of the second part is to stimulate further multilateral liberalization—by joining forces on international trade issues. An innovative aspect of the proposal is to integrate labor, business, environmental and consumer issues into the process. It is, however, too early to say what will come out of this partnership.

Mutual commitment to "full and equal partnership" in economic, political, and security matters was the hallmark of the Bonn Declaration adopted by both nations at the 21 June 1999 E.U.-U.S. summit held in June 1999 in Bonn. The Bonn Declaration outlines how the E.U. and the U.S. want to shape their relationship over the next decade and is embedded in the NTA process.

The record of joint efforts to strengthen the economic, social, and diplomatic ties between

the European Union and the United States demonstrates that we can do even better. I commend my colleague Mr. BEREUTER for his efforts and leadership in bringing this important resolution to the Floor. It will help to improve our record even more through its representation of the voice of Congress.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYES). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 577, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. 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.

CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM TO RELEASE FATHER THADDEUS NGUYEN VAN LY

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 378) calling on the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to immediately and unconditionally release Father Thaddeus Nguyen Van Ly, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 378

Whereas in February 2001, Father Thaddeus Nguyen Van Ly, a Roman Catholic priest was formally invited to testify before the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom but was denied permission to leave the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and thus, instead, submitted written testimony critical of Vietnam which was read into the Commission record on February 13, 2001;

Whereas Father Ly's testimony before the Commission documents numerous specific actions of the Government of Vietnam against religious freedom which he classified as collectively being ''extremely cruel'' and requiring a ''non-violent and persistent campaign'' to achieve full religious freedom for all people in Vietnam;

Whereas Father Ly has been detained by the Government of Vietnam since February 2001, when it placed Father Ly under administrative detention—as a direct response to his testimony, branding him a traitor for ''slandering'' the Communist party and ''distorting'' the religious policy of the Government of Vietnam;

Whereas the Government of Vietnam issued a second decree suspending Father Ly's ability to ''carry on any religious responsibility and functions'' and later formally removed Father Ly from his church, detained him, and denied him access to adequate legal counsel;

Whereas on October 19, 2001, the Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Court convicted Father Ly of all charges after a one day, closed trial, without the benefit of counsel and sentenced him to two years in prison for violating the terms of his administrative detention, thirteen years in prison for ''damaging the Government's unity policy'', and 5 years of administrative probation upon release from prison;

Whereas after pleas from United States Government officials and the world community Father Ly's sentence was reduced by 5 years;

Whereas in June 2001, Father Ly's nephews Nguygen Vu Viet, age 27, and Nguyen Truc Cuong, age 36, and his niece Nguyen Thi Hoa, age 44, were arrested for allegedly being in contact and receiving support from organizations in the United States concerning the religious situation in Vietnam and disseminating information concerning the detention of Father Ly;

Whereas after their cases generated much concern in Congress, Nguyen Thi Hoa, Nguyen Vu Viet and Nguyen Truc Cuong all have been or are expected to be released shortly;

Whereas on November 27, 2003, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention issued Opinion No. 20/2003 stating ''the Group is convinced that [Father Ly] has been arrested and detained only for his opinions . . . [and] the deprivation of the liberty of Father Thaddeus Nguyen Van Ly is arbitrary, as being in contravention of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights'';

Whereas Father Ly has been deprived of his basic human rights by being denied his ability to exercise freedom of opinion and expression; and

Whereas the arbitrary imprisonment and the violation of the human rights of citizens of Vietnam are sources of continuing, grave concern to Congress;

Whereas continuing concerns regarding human rights in Vietnam were recently highlighted by large demonstrations in the Central Highlands on April 10 and 11, 2004, in which thousands of Montagnards gathered on Easter weekend to protest their treatment by the Government of Vietnam, including the confiscation of tribal lands and ongoing restrictions on religious activities; and

Whereas although the Government of Vietnam has attempted to control information about the April 2004 protests and access to the Central Highlands, reputable human rights organizations have reported that the protests were met with a violent response and that many demonstrators were arrested, injured, or are in hiding, and that others were killed: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) Congress—

(A) condemns and deplores the arbitrary detention of Father Thaddeus Nguyen Van Ly by the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and calls for his immediate and unconditional release;

(B) condemns and deplores the violations of freedom of speech, religion, movement, association, and the lack of due process afforded to individuals in Vietnam;

(C) strongly urges the Government of Vietnam to consider the implications of its actions for the broader relationship between the United States and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, including the impact on trade relations;

(D) urges the Government of Vietnam to allow unfettered access to the Central Highlands by foreign diplomats, the international press, and nongovernmental organizations; and

(E) condemns the extent of the violence used against Montagnard protesters on April 10 and 11, 2004, and the use of any violence against peaceful protests and demonstrations; and

(2) it is the sense of Congress that the United States—

(A) should make the immediate release of Father Ly a top concern;

(B) should continue to urge the Government of Vietnam to comply with internationally recognized standards for basic freedoms and human rights;

(C) should make it clear to the Government of Vietnam that the detention of Father Ly and other persons and the infliction of human rights violations on these individuals are not in the interest of Vietnam because they create obstacles to improved bilateral relations and cooperation with the United States; and

(D) should reiterate the deep concern of the United States regarding the continued imprisonment of Father Ly, and other persons whose human rights are being violated, and discuss their legal status and immediate humanitarian needs with the Government of Vietnam.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Vietnam likes to say that Vietnam is a country, not a war. It is a catchy little self-evident phrase that some Members of Congress picked up during the bilateral trade agreement debate, as if to suggest that the debate was somehow about the Vietnam War, which it was not, instead of Vietnam's shameful present-day human rights record, which it was.

Of course Vietnam is a country, to which I respond: behave like an honorable country. Live up to their word as a signatory to numerous human rights covenants, including the international covenant on political and civil rights. Stop bringing dishonor and shame to their government by abusing their own people.

Mr. Speaker, according to the U.S. State Department report, the ''Report on Human Rights Practices for 2003'': ''The Government's human rights record remained poor, and it continued to commit serious abuses.'' Rather than repress and jail, harass, intimidate, and torture, the government should recognize and reflect the innate goodness of the Vietnamese people, a kind, gentle, compassionate people who deserve better, much better.

Take the case of Father Ly. In February 2001, Father Thaddeus Nguyen Van Ly submitted written testimony to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom for a hearing at which he was invited to testify. He was not able to testify in person, but submitted written testimony which I will include in its entirety in the RECORD.

Because this brave Catholic priest told the truth, spoke the truth to power, the Government of Vietnam persecuted and cruelly mistreated him;

and he is now serving a 10-year prison sentence, and he has been in prison for 3 of those years. Amnesty International calls Father Ly a prisoner of conscience, and even the U.N. Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has condemned his detention.

I think it is worth focusing just for a moment on his testimony, which was incisive and compelling; and I quote it in part: ''Since their victory of April 30, 1975,'' Father Ly wrote, ''the Vietnamese Communists have extended its oppressive policy toward the different religions of South Vietnam. Laws and decrees have been promulgated to confine, restrict, or ban religious activities. The government has falsely accused clergy members and lay people as a pretext to detain and imprison those who protest its oppressive policy, or those who teach catechism, lead a church choir, or join a seminary. They have been banished to concentration camps for years. This policy has been ongoing,'' he writes, ''for nearly 50 years.

''The government has used many ruses,'' he continues to write, ''to divide and politicize the Cao Dai, Catholic and Protestant Churches; to split the Buddhist Church in two, the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam and the Buddhist Church of Vietnam; and to set up the puppet Hoa Hao Buddhist Committee of Representatives, which consists of mainly Communist cadres, to claim leadership over 5 million Hoa Hao Buddhists. The government has requisitioned for its arbitrary use numerous facilities and properties belonging to different Churches.''

Father Ly continues to write: ''With regard to the Catholic Church, the Communists have severely restricted her fundamental rights,'' and he points out and lays out some 10 different instances, including the fact that the government still keeps many priests, clergy members, and lay people in prison or under house arrest.

Father Ly continues to say: ''Faced with this extremely cruel policy of the Vietnamese Communist Government to strangle religions, the Churches in Vietnam have unceasingly demanded religious freedom. Their nonviolent and persistent campaign will continue until the Vietnamese people have full religious freedom, which anyone else in the civilized world has.''

□ 1630

This campaign has, as he points out, the following objectives. This is number one. This is Father Ly's testimony:

''Number one: the government must fully respect the right of all citizens to true religious freedom and the right of churches to select, train and appoint their own priests, clergy members and dignitaries. The government must stop its practice of listing the religious affiliation of citizens on their identity cards and personal documents so that no citizen be discriminated against and be able to freely practice his or her faith.

''Number two,'' Father Ly writes: ''The government must return all facilities and properties it has confiscated or requisitioned from the churches, even when the documentary evidence of ownership was lost in the war if local people can confirm the rightful ownership of these facilities.

''Number three: the government must abandon the ruses and schemes it has used to oppress and destroy religions. Its interference in church affairs must cease. Committees created by the government but dressed up as religious institutions in order to serve the government's anti-religion policy must be disbanded.

''Number four: the government must unconditionally release all clergy members, priests, officials and dignitaries of the churches and lay people who are currently in prison or under administrative detention because of their faith.

''Number five: the government must fully respect every and each article of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, of which the Vietnamese Communist Government became a signatory on September 24, 1982.''

Finally, Father Ly writes, ''However, for as long as the Vietnamese Communists keep their dogmatic and totalitarian rule and disregard the fundamental freedoms of the people as I have presented above,'' he goes on to say, ''by trading with Vietnam the U.S. and other countries only strengthen the Communists' grips on power.''

Again, I would like his full statement read by Members, because it is a very strong and compelling bit of testimony.

These are the words of Father Ly. He is now in prison 3 years of a 10-year prison term.

The resolution we are considering today, Mr. Speaker, has over 100 cosponsors and I believe, we believe, will send a strong message to the leaders of Hanoi to free Father Ly and that the ongoing systematic abuses of human rights must cease and that they will not be tolerated.

H. Con. Res. 378 also condemns, and this amendment we are offering with the language today, the brutal crackdown against the Montagnard. Largely ignored by the American press, Vietnam crushed thousands of Montagnard in the Central Highlands on April 10 and 11. In classic dictatorship style and brutality, many Montagnard, who were protesting the confiscation of tribal lands and ongoing restrictions on religious activities, were beaten and there are reports that some were killed. This comes on the heels of another brutal crackdown against the Montagnard in December of 2001 that has resulted in the closing of over 400 churches.

I would just point out to my colleagues that there are also attempts to coerce people to renounce their faith, renunciation of faith. According to Ambassador John Hanford, our Ambassador At Large For Religious Freedom, there are approximately 100,000 Montagnards who were pressured to renounce their faith. I am happy to say that most resisted, but 100,000 within the last few months and years have been pressured to say ''no'' to their faith in Christ.

H. Con. Res. 378 also urges the government of Vietnam to allow unfettered access to the Central Highlands, where all of this is going on, by foreign diplomats, the international press and nongovernmental organizations, and condemns the extent of the violence used against, as I said, the Montagnard protestors.

Mr. Speaker, finally, human rights have gotten worse, not better, since the Bilateral Trade Agreement with Vietnam of 2001. We must not remain silent while the government of Vietnam continues to persecute religious and political dissidents and ethnic minorities. As a matter of fact, I believe strongly that Vietnam should be branded a Country of Particular Concern, a CPC country, pursuant to the provisions of the International Religious Freedom Act.

We care deeply, Democrats and Republicans, Mr. Speaker. We care deeply about the people of Vietnam and respect and honor their legitimate aspirations to be free. Why does not Hanoi?

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the written testimony of Reverend Thaddeus Nguyen Van Ly before the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

TESTIMONY OF REV. THADDEUS NGUYEN VAN LY

Ladies and gentlemen, it is a great honor to be perhaps the first Vietnamese Roman Catholic priest living under a communist regime to testify before your Commission at a location that represents the ideals of democracy. I would like to send my greetings of the New Millennium to you and to the people of the United States.

In the opening statement of the Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on September 2, 1945, Ho Chi Minh tried to win your nation's support by solemnly quoting the second paragraph of Declaration of Independence of the United States: ''All men are created equal. They are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.''

In less than 250 years since her independence, your country has become the shining example of freedom and independence—anyone who wants to know what freedom and independence are only needs to visit your country and her people.

As an eyewitness living in Communist Vietnam for more than 25 years, I would like to boldly and frankly present my ideas on three issues as your invitation letter has suggested.

I. THE REALITIES OF THE RELIGIONS IN VIETNAM IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

In order to achieve independence, liberty and happiness for the Vietnamese people, Ho Chi Minh chose Communism. This is a fundamental contradiction because Communism calls for a dictatorial regime that does not tolerate the concept of true liberty. Freedom of religion will be absent for as long as the Vietnamese government hangs on to its Communist ideology.

Since their victory of April 30, 1975, the Vietnamese Communists have extended its oppressive policy toward the different religions

to South Vietnam. Laws and decrees have been promulgated to confine, restrict, or ban religious activities. The government has falsely accused clergy members and lay people as a pretext to detain and imprison those who protest its oppressive policy, or those who teach catechism, lead a church choir, or join a seminary. They are banished to concentration camps for years. This policy has been on-going for nearly 50 years (from 1954 to 2001).

The government has used many ruses to divide and politicize the Cao Dai, Catholic and Protestant Churches; to split the Buddhist Church in two—the United Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV) and the Buddhist Church of Vietnam (BCV); and to set up the puppet Hoa Hao Buddhist Committee of Representatives, which consists of mainly Communist cadres, to claim leadership over five million Hoa Hoa Buddhists. The government has requisitioned for its arbitrary use numerous facilities and properties belonging to the different Churches.

With regard to the Catholic Church, the communists have severely restricted her fundamental rights. The many petitions issued by the Catholic Bishops Conference of Vietnam (CBCV) since 1980 have unmasked the Government's policy. This I have analyzed in my Ten-Point Proclamation released on November 24, 1994 and the follow-up proclamation dated November 24, 2000, which I have sent to your Commission. Following is the summary of the points made in those two statements.

1. The Vietnamese Communists have brutally interfered with CBCV's authority to organize its annual Pastoral Assembly: the Bishops must apply for permission to organize and the Assembly's agenda must be preexamined by the Government. After the Assembly, the minutes must be submitted to the Government. All reports from the Assembly must be vetted by the Government before they can be released to the Catholic community and the public.

2. The Vietnamese communists have brutally interfered with CBCV's authority to appoint bishops and ordain of priests. The Holy See had to negotiate with the Vietnamese Government for years on each bishop appointment. The Government often rejects candidates selected by the Church and only accepts those they are pleased with. The Government counts on The Vatican having to yield eventually so as to prevent excessive harm to dioceses facing extended absence of a bishop. The dioceses of Hung Hoa, Hai Phong, and Bui Chu . . . have not had a bishop for more than eight years and The Vatican is not allowed to appoint any.

Anyone intending to join a seminary of any candidate for priesthood elected by the Church must have the approval of and their background examined by the Public Security Police. These candidates must prove their docility and show no sign of resisting the regime. The police give special preference to those agreeing to serve as informants for the Government within the seminary. An applicant's chance would increase if he can afford to bribe the authorities. Applicants having family members who worked for defunct Republic of Vietnam or holding nonconformist views stand no chance of being approved for admission into a seminary or priesthood regardless of their qualifications and moral virtues and regardless of the Church's support. I know many young men who have repeatedly passed the Church-administered entrance exam with top scores but have not been approved for admission into any seminary. Any bishop intending to ordain a seminarian into priesthood or to assign a priest to a mission must ask for permission and negotiate with the Government in a protracted process, which in some cases has taken nearly 20 years without results. The approval criteria imposed by the Government has nothing to do with the moral quality that the Church requires of candidates for priesthood. As a result, the number of newly ordained priests has drastically decreased and is currently insufficient to meet the Church's pastoral needs. Aging priests die or retire without successors. Many priests in rural regions have to minister more than ten parishes, all distant from each other. There is hardly normal religious life in these parishes. It is very difficult for priests to change their residence for new assignments.

3. Groups of faithful in new economic zones or in remote areas are anxious to have mass for Christmas and Easter each year but their most basic spiritual need is rarely met. The atheist Government wants these people not to think of religion, which it considers harmful and dangerous.

4. A Mass that brings together the faithful from different places and priests desiring to say mass in places other than their usual assigned location must have prior government permission.

5. The Government still keeps many priests, clergy members, and lay people in prison or under house arrest. (Committee for Religious Freedom in Vietnam has made this list available to your Commission.)

6. The Government brutally violates the Church's freedom of the press. No local or national publication of the Church is allowed. As a result, The Church cannot fulfill its evangelical duties. Before 1975, there were more than a dozen Catholic newspapers and magazines in South Vietnam. Today there are only two weekly magazines, Cong Giao & Dan Toc (The Catholics & The People) and Nguoi Cong Giao Viet Nam (The Vietnamese Catholics), which are created and financed by the Government. CBCV's only publication is the newsletter Ban Tin Hiep Thong (The Communion News), of which the first six issues were ''illegal.'' The Government gave the Church temporary permission to publish issues 7–9 from February to September 2000. In October 2000, the government rescinded its permission and discontinued this only publication of The Church. There is no freedom of speech in my country. Churches of course have none. This kind of statement that I am presenting to you cannot be circulated in Vietnam because no photocopying store or printing shop would dare to reproduce it. Nobody dares to keep it, fearing for his own life and the safety of his family. Those who dare must be prepared for martyrdom. In fact, on February 7 the public security police searched two of my assistants and found a floppy disk containing a draft of this statement. These two brave young men were detained overnight at the police station for extensive questioning.

7. The Government forces all students from all grades and in college to study and love Socialism while in fact nobody likes to teach or study it. Only the three million communist party members and the five million members of the Communist League of Youth should study this ideology if they still believe in it. Forcing the entire Vietnamese nation to study a bankrupt ideology that has caused them so much suffering is outright unconscionable.

8. The Communist Government has, since 1954 in North Vietnam and since 1975 in South Vietnam, seized or requisitioned thousands upon thousands of Church facilities used for education, charity, and medical service. Consequently the Church has no means to train seminarians, providing education and human services to the poor, the sick, the handicapped and the orphans, and it is extremely difficult for Church members to deliver service in a government facility. For example, the Pius X Papal Institute in Da Lat, run by the Jesuits, had been an outstanding college for priesthood formation until its confiscation in 1976 by the Government, which turned it into a training school for Communist cadres. The Hoan Thien Minor Seminary at 11 Dong Da, Hue, offering high school-level training to seminarians, was taken by force by the Government in December 1979; all three priests teaching at the seminary and more than 80 seminarians were evicted. These are but a few examples.

Faced with this extremely cruel policy of the Vietnamese Communist Government to strangle religions, the Churches in Vietnam have unceasingly demanded religious freedom. Their non-violent and persistent campaign will continue until the Vietnamese people have full religious freedom, which anyone else in the civilized world has. This campaign has the following objectives.

1. The Government must fully respect the right of all citizens to true religious freedom and the right of Churches to select, train, and appoint their own priests, clergy members and dignitaries. The Government must stop its practice of listing the religious affiliation of citizens on their identity cards and personal documents so that no citizen will be discriminated against and be able to freely practice his or her faith.

2. The Government must return all facilities and properties it has confiscated or requisitioned from the Churches, even when documentary evidence of ownership was lost in the war if local people can confirm the rightful owner of these facilities and properties.

3. The Government must abandon the ruses and schemes it has used to oppress and destroy religions. Its interference in Church affairs must cease. Committees created by the government but dressed up as religious institutions in order to serve the Government's antireligion policy must be disbanded.

4. The Government must unconditionally release all clergy members, priests, officials and dignitaries of the Churches and lay people who are currently in prison or under administrative detention because of their faith.

5. The Government must fully respect every and each article of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, of which the Vietnamese Communist Government became a signatory on September 24, 1982.

II. EFFECTS OF THE BILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN VIETNAM

I am only a priest, not a specialist in economics and politics. I speak as a Vietnamese citizen with a deep love for my country and my people.

Vietnam needs the Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) for her economic development. In principle I dearly want my country to have the trust of other countries, among them the United States, so that my country may achieve prosperity and my people may have a better life and fully realize their potentials.

However, for as long as the Vietnamese Communists keep their dogmatic and totalitarian rule and disregard the fundamental freedoms of the people as I have presented above, by trading with Vietnam the United States and other countries would only strengthen the Communists' grips on power; the BTA may end up benefiting only the governing minority while prolonging the suffering of the entire people; the vast majority of the common people like us may at best receive small crumbs trickling down from the top but in return must endure our fate of the exploited and disenfranchised for so much longer.

In regard to the ratification of the BTA, I urgently warn the US Congress not to trust

the Vietnamese Communists' promise of good faith. The United States and many other countries have had bitter experiences dealing with their broken promises in the past.

The Vietnamese Communists have signed many international accords and agreements on human rights but have never intended to respect them. Their intention is to deceive the international community. For example, Vietnam became signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1982 but does not abide by Articles 18 and 19 of this covenant which call for the respect for the freedoms of thought, speech, and religion. If international human rights institutions allow themselves to fall victim to such deception, they will contribute to the following dire consequences: (1) the Vietnamese Government will exploit their signing the document to falsely claim that there are human rights in Vietnam; (2) these international institutions will lose their credibility as they prove to be so easily deceived; and (3) these institutions unknowingly prolong the Communist oppression of the Vietnamese people—this in fact constitutes a major crime against my people.

Therefore, if the United States and other countries truly sympathize with my ill-fated people and truly care about human rights, especially the right to religious freedom, of the Vietnamese people, you must not help the Communist Government prolong its totalitarian rule. Instead, the United States and other countries should suspend all agreements harmful to the Vietnamese people and do everything in your capacity to put pressure on the Vietnamese Government to allow freedom and democracy to dawn on our country.

III. WHAT CAN BE DONE TO HELP IMPROVE FREEDOM OF RELIGION IN VIETNAM IN THE NEAR TERM, AND IN THE LONG TERM?

The Vietnamese Communists have idolized Ho Chi Minh, turning him into a ''god'' and creating a new religion revolving around him. The Communist Government wants to suppress all other religions and replace them with this new religion in order to unify the Vietnamese people behind it. In fact, Ho Chi Minh had made significant contributions to our national struggle for independence but at the same time had committed serious crimes against the Vietnamese people. One basic endeavor that the international community needs to undertake is to unravel the harmful myths woven by the Communists around this historical figure.

In the short term, the United States and other countries should help the Churches in Vietnam achieve greater independence from the government, should show by example how freedom of religion is respected in the free world, and should expose the oppression that the Vietnamese Government has imposed on the Churches. At first, the Vietnamese Communists may feel that such independence would clash with its totalitarian power but with time it may realize that the power to control and interfere with Church affairs, such as the appointment of priests, should have never been theirs to start with.

The Vietnamese people will not enjoy religious freedom for as long as the Communist regime remains in place. Therefore if the United States and other countries truly desire to see the return of religious freedom to the Vietnamese people, they will need to create favorable conditions for the early demise of the Communist regime.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This is a precious opportunity to speak on behalf of my people, of the different Churches, and of the Catholic Church in particular. I would like to extend my gratitude to you, to the U.S. Congress, and the American people, including some two million Vietnamese-Americans, for having given me such an opportunity.

May God bless you, your families, your colleagues, the American people, and your beautiful country. Thank you.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, first I want to commend my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), for his leadership on Vietnam human rights issues and, indeed, on being the most indefatigable and passionate advocate of human rights in this body.

As the political security and economic relationship between the United States and Vietnam become increasingly complex, we must never forget the continued absence of internationally recognized human rights in Vietnam.

Mr. Speaker, Father Ly, the subject of this resolution, is a Vietnamese Catholic priest. Three years ago, he was invited by the International Religious Freedom Commission to give testimony related to religious freedom in Vietnam. Since the Vietnamese Government denied Father Ly permission to leave his country, he submitted written testimony for the record. In this testimony, Father Ly outlined the lack of religious freedom in Vietnam and urged his fellow Vietnamese citizens to continue to struggle, nonviolently, for their rights.

He was subsequently sentenced to 15 years in prison after a 1-day closed trial in which he was denied adequate legal counsel. Father Ly was convicted of slandering the Communist Party and distorting the religious policy of the government of Vietnam.

Subsequently, Mr. Speaker, the United Nations Working Group stated that Father Ly was arrested and detained only for his opinions, and the deprivation of the liberty of Father Ly is arbitrary and contravenes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Mr. Speaker, as we meet here today, Father Ly continues to remain in prison because he had the courage of his convictions and he refused to whitewash the continued lack of religious freedom in Vietnam. Our resolution urges his immediate release from prison, a call for justice long overdue.

It is my strong hope that the Vietnamese Government will receive this wake-up call through the passage of our resolution. While large numbers of Vietnamese Catholics continue to attend services each Sunday, the Vietnamese Government prohibits the church from training enough priests to meet the growing demand for clerics. The Vietnamese Government has also refused to compensate the church fully for expropriated church property, and it prohibits the church from expanding its activities to help the poor in Vietnam.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to show their concern about the continued unjust imprisonment of Father Ly and the lack of religious freedom in Vietnam by supporting strongly our resolution.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. COX), the chairman of the Select Committee on Homeland Security.

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, we are here on the floor to demand of the communist government of Vietnam that Father Ly immediately be released, unconditionally. Father Ly's only offense is that he is a Catholic priest who sought to minister to the spiritual needs of his countrymen and countrywomen in Vietnam. For this offense, he has been in prison for the last 3 years, and the communist government of Vietnam expects that he will serve the full decade of his sentence.

This is, of course, an affront to human rights. It is also an affront to the United States, because it was the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom that solicited Father Ly's testimony. They asked that Father Ly testify in person. He was willing to do so; but, of course, the communist government of Vietnam forbade him from doing so. So Father Ly then submitted written testimony, and it is on the basis of that written testimony that he was convicted. That is why he is now in jail.

Never has there been a clearer path from freedom to imprisonment than in this case. We can read the entirety of his offense. What he said, in response to questions from the United States, is that there is not religious freedom in Vietnam. He said that the government of Vietnam had stripped all churches of their independence and freedom. For speaking this truth, Father Ly is now expected to spend a decade in a communist prison.

It was 1 month after he wrote this testimony and sent it to the United States that he was arrested. Indeed, he was arrested while he was saying mass. He was on the alter before a congregation. Six hundred policemen of the Vietnamese communist government surrounded the church, stormed it, and dragged him off. Of course, the Vietnamese Government provided him no legal representation, no consultation whatsoever; and not surprisingly, on October 19 of that same year, Father Thaddeus Nguyen Van Ly was sentenced to this seemingly indefinite time in prison, 15 years originally. He has already spent 3 years. Now he is going to get a 10-year sentence.

Father Ly is no stranger to repression at the hands of the Vietnamese

dictatorship. Since 1977, the government has repeatedly harassed him, repeatedly arrested him, and repeatedly jailed him for his advocacy of religious freedom.

So the Congress today calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Father Ly. But we also recognize that he is not alone. He represents the struggle of all of those citizens of Vietnam who are fighting for freedom and for democracy.

Another piece of legislation to address that struggle is the Vietnam Human Rights Act, H.R. 1587, which I hope the House will soon consider. This legislation will prohibit nonhumanitarian assistance to the government of Vietnam, it will support the efforts of human rights and democracy advocates there, and it will help us work to overcome the government's jamming of Radio Free Asia and their Vietnamese broadcast. It will help resettle refugees and require an annual State Department report on the progress towards freedom and democracy in Vietnam, or the lack of it.

This resolution that is before us today, of which I am an initial cosponsor, is, therefore, a call to action. It is a call, of course, upon the Vietnamese Government to act; but it is also our call to action. The Vietnamese Government and other dictatorships around the globe must come to realize that oppression does not go unnoticed, that the Congress and the President will continue to fight for those like Father Ly who seek meaningful change in their country.

Mr. Speaker, I am very, very proud to join the gentleman from New Jersey (Chairman SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) in supporting this resolution, and I am very proud of the stands for human rights that this Congress will soon take.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to my good friend and distinguished colleague, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ), a champion of human rights.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 378, a resolution which calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Catholic Father and human rights champion Thaddeus Nguyen Van Ly. I thank my colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), for bringing this resolution to the floor. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the bill, and I am proud to work with him on the bipartisan Vietnam Caucus.

On this day, the 10th anniversary of Vietnam Human Rights Day and the 14th anniversary of the Vietnamese Manifesto of Nonviolent Movement For Human Rights, there can be nothing more appropriate action for this Congress than to pass this resolution about Father Ly. Why would that be? Well, we as Members of the United States Congress have a special responsibility, for, you see, it was testimony to this Congress, to this Nation, that Father Ly gave us that put him behind bars.

□ 1645

In fact, we brought forward that testimony in a human rights caucus hearing on religious freedoms in Vietnam, or, should I say, the lack of religious freedom in Vietnam. So we have a particular responsibility to let the world know and to put pressure on the Vietnamese Government with respect to Father Ly's incarceration.

In reaction to Father Ly's defense of human rights and his pronouncements on the need for religious freedom and nonviolent resistance, the Government of Vietnam branded him a traitor, a traitor, and prohibited him from carrying out his religious duties as a priest and sentenced him to 10 years of prison for ''damaging the government's unit policy.''

The imprisonment of Father Ly is not only a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, it is a direct attack on each and every one of us who value human rights.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey, and I thank the gentleman from California for being such a strong supporter of human rights in the world, and I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. AKIN), and I thank him for his support on human rights in general and human rights in Vietnam in particular.

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be able to join my colleagues today and to add my support for House Concurrent Resolution 378 calling for the immediate and unconditional release of father Thadeus Nguyen Van Ly.

Father Ly has peacefully campaigned for more than 30 years for religious freedom in his country, and he has called on the officials of that nation of Vietnam to allow churches to appoint their own leadership and to stop listing people's religious affiliation on their I.D. card, and to return property that was confiscated from the churches to those particular denominations and faiths.

Now, recently, Father Ly, as we have heard, has been sentenced to 15 years of solitary confinement, a very serious sentence, for merely advocating people having the right for free religious expression. That sentence has been mitigated by 5 years, still a 10-year sentence. In the brief time that he had to speak to his own family, he made the following statement: ''My duty and my conscience required me to fight for the freedom of our church. If I had realized those terrifying situations for our church and had not done anything, I would have been guilty before God. Now I think I have accomplished my duty, I do not feel sorry for myself.''

Father Ly, though he lives on the other side of the world, is in a sense a brother of each of ours. This is a personal affront that the Government of Vietnam has stood against those people who have the courage to allow people to express their own personal consciences.

It is particularly appropriate in this Chamber and at this time for us to recall the words of Madison on the subject of property. When property was discussed by our founders, they did not think so much of a piece of land or even of possession, but they thought of the property first and foremost and closest to the heart of all true lovers of freedom: It was the property of our own convictions, the property of our own soul, the property to be able to express our opinion and our devotion to whichever God it is that we would worship. And it is this fundamental, fundamental, heartfelt core of American belief which binds us to freedom-fighters all over the world and which calls us to strong condemnation of the Government of Vietnam, that they would trample people's right to worship and freedom under their feet with total disregard, and would lock a champion of freedom like this away for 10 years, away from his family, and harassing his family.

So I strongly add my support to the gentleman and his resolution, H. Con. Res. 378.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, we have no additional requests for time, and I yield back the balance of our time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYES). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 378, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. 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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 378, the concurrent resolution just considered.

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

There was no objection.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SERVICEMEN'S READJUSTMENT ACT OF 1944

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 91) recognizing the 60th anniversary of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.J. RES. 91

Whereas on June 22, 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly known as the GI Bill of Rights;

Whereas the GI Bill of Rights provided education and training benefits to more than 7,800,000 United States veterans and subsequent Acts have provided those benefits to more than 21,500,000 United States veterans;

Whereas the GI Bill of Rights provided unemployment benefits, small business loans, and job counseling services to assist veterans with the transition from military service to civilian employment;

Whereas the GI Bill of Rights is credited with contributing to the robust recovery of the United States post-World War II economy, and is largely recognized as one of the most successful domestic programs of the United States;

Whereas the GI Bill of Rights, and subsequent Acts, established home loan programs for United States veterans which, since 1944, have guaranteed more than 17,500,000 loans, totaling aggregate loan amounts of more than $800,000,000,000, providing home ownership opportunities to millions of United States veterans and their families; and

Whereas the GI Bill of Rights, and subsequent Acts, have been recognized by political, business, sociocultural, and educational leaders as landmark pieces of legislation which have collectively contributed to the development of the United States middle class: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress—

(1) supports the recognition of the 60th anniversary of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, and

(2) requests the President to issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe the 60th anniversary of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, House Joint Resolution 91 would recognize the 60th anniversary of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, popularly known as the GI Bill of Rights, arguably America's most successful domestic program ever.

In the decade following World War II, more than 2 million eligible men and women went to college using the GI Bill educational benefits. The result was an American workforce enriched by 450,000 engineers, 238,000 teachers, 91,000 scientists, 67,000 doctors, 22,000 dentists, and another 1 million college-educated men and women. It is estimated that another 5 million men and women received other schooling or job training on the GI Bill, helping to create the modern middle class.

The original GI Bill exceeded all expectations and had enormous benefits beyond the immediate benefits given to our deserving war veterans. College enrollment grew dramatically in 1947. GI Bill enrollees accounted for almost half of the total college population, resulting in a need for more and larger colleges and universities. In New Jersey, Rutgers University saw its admissions grow from a pre-war high of 7,000 to almost 16,000 during the postwar decades.

Mr. Speaker, economic philosopher Peter Drucker looking at the GI Bill's historical impact noted ''The GI Bill of Rights, and the enthusiastic response on the part of America's veterans, signaled the shift to a knowledge society. In this society, knowledge is the primary resource for individuals and the economy overall.''

In fact, Mr. Speaker, a Veterans Administration study in 1965 showed that due to the increased earning power of GI Bill college graduates, Federal Government income tax revenues rose by more than $1 billion annually; and in less than 20 years, the $14 billion cost of the original program had been recovered. Further, the home loan portion of the original GI Bill of Rights was so successful that it is credited with creating the suburbs in America. Before the GI Bill, the great majority of Americans were renters. Now, most Americans live in their own homes.

Most importantly, the GI Bill transformed the working men and women of America, giving millions new opportunities they could only dream of before it was enacted.

Mr. Speaker, building upon this success of the original GI Bill, Congress approved a second education bill known as the Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1952 during the Korean War, and then a third bill, the Veterans Readjustment Benefits Act of 1966 during the Vietnam War, and a fourth bill, the Veterans Educational Assistance Program for the post-Vietnam War era.

Finally, in 1985, Congress approved today's Montgomery GI Bill, or the MGIB, which was designed not only to help veterans transition into the workforce through education and training, but also to support the all-volunteer Armed Forces. All totaled, over 20 million men and women have used the VA educational benefits in the various programs since the first GI Bill in 1944.

Furthermore, the use of educational benefits as a recruitment tool has been one of the most spectacularly successful of all tools given to our Nation's military recruiters.

Mr. Speaker, when I was first elected chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs in January of 2001, the GI Bill needed to be updated. As a result of inflation and rising higher education costs, the monthly educational benefit was estimated to cover less than two-thirds of what would be required for a veteran student to attend a 4-year public college as a commuter student. GI Bill utilization rates were down under 50 percent, as far too many veterans concluded they simply could not afford to attend college or job training programs using GI Bill benefits.

With good, solid, bipartisan support in the House and Senate, along with a coalition of education and veterans leaders, I introduced the comprehensive legislation, H.R. 1291, the Veterans Education and Benefits Expansion Act of 2001, now Public Law 107–103, which dramatically increased Montgomery GI Bill benefits. Signed by President Bush in December of 2001, this legislation boosted the total lifetime Montgomery GI educational benefit from $24,192 in December of 2001 to $35,460 today, an increase of $11,268, which goes directly towards education and job training for qualified veterans. This number is about a 46 percent increase when it was phased in over 3 years.

Already, the number of GI Bill users has risen dramatically by over 24,000 in the first full year of the higher benefit levels, from 289,894 in 2001 to 323,165 in 2002, an 11.5 percent increase after 3 years of declined usage. So in other words, it was going in the opposite direction in terms of utilization. That now has ratcheted upwards.

In addition to benefit increases over the past 4 years, Congress has also made dozens of other improvements to the GI Bill program through 32 separate provisions of law, including accelerated GI Bill payments for short-term, intensive, high-technology courses; two major increases in chapter 35 benefits for veterans' surviving spouses and their dependents; protection against loss of GI benefits resulting from mobilizations and deployments; use of the GI Bill for entrepreneurship courses offered through the Small Business Development Centers; and use of benefits for licensing and credentialing.

And, later this week, I am happy to say, Mr. Speaker, the Subcommittee on Benefits of the Committee on Veterans Affairs, chaired very admirably by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BROWN), is poised to mark up H.R. 1716, the Veterans Earn and Learn Act, which I introduced along with my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), to modernize the VA's on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs.

Mr. Speaker, the late author Michael J. Bennett in his book, ''The GI Bill and the Making of Modern America'' wrote: ''The GI Bill was the legislation that made the United States the first overwhelmingly middle-class Nation in the world. It was the law that worked, the law whose unexpected consequences were even more than its intended purposes.''

I am pleased to join with the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD), the prime sponsor of this resolution, and many others in writing this resolution,

and I strongly encourage all of my colleagues to support it. Let us have all of America celebrate a remarkable legacy that continues to give, a legacy given to us by the visionaries who crafted it, and the World War II veterans who converted its opportunities into the American dream.

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

□ 1700

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

I rise today in strong support of House Joint Resolution 91, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same. This joint resolution commemorates the 60th anniversary of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly known as the GI Bill of Rights.

On June 22, 1944, President Franklin Roosevelt signed into law the GI Bill of Rights establishing what many believed to be one of the most socially progressive and economically effective legislative measures ever passed by the United States Congress.

Former Senator Dale Bumpers of Arkansas has stated that he ''considers it to be the best single investment the Federal Government has ever made.''

A noted author, James Michener, said of the GI bill that he ''judged the law one of the two or three finest Congress has ever passed since our Constitution took effect.''

A congressional research study found that for every dollar invested in the GI bill, the country recouped between $5 and $12 through revenue generated by veterans taking advantage of the program's benefits.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that the GI Bill of Rights was originally drafted as an economic stimulus package, not necessarily as an education program. The GI bill benefits originally included education and training; loan guarantees for homes, small businesses and farms; unemployment pay of $20 a week for up to 52 weeks; and job training services.

Many social and political leaders of the day remembered the high unemployment, homelessness, and frustration faced by World War I veterans upon their return to a country in the throes of a deep economic recession. These leaders wanted to avoid the regrettable Bonus March on Washington of 1932, and they understood that nearly double the number of World War II veterans would return than after World War I.

It was essential to our Nation's welfare that action be taken to assist veterans' transition back into civilian life. What they did not realize was how popular and effective the education benefits were going to be under the new law.

Of the approximately 16 million individuals who served in World War II, the GI Bill of Rights provided nearly 7.8 million veterans with education and training benefits; 2.2 million veterans chose to study at the college and university level; and by 1947, half of all college students were veterans.

This influx changed the face of higher education. No longer was college limited to the upper class. Former servicemembers of all socio-economic classes, races, and religions broke open the doors of higher education, including nearly 60,000 women. The Greatest Generation went to college.

World War II veterans also had a tremendous effect on the housing market. With the assistance of the GI bill home loan benefit, many veterans purchased homes. By 1955, approximately 4 million home loans had been granted, and veterans and their families owned nearly 20 percent of all new homes built.

This housing boom allowed FDR's administration to stave off a post-war recession. The unemployment benefits, small business and farm loans, job training services, and education benefits allowed the Greatest Generation to successfully transition from soldiers to civilian leaders.

By 1956, the year the original GI bill expired, the Federal Government had invested over $14 billion in the program, and the veterans of our Nation made good on that investment. The Department of Veterans Affairs estimated that the increase in tax revenue of World War II veterans alone was several times the amount appropriated for the benefit.

Mr. Speaker, the GI Bill of Rights was unquestionably one of the greatest legislative accomplishments. It was a catalyst for the development of the United States middle class and provided our Greatest Generation with an opportunity to succeed. Indeed, the impact of the original GI bill continues today.

Subsequent related acts have provided education and training benefits to more than 21.5 million veterans and guaranteed more than 17.5 million home loans to veterans and their families. I know very well that the GI Bill of Rights and subsequent acts have provided many generations of veterans in the State of Maine quality benefits and an opportunity to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, it is fitting that today we come together in this great body to recognize and celebrate the 60th anniversary of the GI Bill of Rights. I encourage all Members to recognize the importance and power of this law and to continue to work together to provide our veterans the quality benefits that they earned through their service to our Nation.

This joint resolution deserves the support of all Members.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BROWN), the distinguished chairman of our Subcommittee on Benefits.

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I join with the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) in asking my colleagues to support House Joint Resolution 91.

This resolution would recognize through ceremonies and other educational activities the 60th anniversary of the World War II GI Bill of Rights, probably the most successful domestic legislation this Chamber has ever written.

History tells us that much of America's post-World War II motivation was concern over another depression. When 12 million of our demobilized troops came home to an uncertain economy as the mills of war stopped grinding and the United States undertook a massive rebuilding effort in Western Europe and Japan, our great Nation showed remarkable vision.

The Congress gave veterans an opportunity to go to college, sort of an economic cubby hole for them, as we transformed our economy from one of wartime to one of peacetime focus.

Our fellow Americans who selflessly saved the world from tyranny and dictatorship excelled in college because they were already veterans of what author Michael Bennett has referred to as ''America's most demanding prep school,'' the wartime military. World war II veterans attended college and other forms of training in droves, some 7.8 million strong under the GI bill.

Disciplined by duty and enlightened by experience, World War II veterans changed America's higher education dramatically because they did something that was very unusual in an agrarian-based economy: they went to school year around. James Conant, former president of Harvard, noted that former GIs are the best students Harvard has ever had.

Veterans took our economy to new heights of prosperity. In fact, economists credit the veterans themselves with repaying the $14.5 billion cost of the World War II GI bill. By 1960, they paid it off through the additional taxes on their increased earning power as doctors, teachers, engineers, entrepreneurs, civil servants and leaders of business, industry and labor.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution is about their inspiring story. I urge my colleagues to support House Joint Resolution 91.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), the ranking member of the committee.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution, and I want to thank the chairman of the full committee for bringing it to the floor today, and I want to thank the chairman of our subcommittee and the Democratic side for their hard work in bringing this together and this important resolution that I hope this House will pay close attention to.

Mr. Speaker, the Servicemen's Adjustment Act of 1944, or as most people

call it, the act of the GI Bill of Rights, was signed into law by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt nearly 60 years ago on June 22, 1944. The Nation was fighting World War II in the Pacific and the European theaters, and the civilian population came together like no other time in our history to support the war effort on the home front. It truly was the Greatest Generation of our veterans.

This joint resolution is a timely tribute to one of the most important legislative measures passed into law, and the men and women who returned home to build and strengthen our economy and our society. The GI Bill of Rights sets the standard for how all other comparable legislation should be measured.

Because of it, millions of young soldiers returning from the war went to college, an opportunity unimaginable to many before. In fact, just from the chairman's home State, Peter Rodino attended an institution as a result of the GI bill. Richard Nixon, John Kennedy, I guess John Kennedy did not need as much help with the resources that he had, but it has helped dozens of other people. So that the majority of the Congress in the year 1946 was comprised of World War II veterans, and I just think it shows us how good it is.

I stand before my colleagues as one recipient who used my GI bill benefits for education and for housing opportunities. So I am very thankful, and I think the Nation should be proud of itself for doing something so right at that important time.

Mr. Speaker, I stand before my colleagues, like so many other veterans, as a beneficiary. That is why I support this joint resolution, and I urge my colleagues to support this measure to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the GI Bill of Rights, and I want to thank Sonny Montgomery for making sure that we had this review and he with us today, if not in his presence, in our prayers and thoughts.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS), the distinguished chairman of our Subcommittee on Health.

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, the gentleman from New Jersey, for extending to me time; and I rise in support of House Joint Resolution 91, which supports the recognition of the 60th anniversary of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, more popularly known as the GI bill, which transformed our country immediately after World War II and brought the American dream to life.

It is my understanding that during an emergency meeting of the American Legion leadership in 1943, Harry Colmery, a former national commander, crafted the initial draft of the GI bill on hotel stationery at the Mayflower Renaissance Hotel. President Franklin Roosevelt signed the GI bill on June 22, 1944.

The bill put the dream of a college education within grasp of all of the veterans who came back from World War II who had served 90 days or more, and they qualified for up to $500 per term for vocational school or for college.

In my home State of Connecticut, at the University of Connecticut, over 8,000 students enrolled during the period 1946 to 1947, four times the number registered in the period shortly preceding the war.

When we think, Mr. Speaker, of the GI bill, we should not just think of the Greatest Generation. We should think of the many tens of thousands of veterans who since that time have taken advantage of the GI bill; veterans, like myself, returning from service in Vietnam and seeking additional education and then also my wife and I coming here to Washington, D.C., in the early 1970s and looking for a house to buy and appealing to the GI bill to assist us so that not only the dream of an education and the dream of a better job but the dream of homeownership came home to us because of the GI bill.

It makes me proud, Mr. Speaker, to be a life member of the American Legion, knowing that it was the American Legion that initiated this incredible transforming program for America's veterans.

I am excited to join my colleagues from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs here today to celebrate the 60th anniversary of this wonderful piece of legislation, and I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD), specifically for introducing this resolution.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER).

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) for his leadership on this and join with my colleagues in calling for this resolution, which commemorates the 60th anniversary of the GI Bill of Rights.

As the speakers before said, this is a perfect example of responsible and progressive government, and it was truly an economic stimulus package of far-reaching impact. Many authorities indicate that passage of this GI Bill of Rights paid for itself many times over and largely contributed to the post-World War II economic recovery.

Millions of veterans were helped in their transition from soldier to citizen through unemployment compensation, education benefits, and down payment on houses.

The chairman of the committee referred to the creation of the modern middle class. I can well remember after my father volunteered in World War II, the working-class family that I was a part of had to move in with relatives and was renting a very small apartment.

□ 1715

After he came home, I remember 55 years later the incredible feeling of being able to move into our own home for the first time in our lives. With a few thousand dollars down payment, and with the new homes that were constructed by Levitt in New York, the American dream was made possible for working-class families, such as my own, with the help of the GI Bill of Rights. I will tell you that having a sense of your own home was incredibly beneficial to my own family.

So it is appropriate as we approach the 60th anniversary of the bill's enactment that we look back and celebrate the accomplishments of the greatest generation. I would hope also that as we think about this GI bill, we look forward as well. We must honor the sacrifices of the men and women who make up the greatest generation, I think, by investing in the current generation of servicemen and women and provide them the necessary resources so they can succeed and continue the legacy of this greatest generation.

There are a lot of ways to do that. The chairman of the committee, the ranking member of the committee, have bills, for example, to make mandatory the funding of our health care system rather than rely on the appropriations process each year, where we fall behind, further and further, on the adequate health treatment of our veterans. We must get this on to a mandatory funding kind of scheme so we can give our veterans the health care they deserve.

The education provided for in the GI bill that we are celebrating today must be improved upon. We have tried to take steps forward, but right now it pays only $985 a month to veterans who are attending college. And that does not go too far. There is legislation, such as H.R. 1713, the Montgomery GI Bill Improvements Act, that returns the GI bill to its original intent that we are celebrating today by providing full tuition to a public institution of higher learning, and books, fees, and a living stipend for veterans who are students.

Interestingly enough, did my colleagues know there is one group in World War II who were denied their rights under this GI bill that we are celebrating today? The Merchant Marines. The Merchant Mariners of World War II did not come under this bill we are celebrating. They suffered the highest casualty rate of any of the branches of service, and we might say have become the forgotten service. No legislation was passed by this Congress to address their needs until 1988, when they too were granted a watered-down version of the GI Bill of Rights.

I have legislation, H.R. 3721, it is called The Belated Thank You to the Merchant Mariners of World War II, which will grant them compensation to partially, because we can never really make up for it, the 40 years they went without benefits that we are celebrating today, benefits that could have

provided them, too, with an education and a home loan and a small business loan.

Other steps that we can take. We have a discharge petition number 8 sitting beside me that would help widows of veterans to achieve some measure of dignity in their old age. Those widows of servicemen and servicewomen who paid years into the Survivors Benefit Program will only get 35 percent of the retirement pension when they reach age 62. This is not sufficient for people to live on. This is not a sufficient thank-you for those who have been part of a family that have contributed to our Armed Forces and to our Nation's security.

So let us think as we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the GI Bill of Rights and celebrate that wonderful act, let us rededicate ourselves to the task that we have today. Let us honor past veterans by truly honoring present and future veterans in the best way possible by living up to the promises made by a grateful Nation.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ).

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and the chairman, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), and my colleague on the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD), for his great leadership as the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Benefits.

Mr. Speaker, 60 years ago this June, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law one of the most extensive veterans packages to date: the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly known as the GI Bill of Rights.

While our troops were fighting in World War II, the Department of Labor estimated that after the war 15 million men and women who had been serving in the Armed Services would be unemployed. To reduce the possibility of postwar depression, a series of programs for educating and training American troops were designed and recommended to Congress by the American Legion.

Although some felt that the GI bill was too expensive and would lower standards in education, the Congress quickly passed the measure. Now the GI Bill of Rights is credited with contributing to the strong recovery of the United States post-World War II economy, and is recognized as one of the most successful domestic programs in the United States.

The GI bill put higher education within the reach of millions of World War II veterans. Starved for students during World War II, college campuses were suddenly overcrowded. The percentage of college-aged men and women grew. Students who had previously been told they were not college material were able to rise to the academic challenge. And most important, the GI bill accelerated the number of college-educated Americans.

In the last 60 years, more than 21 million veterans have been able to take advantage of the benefit included in the GI Bill of Rights. Another important provision of the GI bill was the billions of dollars provided to veterans to purchase homes and to start small businesses. These loans allowed the majority of Americans to transform from renters to homeowners, and the backbone of our economy, America's small businesses, prospered.

The GI Bill of Rights has been amended several times through the years, but the goal has remained the same, providing our veterans with a variety of benefits. And for this we thank those who allowed and who had the vision to pass forth this particular piece of legislation. And we thank our veterans for their service.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and, in closing, I do want to thank the good gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the chair of the committee, as well as the ranking member, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), and the chair of the Subcommittee on Benefits, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BROWN), for all the hard work that they do dealing with veterans' issues, as well as staff on both sides of the aisle. They work very well together. I do want to thank staff on both sides of the aisle for their hard work in making sure we do what is right for the veterans here in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, if I could finally thank the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) for his sponsorship of this resolution. It is very timely and extremely appropriate. I thank him for his work on the subcommittee and, of course, thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), our ranking member, for all of his cooperation. We do things in partnership, and it is greatly appreciated, and I think the veterans benefit from that kind of bipartisanship.

The gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS) made the point, and I think it was very well taken, about the great role the American Legion played in drafting this legislation. At the time, there was talk of maybe giving a $500 bonus to the returning GIs. Then out of the blue, pretty much, Harry Colmery, who was the American Legion National Commander in 1936, a World War I veteran, crafted, as the subcommittee chairman pointed out, on Mayflower stationery this fine concept and practically wrote the GI bill at the Mayflower Hotel. It was quickly grasped by Members of Congress and the President as an extraordinarily good idea, and it really did create the modern-day middle class.

One of the things I do when I wear my international affairs hat, as chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, is to strongly encourage the Eastern European countries, the Russians and others, that if you want a stable middle class, this landmark legislation crafted by the American Legion, and certainly pushed through to completion by the Congress at the end of the world war, is the way to go. It is historic and truly landmark legislation that has profound positive implications and consequences.

I think recognizing it the way we are today is very proper and fitting, and again I want to thank the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) for that.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYES). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution, H.J. Res. 91.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. MICHAUD. 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.

RECOGNIZING THE VETERANS WHO SERVED DURING WORLD WAR II, THE AMERICANS WHO SUPPORTED THE WAR, AND CELEBRATING THE COMPLETION OF THE NATIONAL WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 409), recognizing with humble gratitude the more than 16,000,000 veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces during World War II and the Americans who supported the war effort on the home front and celebrating the completion of the National World War II Memorial on the National Mall in the District of Columbia.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 409

Whereas the National World War II Memorial on the National Mall in the District of Columbia will be the first national memorial to both recognize the courage, bravery, and unselfish dedication of the members of the United States Armed Forces who served in World War II and those who served on the home front and acknowledge the commitment and achievement of the entire American people in that conflict;

Whereas World War II veteran Roger Durbin of Berkey, Ohio, first proposed the construction of a National World War II memorial, and Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur of

Ohio introduced legislation to establish the memorial in the District of Columbia to honor members of the Armed Forces who served in World War II and to commemorate the participation of the United States in that war;

Whereas, in Public Law 103–32 (107 Stat. 90; 40 U.S.C. 8903 note), approved May 25, 1993, Congress authorized the American Battle Monuments Commission, an independent Federal agency, to design and construct the memorial;

Whereas the location selected as the site for the memorial, the Rainbow Pool site on the National Mall at the east end of the Reflecting Pool between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument, was dedicated on November 11, 1995;

Whereas, in an open competition, the American Battle Monuments Commission selected Friedrich St. Florian as the design architect for the memorial, and his final architectural design was approved by the Commission of Fine Arts, the National Capital Planning Commission, and the Secretary of Interior;

Whereas the late Representative Bob Stump of Arizona, who served as Chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives, sponsored several measures to expedite the funding and construction of the memorial, which were enacted as sections 601, 602, and 603 of Public Law 106–117 and Public Law 107–11;

Whereas after eight years of planning, six years of public deliberation, and four years of fund raising, construction began on the memorial in September 2001;

Whereas the memorial would not have been possible without the efforts and dedication of National Chairman Senator Robert J. Dole and National Co-Chairman Frederick W. Smith, who were instrumental in raising over $194,000,000 for the construction of the memorial;

Whereas these generous contributions came from hundreds of thousands of individual Americans, as well as corporations, foundations, veterans groups, fraternal and professional organizations, States, communities, and schools;

Whereas actor Tom Hanks, the Advertising Council, and the History Channel played a key role in increasing public awareness of the heroic achievements of American World War II veterans and the war effort and in raising support for the memorial;

Whereas President George W. Bush will formally dedicate the memorial on May 29, 2004;

Whereas the memorial will be a monument to the selfless sacrifice and undaunted courage of the members of the United States Armed Forces who served in World War II and a place of remembrance to honor the more than 400,000 American servicemen and servicewomen who died in that conflict defending the United States; and

Whereas the memorial will be a source of inspiration for current and future generations of Americans, giving visitors to the memorial a new appreciation for the accomplishments of America's World War II generation, which united in the quest to free the world from tyranny: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress recognizes with humble gratitude the more than 16,000,000 veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces during World War II and the Americans who supported the war effort on the home front and celebrates the completion of the National World War II Memorial on the National Mall in the District of Columbia.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the prime sponsor of the resolution.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman very much for yielding me this time and for his leadership not only on this issue today, the previous one, but all the many things he does on behalf of our country's veterans. I am delighted to join him as a member of his committee here today on a resolution that I introduced, H. Con. Res. 409, which recognizes the men and women who served during World War II, those who died defending our freedom, and the millions of Americans who supported the effort on the home front.

This resolution also celebrates the completion of the National World War II Memorial here in our Nation's Capital, on the Mall between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, which will be dedicated on May 29. Veterans who served in World War II and their families have made a tremendous sacrifice for this country, and I am proud to be involved in honoring those men and women with this memorial.

I am also proud to be from a State that has been home to many prominent members of our military, including the gentleman just described in the previous bill, Mr. Colmery, who was a Kansan, and who wrote out the GI Bill of Rights on a napkin here in Washington, D.C. But also two that come to mind today, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, from Abilene, Kansas, and Senator Robert J. Dole of Russell, Kansas.

General Eisenhower rose quickly through the ranks of the military, and during World War II he achieved the rank of a five-star general. He served as the Commander of Allied Forces in our landing in North Africa in November of 1942, and on D-Day he served as Supreme Allied Commander of our troops that began the battle for Europe. General Eisenhower's dedication and sacrifice made a significant difference and brought about the freedoms that we enjoy today as Americans.

A soldier from Russell, Kansas, Second Lieutenant Bob Dole, also fought for freedom and served under General Eisenhower's command. Second Lieutenant Dole served in World War II in the Allied liberation of Northern Italy and was twice wounded and decorated for heroic achievements.

Both General Eisenhower and Senator DOLE achieved greatness on the battlefield and in public service. Senator DOLE is recognized in this resolution for his contribution in making the National World War II Memorial possible. Through his fundraising efforts as the national chairman, Senator DOLE played a crucial role in raising more than $195 million in private money pledges to construct this memorial.

All in all, Kansas is proud to be home of approximately 40,000 World War II veterans, and I am honored to be here today to pay tribute to them and to recognize the contribution they made for me and my family and for all those Americans who fought for our great country.

□ 1730

I am honored to be serving in Congress with a number of World War II veterans, my colleagues, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BALLENGER), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL), the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA), a group of men who fought the battles of World War II who now serve with distinction in the United States Congress. I would also like to acknowledge the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), who with her foresight and commitment over many years brought about the legislation that establishes this memorial honoring our World War II veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I put my tennis shoes on today and walked to the World War II Memorial this afternoon. It is a tremendous tribute to our Nation's veterans. If it has the impact it had upon me this afternoon, it will be a fitting memorial to those who served our country so well.

In fact, my father, another Kansan, an 89-year-old former staff sergeant from World War II, received a call from his son today, something I have never said before to my dad, Dad, I love you, I am proud of you, I thank you for your service to our country, you are to be honored as a World War II veteran at this memorial, and it means a lot to me and my family to know you and others, all who served like you, have made a difference so important to all the rest of us.

So I am proud to sponsor H. Con. Res. 409, and I thank the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Resources for their support of this resolution, and I ask my colleagues and all fellow Americans to join me in recognizing the contributions and sacrifices of our Nation's veterans, the contributions they have made to protect this Nation and defend our way of life, and acknowledge all those who made the World War II memorial possible.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 409. This important resolution recognizes the service and sacrifice of our World War II veterans, the domestic contributions of Americans in support of the allied victory, and celebrates the completion of the National World War II Memorial located on the National Mall here in Washington, D.C.

I thank the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) for his work on this resolution, as well as all of my colleagues who assisted in its drafting. I especially thank the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for all of her work and perseverance to ensure the establishment of the National World War II Memorial and for her hard work on behalf of the many veterans in the great State of Ohio.

Most importantly, I thank and express my gratitude to all of the World War II veterans. Without their efforts and sacrifice, this world would be a quite different place. This resolution is indeed important and appropriate as we prepare to dedicated the National World War II Memorial. Not only does it recognize the heroic veterans of World War II, but it also commends the individual and collective contributions that American citizens have made on the homefront in support of the Nation's war effort. This memorial that we will soon dedicate and celebrate will stand before us as a reminder of the great sacrifices and the great triumphs of the Greatest Generation.

I am proud and humble to represent the 17th Congressional District of the State of Ohio where many veterans of World War II reside. This resolution is for them and all of those who have fought to protect this great country, and I thank them.

Mr. Speaker, I support this measure, and I urge all Members to do the same.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I first thank the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) for sponsoring this important resolution and for his touching remarks and great work on behalf of the Nation's veterans. It is appreciated by this chairman and many others.

I also want to say I rise in strong support of this resolution which celebrates the completion of the National World War II Memorial on the National Mall here in Washington. More than 16 million Americans served in the armed forces, including my own father who saw horrific action in New Guinea, and he ended up in the Philippines at the end of the war. Very, very rarely would he even talk about it unless my brothers and I really prodded him for details. He finally wrote a lot of it out, which makes for some very disturbing but important reading for any son or daughter who had a father who fought in World War II.

This great memorial will crown that achievement because certainly all of our fathers and mothers who participated in the war effort, whether here at home or abroad or in any way who were a part of that great effort, know that without them we would have been, unfortunately, perhaps saluting the Nazi salute or been part of Imperial Japan; and we know the terrible things that they did during World War II.

This is a fitting tribute I think to the peacemakers, the men and women who answered the call and did so so gallantly. More than 400,000 of our GIs lost their lives in World War II. As I said, virtually every American rose to the challenge, and that is why they are the Greatest Generation, as said Tom Brokaw.

This is the first national memorial built to honor all of the dedicated Americans who served during World War II. It stands as a monument to the spirit, sacrifice, and commitment of the American people to the defense of the Nation and really the defense of the world, because without intervention of the United States and the great leadership of Presidents Roosevelt and then Truman, the world would have been lost to tyranny.

Someone said freedom is not free, and nothing could have been more appropriately said by that generation in standing up against tyranny.

This resolution recognizes the leadership of Bob Stump, who as chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services, authored legislation to expedite the funding and construction of the memorial. Bob's family must certainly be proud of his role in expediting this memorial and his own valiant service during World War II.

It also recognizes the good work of the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) in helping to bring this memorial about. In 1993, we all know Congress passed legislation that authorized the American Battle Monuments Commission, an independent Federal agency, to design and to construct a memorial. After years of planning, public deliberation and fundraising, construction began in September of 2001. Funded primarily with extensive private contributions, the memorial is located within tennis-shoe distance, according to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), at the east end of the Reflecting Pool between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. This prominent location is commensurate with the historical importance and lasting significance of World War II to America and to the world.

On May 29, nearly 59 years after the end of World War II, President Bush will dedicate this fitting memorial, and this ceremony may well be the last large gathering of World War II veterans, and it will be very well attended, I am sure.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) for sponsoring this timely resolution.

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

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for his leadership and for the gentleman's work on the previous resolution on Vietnam human rights today, and also those people who fought in the past for our freedoms that we have today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ).

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) for yielding me this time on this important resolution, and I thank the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) for deciding to do this, because it is extremely important.

Mr. Speaker, for over 50 years America's Greatest Generation has been waiting for a memorial to call their own. Although we have many great monuments in our Nation's capital, we lacked a tribute to one of our country's most defining moments. It is with great honor that I stand before this body today to pay tribute to the more than 60 million veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces during World War II. Among them was my father-in-law, Daniel Pena, and many more, relatives and uncles and cousins. I also pay tribute to those Americans who supported the war effort in the home front.

After 8 years of planning, 6 years of public discussion, 4 years of fund-raising and 3 years of construction, we can finally say America's Greatest Generation has won their final battle to have a national monument commemorating their many sacrifices.

It is estimated that our country suffers the loss of more than 1,000 World War II veterans each day. Many of these veterans were new soldiers with very little fighting experience. Many of them were teenagers. All of them were heroes. During this time, Americans were willing to set aside their differences in order to defeat tyranny. The building of this national monument is another way for us to show America's Greatest Generation that their sacrifice was not done in vain.

During Memorial Day weekend, the largest gathering of World War II veterans since 1954 is expected to visit our Nation's capital for the official dedication of the World War II Memorial. Similarly, veterans throughout the country will gather at their local VFWs and American Legion halls to pay respect to the local World War II veterans. As these gatherings occur, it is my hope that Congress continues to support all veterans by providing them with adequate health care and services. It is the least we can do for the Greatest Generation before us.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), and a personal friend of mine.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, although no resolution or parade will ever be able to express our appreciation enough to our World War II veterans, this resolution is indeed an honorable effort.

Mr. Speaker, the World War II era was a decisive time for our Nation and the world. Sixteen million American

men and women served in uniform, and many more came together at home to support the war effort. The men and women of the Greatest Generation, along with our allies around the world, stood up and turned back fascist tyranny and extremism in Japan.

The World War II memorial soon to be dedicated on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. will be the culmination of many efforts. Its dedication will provide us an opportunity to revisit the history and sacrifices that our World War II veterans made, the civilian home-front efforts, celebrate the American spirit and high ideals. I support this resolution and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL).

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H. Con. Res. 409, a resolution in recognition of the veterans of World War II and celebrate the completion of the National World War II Memorial.

As one of the 12 Members of Congress who is a veteran of World War II, I am proud and pleased that our Nation will be dedicating this World War II memorial on May 29. The memorial is a beautiful and solemn tribute to the 16 million men and women who served, the 400,000 Americans who died, and the millions who supported the war effort at home.

Ours has been called the Greatest Generation, but in reality our parents were the great ones because they survived two wars and a depression, and understood the importance of work and sacrifice. They instilled in the World War II generation a sense of duty that mobilized our country into action and ultimate victory.

While we are engaged in wars overseas, it is fitting I think to pause and remember the selfless sacrifice and the courage of the members of the United States armed services. Like the men and women currently serving, soldiers' valiant efforts in World War II helped secure the freedoms we enjoy today and secured America's leadership throughout the world.

This will be a monument not only for the World War II generation, but also for our children and our grandchildren. I am hopeful that Americans will visit this site for years to come and take time to honor those throughout the ages who answered the call to duty. They did not seek war, but rather yearned for peace and for liberty.

□ 1745

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) who initiated this whole process.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio very much for yielding time and am pleased to join with him, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and all the other Members of this body who have sponsored this wonderful resolution to officially now recognize the contributions of the American people to the victory of liberty over tyranny in World War II.

Of course, there will be major Memorial Day celebrations in our country on May 29, indeed the entire week prior, and during that weekend to especially commemorate this Memorial's dedication. I come to the floor this evening to pay honor and tribute to the 16 million Americans who literally bequeathed freedom to us, as well as to all those who served on the home front. If you go down to the memorial today, which has taken 17 years to complete, it is really very poignant to talk to family members who are strolling through the plaza. I met a family last week, a son pushing his father, a World War II veteran, in a wheelchair. All the memories and all of the history come rushing at us. This idea began in 1987 in a place called Jerusalem Township, in the Trustees hall, at the Annual Lucas Township Trustees' fish fry when a wonderful veteran by the name of Roger Durbin approached me. Actually, he shouted at me across the room and said, ''Congresswoman Kaptur, Why is there no World War II memorial in Washington, D.C. where I can bring my grandchildren so they understand the reasons that we fought and how the world was changed? From that moment until May 29, now nearly two decades later, every effort was put forward to properly represent the enormous contribution of the 20th century in bequeathing freedom to the next generation.

This memorial will sit between the Washington Monument, representing the founding of our Republic in the 18th century, and the Lincoln Memorial, representing the preservation of the Union in the 19th. This sits between them is a beautiful, reflective, peaceful expression, including waterfalls and 4,000 stars, each representing 100 of those who lost their lives for us and for the cause of freedom. As the tourists have begun coming through, now they tell me at the rate of 5,000 per day, it will be one of the most visited memorials. It is also the most important memorial in our nation's Capital representing the 20th century's most profound achievement. It is located where it belongs, right there on our Mall of Democracy.

And so we prepare for these great patriotic celebrations. Our deepest regret as we celebrate this moment is that so many of those who fought and those who served on the homefront will not be there with us. I also know that every single veteran or their family members who will come here on May 29 will first think not of themselves but of their comrades and their family members and their friends who are not here, and who will not be able to be here.

I just want the American people to know that as we pass this resolution today, I want to acknowledge the presence in our Chamber today of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), both involved in the Committee on Veterans' Affairs from the very beginning of our service here. I want to acknowledge Congressman Sonny Montgomery and Congressman Bob Stump. Bob has passed. Sonny I know will be with us. Both were key chairs of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs when we passed the two key parts of legislation that made this memorial possible. It took 10 Congresses to get this job done, two decades to get this job done right. Other members who helped in their capacities as committee chairs were Bill Clay of Missouri who is retired, Henry Gonzalez of Texas who has passed, and Esteban Torres of California, who assisted us on the bill related to the coinage, that is, the minting of three coins that raised the initial $7 million to help us begin the architectural and engineering studies. Speaker Jim Wright and Congressman Jack Brooks, both war veterans themselves when we first introduced this legislation back during the 1980s. And in the other body Senators John Glenn, now retired, and Senator Strom Thurmond who has passed, and of course Senators Bob Dole and JOHN WARNER.

All of these individuals were a part of those early years. Let me mention also Congressman John Grotberg of Illinois, who preceded the current Speaker in this institution, and was so important in helping us bridge the partisan line here to expedite these bills' passage. To his wife and to his family, I wish to assure that he is mentioned respectfully in our proceedings here today.

I also wanted to mention to all veterans who may be listening, and to their families, that as part of this memorial, in fact right adjacent to it, there is going to be in perpetuity, run by our Department of Interior, a veterans' legacy section where you can place the name of your loved one, whether they served in battle or here on the home front. So families can take that information and help record for history of what their loved one did doing World War II. When you enter the site, there is a facility being operated by the Department of Interior with three computer terminals now where families of our country can tell the whole story of America's participation.

This has taken a long time. But we look forward to the moment on May 29 when this entire Nation will say ''Our thank you to the most unselfish generation in American history . . . a grateful Nation remembers.''

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS).

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the gentlewoman from Ohio for her work on this legislation. It was 20 years ago. We were both freshmen. She has stuck with this issue and pounded away. I am so proud of her

and what she represents. It really tells me what kind of job she is doing as a Congresswoman. I thank the gentlewoman. Just so all the veterans in our country know that she made it happen more than anybody else.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. EVANS. I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, let me just say that the gentleman from Illinois is a combat veteran. I am not. I have many in my family who have been, including those who served in World War II. I have the highest respect for the gentleman from Illinois. If anyone represents perseverance and honesty and integrity in this institution, it is he. It is my privilege to serve with him.

Mr. EVANS. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute. I would like to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) chairman of the Committee on Resources, which also has jurisdiction, for allowing this resolution to be considered on the floor in such a timely fashion.

I include the following letter from the Committee on Resources as part of the RECORD.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, May 5, 2004.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH,
Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I understand that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs wishes to schedule for rapid Floor consideration H. Con. Res. 409, recognizing with humble gratitude the more than 16,000,000 veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces during World War II and the Americans who supported the war effort on the home front and celebrating the completion of the National World War II Memorial on the National Mall in the District of Columbia. This bill was referred primarily to your committee and additionally to the Committee on Resources.

I have reviewed the legislation and have no objection to its consideration. In fact, I have asked the author to add me as a cosponsor before the bill is voted on by the House of Representatives. Therefore, I have no objection to the Committee on Resources being discharged from further consideration of the bill. Of course, this action should not be construed as waiving the Committee on Resources' jurisdiction over the bill or as precedent for other bills. In addition, if a conference on H. Con. Res. 409 should become necessary, I ask that you support my request to have the Committee on Resources be represented on the conference. Finally, because no bill report will be prepared on the legislation, I ask that you include this letter and any reply in the Congressional Record during consideration of H. Con. Res. 409.

I congratulate you and Mr. Moran for producing a timely and thoughtful bill and I look forward to working with you again on other matters of mutual interest.

Sincerely,

RICHARD W. POMBO,
Chairman.

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

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds just to say that as a Member of this body who arrived here at 29 years old, a member of the generation or two to follow the greatest generation, I would just like to thank all of the veterans who gave us this great system that we have, where young men and young women from all over this country can run for office and get voted on by their community to come down here and represent their views. We have a tremendous system here that was achieved by great sacrifice from those who came before us. Again, I thank everyone who has brought forth this particular resolution and the World War II Memorial that we will be celebrating here in the next few weeks.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 409, which recognizes the 16 million Americans who served in the Armed Forces during World War II and the millions more who supported them at home. As the dedication of the National World War II Memorial and the 60th anniversary of D–Day approach, our country will rightfully be thinking of those Americans who bravely gave or risked their lives to a great cause.

I remain in awe of this generation, of men who accepted the call to travel around the world to spend years fighting in the Asian and Pacific theaters, and of women who kept the country running by assuming jobs in factories, growing victory gardens, and serving overseas in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps and other capacities.

It has been my good fortune to spend some time with veterans and their families in my home district of western Wisconsin, and I always enjoy hearing their stories of wartime. In fact, it was the experience of listening to my uncle, a World War II veteran, that inspired me to introduce legislation creating the Veterans Oral History Project. Almost 4 years after becoming public law, the Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress has collected 16,000 stories and is working at a feverish pace to collect more everyday. This living legacy is testament to the millions of Americans who sacrificed so much during World War II.

Now, almost 60 years after the end of the war, a monument has at last been built in our Nation's Capital that pays tribute to the generation that fought and won World War II. The monument, set in the middle of the National Mall between the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument, will remind all visitors to the city that World War II was the defining event of the 20th century and the seminal point for what is often and aptly called "the Greatest Generation."

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, H. Con. Res. 409 resolves that Congress recognizes with humble gratitude the more than 16 million veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces during World War II and the Americans who supported the war effort on the home front and celebrates the completion of the National World War II Memorial on the National Mall in the District of Columbia.

The National World War II Memorial on the National Mall in the District of Columbia will be the first national memorial to both recognize the courage, bravery, and unselfish dedication of the members of the United States Armed Forces who served in World War II and those who served on the home front and acknowledge the commitment and achievement of the entire American people in that conflict. Many of my family and friends that served in World War II suggested to me some kind of a National World War II memorial. I join with my friend Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR of Ohio who introduced legislation to establish the memorial in the District of Columbia to honor members of the Armed Forces who served in World War II and to commemorate the participation of the United States in that war.

Congress authorized the American Battle Monuments Commission to design and construct the memorial. The location selected as the site for the memorial, the Rainbow Pool site on the National Mall at the east end of the Reflecting Pool between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument, was dedicated on November 11, 1995. In an open competition, the American Battle Monuments Commission selected Friedrich St. Florian as the design architect for the memorial, and his final architectural design was approved by the Commission of Fine Arts, the National Capital Planning Commission, and the Secretary of the Interior.

The late Representative Bob Stump of Arizona, who served as Chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives, sponsored several measures to expedite the funding and construction of the memorial, which were enacted. After 8 years of planning, 6 years of public deliberation, and 4 years of fund raising, construction began on the memorial in September 2001.

The memorial would not have been possible without the efforts and dedication of National Chairman Senator Robert J. Dole and National Co-Chairman Frederick W. Smith, who were instrumental in raising over $194,000,000 for the construction of the memorial. These generous contributions came from hundreds of thousands of individual Americans, as well as corporations, foundations, veterans groups, fraternal and professional organizations, States, communities, and schools. Actor Tom Hanks, the Advertising Council, and the History Channel played a key role in increasing public awareness of the heroic achievements of American World War II veterans and the war effort and in raising support for the memorial. President George W. Bush will formally dedicate the memorial on May 29, 2004.

The memorial will be a monument to the selfless sacrifice and undaunted courage of the members of the United States Armed Forces who served in World War II as well as a tribute to their families and most Americans that joined in the war effort. It is a place of remembrance to honor the more than 400,000 American servicemen and servicewomen who died in that conflict defending the United States. The memorial will be a source of inspiration for current and future generations of Americans, giving visitors to the memorial a new appreciation for the accomplishments of America's World War II generation, which united in the quest to free the world from tyranny.

It is with great respect that I strongly support this resolution.

SMITH ANNOUNCES VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

WASHINGTON, DC.—Congressman Nick Smith announced a special initiative today,

encouraging citizens to participate in the Veterans History Project, which is an effort by Congress and the Library of Congress to collect audio- and video-taped interviews of veterans, or civilians who served in support of the war effort, along with other first-hand materials such as photographs, diaries, and letters.

''As we approach Memorial Day, I would like to invite all of my constituents to get involved in the Veterans History Project,'' Smith said. ''I encourage families, friends, historians, teachers, senior care workers, and students to participate and volunteer to interview a veteran.''

On Monday, Congressman Smith sat down with James Cox, a WWII veteran, to conduct an interview for the Veterans History Project. Cox served with the famed 30th Infantry Division. The 30th opened the way for General Patton's 3rd Army to drive into Brittany and on to Brest, and was kept in the forefront all the way into Belgium, Holland and Germany. The interview is being aired on cable public service channels. Congressman Smith will be interviewing someone from each county in the 7th District to raise awareness about the Veterans History Project.

''The Veterans History Project is important, not only to preserve the experiences and memories of our nation's veterans, but also to bring families and communities together. Grandchildren should interview their grandparents, students should interview community members, and veterans should interview each other.''

The Veterans History Project was enacted in October of 2000. Oral histories and documents collected through this project will be part of the national Veterans History Project Collection at the Library of Congress.

Interview kits are available at Congressman Smith's office in Battle Creek and Jackson. People who have questions about the Veterans History Project should contact the Congressman's office or go to the home page of Congressman Smith's Web site at: www.house.gov/nicksmith, which has a link to the Veterans History Project in the ''Quick Links'' section. Completed interviews can then be sent to Congressman Smith's office which will then be submitted to the Library of Congress.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMMONS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 409.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. 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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. 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 H. Con. Res. 409.

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

There was no objection.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on three motions to suspend the rules previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 4299, by the yeas and nays;

House Resolution 622, by the yeas and nays; and

House Resolution 577, by the yeas and nays.

The remaining votes will be taken later in the week.

The first and third electronic votes will be conducted as 15-minute votes. The second vote in this series will be a 5-minute vote.

DR. MIGUEL A. NEVAREZ POST OFFICE BUILDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 4299.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan. (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4299, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 405, nays 0, not voting 28, as follows:

[Roll No. 153]

YEAS—405

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Ballance
Ballenger
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Beauprez
Becerra
Bell
Bereuter
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (OH)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Burns
Burr
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carson (IN)
Carson (OK)
Case
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Chocola
Clay
Clyburn
Coble
Cole
Collins
Conyers
Cooper
Costello
Cox
Cramer
Crane
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Culberson
Cummings
Cunningham
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Doggett
Dooley (CA)
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fossella
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Goss
Granger
Graves
Green (TX)
Greenwood
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall
Harman
Harris
Hart
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley (OR)
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jenkins
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kirk
Kleczka
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Lynch
Majette
Manzullo
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McInnis
McIntyre
McKeon
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moore
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Nethercutt
Neugebauer
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Osborne
Ose
Otter
Owens
Oxley
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Renzi
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Sandlin
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrock
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg

Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Spratt
Stearns
Stenholm
Sullivan
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Toomey
Towns
Turner (OH)
Turner (TX)
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Vitter
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—28

Brown, Corrine
Buyer
Carter
DeMint
Dingell
Edwards
Gerlach
Gonzalez
Green (WI)
Hoeffel
Isakson
John
Kingston
Kucinich
Lipinski
Maloney
McNulty
Mollohan
Murtha
Reyes
Rohrabacher
Souder
Stark
Strickland
Stupak
Sweeney
Tauzin
Visclosky

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY) (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining in which to vote.

□ 1855

So (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 622.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 622, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 404, nays 0, not voting 29, as follows:

[Roll No. 154]

YEAS—404

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Ballance
Ballenger
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Beauprez
Becerra
Bell
Bereuter
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (OH)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Burns
Burr
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carson (IN)
Carson (OK)
Case
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Chocola
Clay
Clyburn
Coble
Cole
Collins
Conyers
Cooper
Costello
Cox
Cramer
Crane
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Culberson
Cummings
Cunningham
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Doggett
Dooley (CA)
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fossella
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Goss
Granger
Graves
Green (TX)
Greenwood
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall
Harman
Harris
Hart
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley (OR)
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inslee
Isakson
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jenkins
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kirk
Kleczka
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Lynch
Majette
Manzullo
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McInnis
McIntyre
McKeon
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moore
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Nethercutt
Neugebauer
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Osborne
Ose
Otter
Owens
Oxley
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Renzi
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Sandlin
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrock
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Spratt
Stearns
Stenholm
Sullivan
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Toomey
Towns
Turner (OH)
Turner (TX)
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Vitter
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—29

Brown, Corrine
Buyer
Carter
Davis (TN)
DeMint
Dingell
Edwards
Feeney
Gerlach
Gonzalez
Green (WI)
Hoeffel
John
Kingston
Kucinich
Lipinski
Maloney
McNulty
Mollohan
Murtha
Reyes
Rohrabacher
Souder
Stark
Strickland
Stupak
Sweeney
Tauzin
Visclosky

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining on this vote.

□ 1904

So (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING 50 YEARS OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY). The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 577, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 577, as amended, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 397, nays 7, not voting 29, as follows:

[Roll No. 155]

YEAS—397

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Alexander
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Ballance
Ballenger
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Beauprez
Becerra
Bell
Bereuter
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (OH)
Brown (SC)

Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Burns
Burr
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carson (IN)
Carson (OK)
Case
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Chocola
Clay
Clyburn
Coble
Cole
Collins
Conyers
Cooper
Costello
Cox
Cramer
Crane
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Culberson
Cummings
Cunningham
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Doggett
Dooley (CA)
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fossella
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Goss
Granger
Graves
Green (TX)
Greenwood
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall
Harman
Harris
Hart
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley (OR)
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inslee
Isakson
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jenkins
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kirk
Kleczka
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Majette
Maloney
Manzullo
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McInnis
McIntyre
McKeon
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moore
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Nethercutt
Neugebauer
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Osborne
Ose
Otter
Owens
Oxley
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Renzi
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Sandlin
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrock
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Spratt
Stearns
Stenholm
Sullivan
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Toomey
Towns
Turner (OH)
Turner (TX)
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Vitter
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—7

Akin
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
LaHood
Miller (FL)
Musgrave
Paul

NOT VOTING—29

Blackburn
Brown, Corrine
Buyer
Carter
DeMint
Dingell
Edwards
Gerlach
Gonzalez
Green (WI)
Hoeffel
John
Kingston
Kucinich
Lipinski
Lynch
McNulty
Mollohan
Murtha
Reyes
Rohrabacher
Souder
Stark
Strickland
Stupak
Sweeney
Tauzin
Visclosky
Weller

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY) (during the vote). Members are advised 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1921

So (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) 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.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during rollcall votes 153, 154, and 155. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on each of those rollcall votes.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTION TO OFFER MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON S. CON. RES. 95, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, subject to rule XXII, clause 7(c), I hereby announce my intention to offer a motion to instruct on S. Con. Res. 95, Concurrent Resolution on the Budget For Fiscal Year 2005.

The form of the motion is as follows:

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I move that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 95 be instructed to agree to the pay-as-you-go enforcement provisions within the scope of the conference regarding direct spending increases and tax cuts in the House and Senate. In complying with this instruction, such managers shall be instructed to recede to the Senate on the provisions contained in section 408 of the Senate concurrent resolution (relating to the pay-as-you-go point of order regarding all legislation increasing the deficit as a result of direct spending increases and tax cuts).

BLOCKING PROPERTY OF CERTAIN PERSONS AND PROHIBITING EXPORT OF CERTAIN GOODS TO SYRIA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 108–184)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with subsection 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(b) (IEEPA), and section 301 of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1631, I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (order) in which I declared a national emergency with respect to the threat constituted by certain actions of the Government of Syria. Further, in accordance with subsection 5(b) of the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003 (SAA), Public Law 108–75, this message also constitutes the report on my exercise of the waiver authority pursuant to that statute.

On December 12, 2003, I signed into law the SAA in order to strengthen the ability of the United States to effectively confront the threat to U.S. national security posed by Syria's support for terrorism, its military presence in Lebanon, its pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, and its actions to undermine U.S. and international efforts with respect to the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq. These policies by the Government of Syria directly threaten regional stability and undermine the U.S. goal of a comprehensive Middle East peace. Despite many months of diplomatic efforts to convince the Government of Syria to change its behavior, Syria has not taken significant, concrete steps to address the full range of U.S. concerns, which were clearly conveyed by Secretary of State Powell to Syrian President Asad in May 2003. I find the actions, policies, and circumstances described above sufficiently grave to constitute a threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, and thus have declared a national emergency to address that threat.

In implementation of subsection 5(a) of the SAA, in the order I directed that action be taken to prohibit the export

to Syria of products of the United States other than food and medicine, including but not limited to items on the United States Munitions List or Commerce Control List, and I prohibited commercial air services between Syria and the United States by aircraft of any air carrier owned or controlled by Syria, as well as certain non-traffic stops by such aircraft.

It is important to the national security interests of the United States, however, that certain discrete categories of exports continue in order to support activities of the United States Government and United Nations agencies, to facilitate travel by United States persons, for certain humanitarian purposes, to help maintain aviation safety, and to promote the exchange of information. Also, it is important to U.S. national security interests that aviation-related sanctions take into account humanitarian and diplomatic concerns as well as the international obligations of the United States.

Accordingly, I have waived the application of subsections 5(a)(1) and 5(a)(2)(A) of the SAA to permit the export and reexport of: products in support of activities of the United States Government to the extent that such exports would not otherwise fall within my constitutional authority to conduct the Nation's foreign affairs and protect national security; medicines on the Commerce Control List and medical devices; aircraft parts and components for purposes of flight safety; exports and reexports consistent with the 5(a)(2)(D) waiver outlined below; information and informational materials, as well as telecommunications equipment and associated items to promote the free flow of information; certain software and technology; products in support of United Nations operations; and, certain exports and reexports of a temporary nature. These items are further identified in the Department of Commerce's General Order No. 2, as issued consistent with my order. I have also waived the application of subsection 5(a)(2)(D) to permit the following with respect to aircraft of any air carrier owned or controlled by Syria: takeoffs or landings of such aircraft when chartered by the Government of Syria to transport Syrian government officials to the United States on official Syrian government business; takeoffs or landings for non-traffic stops of such aircraft that are not engaged in scheduled international air services; takeoffs and landings associated with an emergency; and overflights of U.S. territory.

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *May 11, 2004*.

CALLING FOR RESIGNATIONS DOES NATION DISSERVICE

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

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld led this Nation through two wars. There was a minimum loss of life on both sides. He was effective and provided freedom for millions of men, women, and children. General Kimmitt in January reported that there were problems at a prison, ordered immediate investigations under the rule of law. Unfortunately, someone released pictures to the press and blew it out of proportion.

There is a lot of anger from all Americans and many Arabs, but I think in the long run the world is going to see what a free nation is capable of. A rule of law, justice, is it perfect? No. But it is the best we have in any part of the world.

We will bring the guilty forward in punishment, and there will be probably more than the original six that will be tried. When we come out of this, we will be stronger, and those calling for the resignation of the Secretary, I think, do this Nation great disservice.

HONORING ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICANS

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to do a Special Order today that I will not be able to do, but I join the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) and the rest of my colleagues on the occasion of Asian American Heritage Month. During this month, we celebrate the important contributions Asian Pacific Americans have made to our great country.

The gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) is head of the Asian Pacific Caucus, and the gentleman has helped all of us learn more about the concerns and issues facing Asian Americans and the Pacific Islander community, and I salute the gentleman's work on these issues.

More importantly, I thank every Asian American for the extraordinary contribution they have made to this country. I have a list which I will not have time to read, but it will be included in the RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, suffice it to say I am pleased that the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) took out this very appropriate Special Order to honor Asian Americans during Asian American Heritage Month.

TRUTH WILL PREVAIL

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

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday afternoon for 2½ hours, I met with one of our soldiers from the unit that was assigned to the prison in Baghdad. I can tell Members that as this story unfolds, we will continue to be vigilant in prosecuting not just those soldiers who were involved, but those superiors who in some cases ordered our soldiers to do the acts that they were asked to do and to also be involved in the oversight. We will hold these individuals responsible, and we will seek and obtain justice.

But, Mr. Speaker, I also rise to pay tribute to a neighbor of mine, who lived less than 15 minutes from my home by the name of Nick Berg who we just learned in the past several days was brutalized in the most unbelievable way imaginable by those same people over in Iraq who expect us to treat those perpetrators of crimes in the prison with justice.

I also rise to pay tribute to Tali Hatuel, an Israeli who was gunned down, along with her four children and her unborn child, in the most despicable way. Truth and justice will prevail. I just wish that were the case on both sides both with al Qaeda as well as with our own troops.

COMMEMORATING ASIAN PACIFIC HERITAGE MONTH

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to also commemorate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and to celebrate the lives and accomplishments of Asian Pacific Americans in U.S. history.

I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA), the new chair and vice chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, for organizing this Special Order. And in particular, I want to recognize the contributions of Korean-Americans in my district and commend them for their tireless work in improving the City of Los Angeles.

Mr. Speaker, today Asian Americans continue to gain new ground in even greater social and political representation. As we commemorate and celebrate the crucial role of Asian Pacific Americans and the role they have played in the development of this Nation, we must work harder to improve their lives and opportunities for 12.5 million Asian Pacific Americans who are still confronted with daily prejudices, discrimination, and economic inequalities.

ECONOMIC REMEDIES

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, last week President Bush took one of his bus trips through the State of Ohio trying to argue for his economic policy. Ohio is a State that has lost 170,000 manufacturing jobs. Virtually every month during the Bush administration, we have lost manufacturing jobs. One out of six manufacturing jobs in the

State of Ohio has disappeared since President Bush took office. His answer always is more tax cuts for the wealthiest people in our society with the hope some will maybe trickle down and create jobs. That has not worked. His other answer is more trade agreements like NAFTA that shift jobs overseas.

Instead, Congress should extend unemployment benefits for the 1 million American workers whose benefits have expired, and Congress should pass the Crane-Rangel bill which gives incentives to those companies that manufacture in the United States, not continue to give big corporate tax breaks to the largest companies in the world who send jobs to China and send jobs to Mexico.

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SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHOCOLA). 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.

CALLING FOR RENEWAL OF ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN

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. Mr. Speaker, Sunday was Mother's Day. An awful lot of us were down here in Washington to kick off the next several months on going to so many different States to remind people that September 13, the assault weapons ban will expire. In many ways it was great seeing people I have met over the last several years, people from California, Oregon, Washington, New York, Jersey, Connecticut, people that gave up Mother's Day to come down and to be here today and tomorrow to lobby Members of Congress to remind their legislators they want the assault weapons ban kept in place. One of the saddest things was talking to so many friends that I have met over the years, those that have lost their children, their husbands, their wives, and yet they are still out there fighting.

We know that reducing gun violence in this country will always be a tough fight. But the one thing I heard constantly, Why are we letting the assault weapons ban expire? It is going to be up to the million moms across this country. I happen to think the dads and the grandfathers, the husbands and wives, should certainly be out there. We have every national police organization behind us. They do not want to see the assault weapons ban expire. Yet when the White House was asked about what they were going to do about the assault weapons ban, the answer came back, NO comment. That is a far cry from what was said during the last campaign when President Bush said he would sign the bill if it came to his desk.

I know it is an inside Washington thing, but to get a bill on the desk, it actually has to be brought up here on the floor so we can vote on it. That is where the American people have to come into play. The American people have to start e-mailing, they have to start faxing their Representatives and say we want to keep the assault weapons ban in place. That is the only way that we can put pressure on this House to make sure it is coming up for a vote.

I happen to think that when our police officers start going to all their local legislators and their Senators, that we are going to see a change in the tide. I know we do things here at the last minute on the House floor. I accept that. But I have to tell you, when there is only 125 days left to make sure that the assault weapons ban stays in place and only 50 days before an election, I think the American people's voices should be heard.

I am a great believer in one person can make a difference. It was gratifying to see so many people from around the country down here in Washington. When you multiply that and multiply that throughout the Nation, we can make a difference. I always hear from the American people that it makes no difference what we do down in Washington, that they have no voice. I say that is wrong. Do you know how many votes pass in this House by one vote or fail by one vote? Over in the other body today, unemployment insurance failed by one vote. The assault weapons bill going back when it first passed, it passed by one vote. One vote does count. One vote means a lot.

Sixty-six percent of gun owners believe that the assault weapons ban should be renewed. Seventy-six percent of the American people believe the assault weapons ban should be kept in place. May I remind our people out there, the guns we are talking about are AK–47s, Uzis, the guns unfortunately that we see in the war every day. Do we actually want them back in our communities? Do we want them in our streets? In our schoolyards? Have we not seen enough gun violence in this country that we would want to put these weapons of mass destruction back out on the streets? I do not understand this. This is not taking away anyone's right to own a gun. Talk to hunters across the country; they do not hunt with these guns.

So what is the holdup here? They are back on their old rhetoric, saying the bill never worked. Talk to the police officers across this country and they will say the bill does work. May I remind everybody why we passed an assault weapons ban in the first place? Because too many of our police officers were being mowed down. Get out there and let your voices be heard. We can make a difference.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair reminds Members that they are not to refer to actions of the other body.

DROUGHT IS A NATURAL DISASTER

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

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, as many people know, we frequently talk on the floor here about the state of the economy. However, it seems to me that much of this criticism is unfounded. We currently have historically low interest rates. Inflation is at 1.9 percent which, again, is almost at an all-time low. Economic growth is exceptional, 12 percent in the fourth quarter. Productivity increase is the highest in the last 40 years. And recently we have heard that government revenues are increasing, which means that we may have $100 billion less deficit than was originally forecast.

The majority of the criticism seems to focus on joblessness which currently stands at 5.6 percent of American workers and is decreasing. This is certainly a figure we would like to see better, like to see it improved. But I would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that in the decade of the 1970s the average unemployment rate was 6.2 percent; during the 1980s, it was 7.3 percent; during the 1990s it was 5.8 percent. So for that 30-year stretch from 1970 to 2000, we averaged 6.4 percent unemployment. Today it is at 5.6 percent. In April we added 280,000 payroll jobs. We have added 867,000 since January, and 1.1 million since last August.

Those who decry the overall strength of the economy would appear to be in error. My thesis is that this is the strongest economy in the world and is generally doing quite well. However, Mr. Speaker, one segment of the economy is currently very troubled. I would like to point to the graphic here which I think illustrates this. Currently the dark areas, the red, the yellow, the brown and the deep brown are areas of drought in the country. This would be bad enough if it was just this year, but this is something that has been ongoing now for 5 years. Throughout that area, those who are raising dry land crops have had practically no crop at all. The reservoirs which are used for irrigation are now down to 25, 30 percent. Many of them will run dry within a year.

I think it is important that we look at what is happening to the farm economy. This is a natural disaster. We sometimes readily provide assistance for fires, for floods, for tornadoes or hurricanes but not for drought. I guess the argument is that somehow a drought comes on slowly so it is not a natural disaster. But as far as those

people living in this part of the world are concerned, it certainly is a natural disaster.

One reason sometimes we are reluctant to give assistance for the drought is because it is assumed that there is a lot of money in the farm bill, that farmers are being taken care of maybe too well. I would like to call attention again to another graphic here which illustrates that the farm bill has really been functioning in a way that many people have not anticipated. The projected costs in 2002 were $14.3 billion. In actuality it cost $13.2 billion. In 2003 the projected costs were $18.6 billion. Instead it cost $12.1 billion, a saving of roughly $6.5 billion less than projected. In 2004 the projection was $17.5 billion and now it looks like it is projected to come in at about $10.1 billion. Out of a $50 billion expenditure that was predicted, we are actually going to spend about $35 billion.

The point is that we would hope that maybe out of that $15 billion shortfall that we think is certainly good for the country and good for the taxpayer, that maybe at least some of that, a little bit of that could go back to those who have really labored under this drought.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by urging Congress not to ignore the largest ongoing natural disaster facing the United States today, which is the extended drought, and I would also like to hope that Congress would not fail to appreciate those who provide the world's best, the safest, and the cheapest food supply of any place on this planet.

NATIONAL COVER THE UNINSURED WEEK

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this week marks National Cover the Uninsured Week where we focus our attention on the many health care problems confronting Americans without health insurance. This evening I returned to Washington from Houston after participating in a symposium, at St. Joseph's Christus Hospital, on the uninsured. St. Joseph's and Sisters of Charity have for decades served both the uninsured and the insured in the Houston area. Some of the most innovative and lifesaving research and treatment developments are being discovered in our backyard. The problem is that too many of our neighbors cannot access these lifesaving treatments because they lack health insurance.

Currently 31.2 percent of adult Texans are living without health insurance, more than any other State in this country. The growing number of uninsured in this country is truly a problem for all Americans. The uninsured often use the emergency room as their primary source of health care, which increases health care costs for all Americans. Americans without health insurance are less likely to seek preventive health care and only get care once their health problems reach emergency proportions. In fact, nearly 40 percent of the uninsured adults skip a recommended medical test and half of those people have not received care for a serious health problem in the last year.

I hope that Cover the Uninsured Week will result in a renewed debate about the serious health care problems that we face in our country and the actions we must take to ensure Americans access to quality health care. But we are increasingly going in the wrong direction. Uninsured, particularly children, have taken such a huge cut in the children's health care initiative program, the CHIPs program. I know in my State of Texas alone we have lost at least 107,000 children from CHIPs because of State budget problems. I am sure that problem is around the country with all our States.

As we have learned in the past, a rush to enact flawed policy is arguably just as bad as enacting no policy at all. A prime example is the new Medicare discount drug cards that are giving our seniors too little benefits and too many frustrations. This card was created from a flawed Medicare prescription drug bill that does not provide prescription drug coverage until 2006 and creates a huge gap in coverage forcing seniors to pay all their drug costs between $2,250 to $3,600.

Therefore, it is no surprise that I had doubts about our seniors' ability to utilize this first step, the discount drug card. I worried about seniors' access to information about the various cards and their ability to get reliable data from which to make an informed decision. Yet with great fanfare, Medicare released a Web site to provide just this information and allow seniors to compare the drug prices offered by the cards. That is precisely where the confusion began. The Houston Chronicle recently published an article detailing just how confusing this drug card is for seniors. In fact, the author found that the drug card was more confusing than preparing your income taxes or dealing with an insurance company regarding a hospital bill. I think this article sheds important light on the frustrations seniors are facing right now. I submit this article for printing in the RECORD.

[From the Houston Chronicle, May 4, 2004]

MEDICARE DRUG DISCOUNT CARDS EXPLAINED, SORT OF

(By Jim Shea)

The first thing seniors need to find out about the new Medicare prescription drug discount cards is if they are eligible.

This will not be easy.

Doing your taxes is easy.

Trying to straighten out a hospital bill with the insurance company is easy.

Explaining the infield-fly rule is easy.

Figuring out if you qualify for a discount card is, well, let me try to put it in context.

Beginning this week, seniors who are thinking of applying for the card can call for information. To handle the anticipated volume, the government has hired 1,000 ''benefit advisers.''

This sounds pretty good until you do the math:

Problem: How many times does 1,000 (government bureaucrats) go into 12.5 million (confused Medicare recipients who may call)?

Answer: Enough times to boost ''death by on-hold music'' to the top of the mortality charts.

Next, let's explore the matter of choosing which of the 28 government-approved private companies you should get your discount card from.

To make this choice, the government suggests you compare such things as drug availability and price before signing with a provider.

Seems like reasonable advice, except for one little hitch.

The discount card company you join is under no restriction to maintain the price that enticed you to join in the first place. In fact, it doesn't even have to guarantee it will continue to carry the drugs you need.

In private business this practice is known as bait and switch. In Republican-controlled Washington these days, it is known as a benefit.

If this provision seems a little one-sided, a little too big-business friendly, consider this: Even if you are baited and switched and generally hosed all over, you are prohibited from moving to another discount card company until your mandatory one-year commitment is up.

I mean, you get better terms from the Gambinos.

In fairness, seniors at the low-income end of the spectrum who manage to escape the registration process without contracting a terminal case of phone ear will benefit from the program. They qualify for an annual subsidy of $600, which if they are smart, they will use to purchase round-trip bus tickets to drug-stores in Canada.

Seniors at the high-income end of the spectrum, who own the right stocks, will also make out well.

To everyone else, let me just say that if you can't get your questions answered, give me a call and I will explain the following:

The first thing to know about the infield-fly rule is that it only applies if there are less than two outs and . . .

The first problem with the Medicare Web site is that a large number of senior citizens do not enjoy or are not proficient with the Internet. Frankly, I do not blame them for being skeptical about providing sensitive financial information such as their monthly income or other indicators of their financial situation. Yet even if our seniors are willing to go through all the steps on the Medicare Web site, the information generated is too confusing to help our seniors make a truly informed choice regarding their discount drug card. My staff and I attempted to put together a simple document to help seniors in our district easily understand the choices before them, yet it did not take long for us to realize there is nothing simple about this card.

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One zip code in my district had 12 participating cards; yet a neighboring zip code under the Web site had zero participating cards. It is hard enough for a senior to determine what cards serviced their zip code. For example, a senior would also have to figure out if

her pharmacy accepted that card and if her drugs were considered preferred under that card. If that is not difficult enough, then that senior would have to compare that card to all the other cards in her area, for example, the one that had 12 with the neighboring zip code that had zero.

Unfortunately, the story gets worse for our seniors. After spending the time, energy, and brain power to choose the best card, seniors are not even guaranteed that the companies will continue to maintain the cost that is on that Web site or access to those particular drugs that the seniors have looked for and they need. The company is under no obligation to maintain its advertised prices or even carry the drugs that they need. If they start losing too much money on a particular drug, they can just cease to offer that coverage during the year. And while all these private companies get escape clauses, Medicare beneficiaries are forced to stay with each card for at least a year.

In the end I am afraid we will learn the hard way that this discount drug card is just as bad a deal as the Medicare drug bill that created it.

THE WAR AGAINST THE TERRORISTS

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I have been watching television like all of my colleagues over the past few days and we are all very disappointed and disgruntled, upset, whatever one wants to call it, about the pictures that we have seen of prisoners in Iraq, and it is really tragic that those sorts of things happen in war. But we have had wars in the past where these things have happened. We had My Lai in Vietnam. We even had a problem in the Revolutionary War where other generals were calling for the resignation of George Washington because they had not won any victories because they had made so many mistakes. And of course they have Valley Forge. He crossed the Delaware, attacked the Hessians at Trenton, and he became a big hero, and we all know that he became the father of our country because of the successes of the Revolutionary War.

There are tragedies in all wars, but what we must not lose sight of is we are in a world war against terrorists. Over 3,000 Americans lost their lives in the World Trade Center. We saw in Fallujah Americans being burned and dragged through the streets and hung up by terrorists. Just these last couple of days we saw an American, an innocent American civilian, who was just working over there, having his head cut off, and they said it was because of the pictures. The terrorists said it was because of the pictures that were shown about what happened in the prisons in Iraq. The fact of the matter is they have been perpetrating these terrorist acts on and on and on because they want to defeat us and our way of life. And we must not let that happen.

And then I hear my colleagues criticizing the President and the Secretary of Defense over and over and over again saying, oh, my gosh, they are making mistakes; they should be doing this and that and the other thing. The fact of the matter is we do not need 535 would-be commander in chiefs. And that is what we see around here, people second-guessing everything that is going on.

As a matter of fact, we are winning the war in Iraq. We are winning the war in Afghanistan. The terrorists are on the defensive. And we must not send any signals to them whatsoever that they have a chance to win this sort of thing. And that is what I am afraid many of my colleagues are doing.

President Bush is doing a very good job. Donald Rumsfeld, as Secretary of Defense, is doing an outstanding job. And we need to stand with them and with our troops in the field and not be casting aspersions on every single thing that goes wrong over there. In war mistakes are made, and we are going to see more mistakes in this war. But we are winning it and we are going to win it as long as we have people like President Bush and Don Rumsfeld at the helm. And I hope my colleagues will think about that before they start shooting off their mouths in the future.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISCOUNT CARDS

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. Mr. Speaker, my disagreement with Secretary Rumsfeld began 2 years ago, 1½ years ago, when it was clear when Members of this Congress, in this House, and both parties were calling on the President and the Secretary of Defense to provide body armor for our soldiers, many of whom did not have body armor, with demands that they put armor on the underbellies and the doors of Humvees; still are not fully done and Americans have died because of it. That is the first major criticism of the Secretary of Defense and the President, something that they should have stopped what they were doing to take care of the safety of our men and women in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, last week enrollment began for the President's prescription drug discount card. They became available through the Medicare bill passed last year. What we could have done in this body is simply to have given a card like this, a Medicare card to every senior, and said this card will get them a significant 50, 60, 70 percent discount in their prescription drugs because we could have set our system up the way Canada does. The Secretary of the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services, the director, could have negotiated directly with the drug companies on behalf of 40 million Medicare beneficiaries, got a discount similar to what they have in every nation in the world, given this discount card to every senior, and they could have gotten a discount the way the Canadians get and the French get and the Germans and the Israelis and the Japanese, a 50, 60, 70 percent discount. Instead, the President wanted to privatize Medicare. He wanted to privatize these prescription drug cards, these discounts cards.

So what do we have? Beginning last week in my State of Ohio, there will be 50 cards available. I am not making this up. They need to select one of these 50 cards if they are a senior. This card may have a discount for Fosamax. This card may have a discount for Zoloft. This card may have a discount for Vioxx. This card may have a discount for something else. Maybe a 22 percent discount here, a 12 percent discount here. They have got to figure that out as a senior. They have got to look at all 50 of these cards and figure out where it makes the most sense to get a discount and which card makes the most sense for them. After they take one of these cards, they will be paying $30 and have this card for the year. The problem is the card seller, several of whom are big contributors to the President, and they are going to make a lot of money, these cards, but the prescription drug card seller, after they have chosen the card, can change the discount and can change the drug formulary in the drugs which are covered.

One might wonder why the President and why my friends on the other side of the aisle, instead of choosing one card and getting a 50 or 60 percent discount, would make seniors look at 50 cards and try to figure out the best 10 or 15 percent discount that they are going to get. One might wonder why would the President, why would the Republican leadership choose to do that. It has got a whole lot to do with the way this Congress operates. The word on the street is the drug industry is going to give $100 million to the President's reelection campaign. The drug industry and the insurance industry have already contributed millions of dollars to the Republican leadership, to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) and the gentleman from Illinois (Speaker HASTERT) and Republican leadership, millions of dollars to President Bush. In fact, a nonpartisan study said that this bill will mean $150 billion more in subsidies to the drug industry, in additional profits to the drug industry, and a $46 billion direct subsidy to the insurance industry, $46 billion coming out of taxpayers' pockets, going directly to the insurance industry, $46 billion.

We could take that $46 billion and divide it among the 39 million Medicare beneficiaries and they would each get a $1,100 drug benefit just from that alone. Instead, Republican leadership gives us

these cards and gives the insurance industry a $46 billion subsidiary. And do my colleagues know what? While the drug benefit program does not go into effect until 2006, the insurance industry, the HMOs, already got their payment on March 1, their first payment.

Mr. Speaker, we could have done this right and done a regular prescription drug program through Medicare with a good discount. Instead, the President and the Republican leadership have again done the bidding of the drug industry, again have done the bidding of the insurance industry, again have done the bidding of these companies that make these discount cards.

It is outrageous, Mr. Speaker, that instead of doing Medicare right and preserving the Medicare that we know and that this country likes and that seniors have benefited from, we have privatized this system. We have confused seniors, and we have let the drug industry and the insurance industry write this legislation, benefit from that legislation, and cash in on this legislation.

WE MUST SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

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

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, first of all, in response, I found a different case from my constituents. The first woman who signed up for one of the drug cards, Mr. Speaker, was 85. She had a monthly cost of $409, and after the card was given and she was able to navigate her way through it, her cost was $13.61. Mr. Speaker, that hardly sounds like the drug industry is going to get a payoff.

Mr. Speaker, I, like many, am profoundly disappointed in the photos and the actions of a handful of our soldiers, but I do not for one moment mistake the actions of a few to be representative of the many.

On the floor of this House, Mr. Speaker, I have heard my colleagues from the other side of the aisle say that the war being fought in Iraq cannot be won and is, in fact, ''unwinnable.'' And yet with straight faces these same colleagues say that they support our troops.

They have short memories, Mr. Speaker. They say they support our troops, and yet some of them earnestly voted against providing our troops with the very resources they need in the field, fighting not only for our liberty but for the freedoms of others.

Mr. Speaker, the words and actions of these individuals do not indicate support for our troops, and I find it profoundly disappointing when some show such blatant disregard, dishonor, and disrespect for our troops. Some of my colleagues have made such comments without concern for the impact that it has on the morale of our troops who are currently fighting in Iraq as well as those who are poised to go to Iraq.

Is this Election Year rhetoric and the partisan banter part of the Democrats' winnable strategy in Iraq? The bottom line is that some Members of the other party have become representative for retreat and appeasement. Mr. Speaker, appeasement and retreat has not worked in the past and will not work in the future with the terrorists. Mr. Speaker, we must win this war on terror. The stakes are too great for the future of humanity.

I went to Iraq late last year and personally visited with our soldiers. The young men in this picture and the young women that I met, those are the soldiers in Iraq who are an all-volunteer force who are fighting so that our children and grandchildren do not have to live in a world where there is daily fear of terrorism. These men and women deserve the thanks of a grateful Nation and a grateful world. They deserve to have our unwavering support for their unwavering belief in liberty and their understanding of freedom.

Since the American people will not hear these stories on the evening news, Mr. Speaker, I am here tonight to share true stories of astonishing bravery, courage, compassion, valor, and steel nerve. Mr. Speaker, I am talking about our soldiers and what they have done for America, Iraq, Afghanistan, and the entire world.

The soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division have been working to make Iraq secure but also have been putting time and effort into helping towns and villages with their ''Operation Helping Hands'' program. With ''Operation Helping Hands,'' our soldiers donate their own money to help provide families with food and health care necessities. Brigade Commander Colonel Ben Hodges came up with the idea of helping the poor families in the area. They have collected several thousand dollars, which goes a long way toward helping many Iraqi families.

Mr. Speaker, our troops are compassionate. They are helping Iraqi families in a way that they have never been helped before. Soldiers are often out in Iraq communities to provide medical care and humanitarian assistance. A small, impoverished village about 10 miles from Baghdad was recently paid a visit by personnel from the Medical Civic Action Program. This program sends doctors and medics out to provide free medical care on a regular basis. Because of conditions under Saddam Hussein, soldiers are treating diseases we rarely see here at home such as tuberculosis, hepatitis, and polio.

Mr. Speaker, we should also be proud of our troops for fighting for women's rights. For the first time in history, women in Mosul, Iraq were able to join the rest of the world in celebrating International Women's Day. The day recognizes coordinated efforts of women everywhere for equal rights and political and economic equality.

The People's Assembly Building was rededicated as the Center for Iraqi Women. The center will serve as a meeting place for all women of Iraq where they can share ideas, offer training, coordinate communications, and build a safer homeland.

And in Mosul, Iraqi police say they are grateful to the soldiers from the U.S. Army's 503rd Military Police Battalion for their assistance in rebuilding police stations. Coalition forces helped to renovate several police stations and enabled the Iraqi police officers to protect their fellow citizens. There are more than 1,600 policemen who have trained from scratch in an 8-week training program.

Mr. Speaker, these are the stories of our young men and women in Iraq. These are the stories of the people who are fighting for freedom and fighting to rebuild a country. Mr. Speaker, the war on terror must be won.

The new Iraqi Army is growing. In early March, more than 1,000 recruits of the 4th Battalion graduated from the nine-week basic training program.

These are our soldiers stories. There are hundreds, perhaps thousands more. I am proud of our soldiers and want to say ''thank you.'' These are not the stories that you will hear on the news, or in the newspapers—nor will you hear them during election year rhetoric.

A U.S. soldier evacuated an Iraqi woman, Farha Abed Saad for medical treatment after she had been harmed by the thugs who wish to rob Iraqis of their right to freedom. ''Thank God, you have come here to Iraq and make us free,'' said Ms. Saad, kissing a soldier's hands. ''When I see you, I see my own sons! Thank you, thank you.''

It is a sad day, Mr. Speaker, when some in this city who routinely ignore the great accomplishments of our soldiers only to politicize the war at their expense.

We will win this war on terror, Mr. Speaker, there is no other option. This IS a winnable war—and we must stand behind our policy and our troops with a firm resolve.

A world controlled by terrorists is not acceptable. If the United States of America cannot defeat terrorism, who in the world can? We will continue to fight against Al-Qaeda and Al-Qaeda affiliated groups—like the one who viciously beheaded 26-year-old Nick Berg. Nick Berg was a civilian who voluntarily went to Iraq to help rebuild Iraqi communication antennas. And my prayers are with his family.

After 9–11, Mr. Speaker, America was called to a new destiny. Our destiny is to defeat terrorism and tyranny. Amid the towers of American tragedy, Mr. Speaker, emerged our soldiers as towers of American strength.

And they shall have my eternal gratitude.

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REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4275, PERMANENT EXTENSION OF 10-PERCENT INDIVIDUAL INCOME TAX RATE BRACKET

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108–483) on the resolution (H. Res. 637) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4275) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, to permanently extend the 10-percent individual

income tax rate bracket, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4279, PROVIDING FOR DISPOSITION OF UNUSED HEALTH BENEFITS IN CAFETERIA PLANS AND FLEXIBLE SPENDING ARRANGEMENTS; H.R. 4280, HEALTH EFFICIENT, ACCESSIBLE, LOW-COST, TIMELY HEALTHCARE (HEALTH) ACT OF 2004; AND H.R. 4281, SMALL BUSINESS HEALTH FAIRNESS ACT OF 2004

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108–484) on the resolution (H. Res. 638) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4279) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the disposition of unused health benefits in cafeteria plans and flexible spending arrangements; for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4280) to improve patient access to health care services and provide improved medical care by reducing the excessive burden the liability system places on the health care delivery system; and for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4281) to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to improve access and choice for entrepreneurs with small businesses with respect to medical care for their employees, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

A FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, in response to the gentleman who spoke earlier in the well about casting aspersions on Donald Rumsfeld and others in the Bush administration, I will not cast aspersions. I called for his resignation earlier; and if I have time at the end, I will go into those again.

But I am going to read from the Army Times, not exactly a bastion of Democrats or liberalism.

''Editorial: A Failure of Leadership At the Highest Levels.

''Around the halls of the Pentagon, a term of caustic derision has emerged for the enlisted soldiers at the heart of the furor over the Abu Ghraib prison scandal: The six morons who lost the war.

''Indeed, damage done to the U.S. military and the nation as a whole by the horrifying photographs of U.S. soldiers abusing Iraqi detainees at the notorious prison is incalculable.

''But the folks at the Pentagon are talking about the wrong morons.

''There is no excuse for the behavior displayed by soldiers in the now infamous pictures, and an even more damning report by Major General Antonio Taguba. Every soldier involved should be ashamed.

''But while responsibility begins with the six soldiers facing criminal charges, it extends all the way up the chain of command, to the highest reaches of the military hierarchy and its civilian leadership.

''The entire affair is a failure of leadership from start to finish. From the moment they are captured, prisoners are hooded, shackled and isolated. The message to the troops: anything goes.

''In addition to the scores of prisoners who were humiliated and demeaned, at least 14 have died in custody in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Army has ruled at least two of these homicides. This is not the way a free people keeps its captives or wins the hearts and minds of a suspicious world.

''How tragically ironic that the American military, which was welcomed to Baghdad by the euphoric Iraqi people a year ago as a liberating force and ended 30 years of tyranny, would today stand guilty of dehumanizing torture in the same Abu Ghraib prison used by Saddam Hussein's henchmen.

''One can only wonder why the prison wasn't razed in the wake of the invasion as a symbolic stake through the heart of the Baathist regime.

''Army commanders in Iraq bear responsibilities for running a prison where there was no legal advisor to the commander, no ultimate responsibility taken for the care and treatment of the prisoners.

''General Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs, also shares in the shame. Myers asked '60 Minutes II' to hold off reporting news of the scandal because it could put U.S. troops at risk. But when the report was aired, a week later, Myers still hadn't read Taguba's report, which had been completed in March; Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld also failed to read the report until after the scandal broke in the media.

''But then, of course, it was too late.

''Myers, Rumsfeld and their staffs failed to recognize the impact the scandal would have, not only in the United States, but around the world.

''If their staffs failed to alert Myers and Rumsfeld, shame on them. But shame, too, on the chairman and Secretary, who failed to inform even President Bush.

''He was left to learn of the explosive scandal from media reports instead of from his own military leaders.

''On the battlefield, Myers and Rumsfeld's errors would be called lack of situational awareness, a failure that amounts to professional negligence.

''To date, the Army has moved to court-martial the six soldiers suspected of abusing Iraqi detainees and has reprimanded six others.

''Brigadier General Karpinski, who commanded the MP brigade that ran Abu Ghraib, has received a letter of admonishment and also faces possible disciplinary action.

''That is good, but not enough.

''This was not just a failure of leadership at the local command level. This was a failure that ran straight to the top. Accountability here is essential, even if that means relieving top leaders from duty in a time of war.''

That is from the Army Times, the May 17, 2004, issue.

I called earlier for Secretary Rumsfeld's resignation, as had others, because of the jiggered intelligence about the weapons of mass destruction and the so-called links that did not exist with terrorist groups with this regime, the fact that they ignored intelligence reports and plans drawn up by the State Department, and concerns about post-war occupation of Iraq, about the number of troops necessary to prevent looting, the downward spiral that could begin with looting, the fact that the troops did not have body armor, armored Humvees.

That is all because they were not ordered, not because there was not enough money. They were not ordered. Rumsfeld did not think they would need them, in his arrogance.

And today he talks about troops as fungible, and he reigns over a Defense Department that has wasted billions, while the troops are lacking basics. And he is the guy at whose desk the buck stops when prisoners are abused, as says the Army Times, not just a progressive Democrat from Oregon.

WHAT AMERICA HAS ACCOMPLISHED

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, we all demonstrated our righteous indignation over what took place in the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, and we are horrified by it. But I would like to take just a few minutes to share the transcript of the Fox News Sunday program hosted by Chris Wallace, in which he talked about the positive accomplishments.

He said on Sunday, ''As many of you may know, we thought the ABC News program, 'Nightline,' made a mistake last week, listing all the brave men and women who died in Iraq but without providing the context of what they died for. So we have said that we would put together our own tribute, our own list of what these brave men and women have built in Iraq.

''A couple of points before we begin. Some of you have written saying that we're pushing the White House agenda. As you saw in the last segment, there are plenty of hard questions to ask about the Bush administration's policy in Iraq, and we will keep asking them.

''There were also times this week when you couldn't help but wonder about putting on the good news from Iraq, as we saw those ugly pictures from the Abu Gharib prison. But the more we thought about it, what better

time to talk about what the vast majority of our troops are doing there? What better time to try to make sense of the sacrifice of the 767 men and women who have died in Iraq?

''We call our tribute, 'What We've Accomplished.' ''

Chris Wallace went on to say, ''First, ending the brutal regime of Saddam Hussein. Ending the systematic torture and murder of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis. Since Saddam was overthrown, investigators have found dozens of mass graves in which more than 300,000 Iraqis were buried.

''Ending the theft of billions of dollars from the Iraqi people,'' Wallace goes on to say. ''Since 1991, Saddam built 48 palaces, at a time when his regime said it did not have the sources to build housing. And an investigation has found Saddam stole more than $11 billion from the U.N.'s Oil for Food program.

''Ending the threat that weapons of mass destruction will be developed and used. Since the invasion, U.S. inspectors have not found WMD, but during its time in power, Saddam's regime manufactured chemical and biological weapons and, at one point, actively pursued nuclear weapons.

''Second, quality of life. Daily life has improved dramatically for the average Iraqi since the fall of Saddam, but it has come at a cost. These three soldiers were killed last July while they guarded a hospital at Baquba.

''Under the old regime, little money was spent on education and there was no schedule for maintaining school facilities. So far, 2,500 schools have been renovated, with another 800 to be finished soon.''

Then the voice of an Iraqi female saying, ''They put in electricity for us and a fan for us so we could get some air, and I say thanks to God.''

An Iraqi child says, ''Before, the school was dirty and not clean and even the bathroom was not good. This year, they made a new bathroom for us and they changed the building and painted it well.''

Chris Wallace goes on to say, ''What children are learning in school has also changed. Before the war, the government fired teachers for not following the party line. Almost 9 million new math and science textbooks have been printed and distributed. Old books were filled with pro-Saddam propaganda.

''And here are U.S. troops handing out knapsacks full of school supplies in Samarra. This just days after those four American contractors were killed and their bodies mutilated in Fallujah.

''Major progress has also been made in health care. Under Saddam, the Ministry of Health spent $16 million a year. The current budget is almost $1 billion. The health care system is now open to all Iraqis, with 30 percent more people using the facilities. Doctors who used to get $20 a month now earn up to $180. Modern medication, such as cancer drugs, are now available, something unheard of during Saddam Hussein's years.

''Last Sunday, these five Navy Seabees were killed in the Sunni triangle while on assignment rebuilding schools and medical facilities for the Iraqis.

''Third, human rights. Since the end of Saddam Hussein, a fully functioning legal and judicial system has been developed. More than 600 judges are working in courtrooms across the country. Iraqis charged with crimes now have rights that would have been laughed at under the old regime: the right to remain silent when they're arrested; the right to a fair, speedy and open trial; the right to a defense lawyer at all stages of the process.

''Iraqis now enjoy freedom of speech. Street protests against the United States occupation are now routine in Baghdad, something that in the past would have earned these demonstrators imprisonment or death.

''There is also something approaching freedom of the press. Under Saddam all newspapers were controlled by the government.''

Here was a woman that was a reporter for 27 years. She said, ''Before, we write as they tell us to write. Now we write what we believe.''

Mr. Speaker, I include the rest of the transcript for the RECORD.

WALLACE: Now, 120 papers are being published, some of them critical of the U.S. The coalition has shut down only two papers, which it said were inciting violence.

This is another sign of new freedom: Internet cafes. Before, few people had access to computers, fewer still to the government-monitored Internet. Now people can communicate, get information or sound off in Web blogs.

And here's more technology that was banned under Saddam Hussein: satellite dishes. Now more than one-third of Iraqi households receive news from around the world by way of these dishes.

Finally, the economy and infrastructure. There's a new currency in Iraq. Gone are those ever-present pictures of Saddam in a country that used to have two weak currencies, there is now one stable form of money.

Iraq's most important resource, oil, is showing a strong revival. Production now exceeds pre-war levels, averaging half a million barrels a day more than when Saddam was forced from power.

Still, gasoline shortages have meant that U.S. soldiers often have to guard filing stations to prevent looting. Private First Class Jason Wright from the 101st Airborne Division was killed by a drive-by shooter as he protected Iraqis who were buying gas.

One crucial area that has seen solid improvement is basic utilities. After years of neglect, Iraqis have electricity for only part of the day. By this summer, the average Iraqi will have electricity for 16 hours a day, 40 percent above pre-war levels. Under Saddam, only half of the country had access to clean drinking water. Now extensive renovations of water plants have brought cleaner water to more people, almost 15 million, on a more reliable basis.

Before the war, few areas had proper sewage facilities. One example of what soldiers are doing on the ground is in Mosul, where a neighborhood was swamped with raw sewage for 17 years. The U.S. Army spent $40,000 to hire local workers, and the problem is fixed.

Improvements in the infrastructure are widespread. Here are some key examples. Baghdad airport now has 43 passenger flights a day, including regular commercial service to Jordan.

And look at something as simple as phone service. Under Saddam, cell phones were a luxury, reserved only for top party and government officials. Now, more than 340,000 Iraqis have cell phones, and business is booming.

There's one other big difference: When Iraqis make a call now, they say no one is listening in.

IRAQI MALE: I call him now on the phone. Now we can discuss anything. We are not—I am not afraid to say anything.

WALLACE: As we struggled to put all of this together, we were astonished by all that our troops have accomplished. And we'll keep an eye out so we can update you on some of the ways our troops are making life better for so many Iraqis.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, we have seen tremendous improvements. We can see that a great deal has been accomplished. As we have seen suffering that so many have gone through, we are enjoying tremendous success.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTION TO OFFER MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2660, DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, subject to rule XXII, clause 7(c), I hereby announce my intention to offer a motion to instruct on H.R. 2660, Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2004

The form of the motion is as follows:

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I move that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 2660 be instructed to insist on reporting an amendment to prohibit the Department of Labor from using funds under the Act to implement any portion of a regulation that would make any employee ineligible for overtime pay who would otherwise qualify for overtime pay under regulations under section 13 of the Fair Labor Standards Act in effect September 3, 2003, except that nothing in the amendment shall affect the increased salary requirements provided in such regulations as specified in section 541 of title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations, as promulgated on April 23, 2004.

GROWING CONCERN ABOUT ALARMING LANGUAGE USED TO DEMEAN THOSE QUESTIONING AMERICAN POLICY IN IRAQ

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. Mr. Speaker, millions of Americans throughout this country share my growing concern about the alarming language being used to demean anyone raising questions about American policy in Iraq. But we have been there before.

We have endured the excesses and the shame of the Palmer Raids, of McCarthyism, of J. Edgar Hoover, and Nixon's Enemies List. It is a sad, but historical, fact that in these times of national crisis and stress, some resort to challenging not merely the ideas of our fellow citizens, but their character, their integrity, and even their patriotism.

Some would prefer that we ignore such blasphemy, that we treat such exaggerated rhetoric with the indifference it deserves. I respectfully disagree. I believe that we have learned a sad lesson from history of this and other countries that ignoring vicious political slurs encourages further abuse and undermines free speech and open debate.

We have substantial disagreements about the wisdom of our course in Iraq. Those who disagree with our policies include highly decorated veterans, intelligence experts, some of our closest allies and millions of our constituents, a growing number every day.

And yet, when a widely respected Member of the House, an honored veteran who has been a staunch supporter of the defense community through 30 years of congressional service, offered a somber analysis about the misdirection of our Iraqi effort, he was denounced by other Members as conducting ''a calculated and a craven political stunt.''

Now, the author of that statement has a tendency towards loose language and personal invective, and most people do not take his words too seriously. I do, because he is the majority leader.

He was speaking about our distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA.) He called him ''craven.'' The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA), craven?

Craven is a strong word. It means gutless. It means spineless. It means cowardly, weak, fearful. It is a word that should never be used by a Member of Congress to describe another, and could never be used to describe the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA).

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The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA) joined the Marine Corps during the Korean War. He volunteered to serve in Vietnam, while those who accuse him managed to avoid military service. He is the first combat Vietnam veteran elected to Congress. He retired from the Marine Corps Reserves in 1990 and has been awarded the Navy Distinguished Service Medal and the USO's Spirit of Hope Award for his many services to the men and women in the military.

To even suggest that his impassioned and difficult statement about the course of the war in Iraq was a ''political stunt'' is to insult a distinguished veteran and Congressman, and I denounce it in the strongest terms.

But the voices of hysteria did not stop there.

Now we are told that those expressions of concern about the misdirection of the Iraqi campaign demonstrated that ''the national Democratic Party declared its surrender on the war on terror.'' Democrats were accused of giving ''aid and comfort to the enemy,'' according to another Republican Member who never served in combat.

Let every American understand the meaning of these words: It does not matter who you are, if you have worn the uniform of your country, if you have risked your life in combat; to those who use these words on the floor of the House, it does not matter. Challenge the policies of the Bush administration and House Republicans in Iraq, and you are ''giving aid comfort to the enemy.'' You are surrendering to terrorism.

In other words, you are a traitor. That is what these Republican Members would suggest about Members of Congress.

Well, according to the latest poll, 60 percent of the American public think the situation in Iraq is out of control. Have we become a Nation of traitors in the eyes of the Republican leaders of this institution?

Mr. Speaker, this disgraceful, demeaning, and insulting rhetoric has no place in the Congress, it has no place in America, and it should be denounced by every Member of this House, regardless of party and regardless of one's position on Iraq. The day we lose our ability to voice our heartfelt views without having our patriotism demeaned is a dangerous day for democracy.

Some may argue that these are just the voices of an extreme, though powerful few. Some say it is just partisan politics. That is not the case. We have been here before.

Two years ago, the patriotism of Senator Max Cleland was challenged, a man who served in Vietnam and left three of his limbs there; a man who served honorably as the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs and as a United States Senator. Apparently he did not lose enough limbs to prove his patriotism to those who attacked him, those who sought multiple deferments in the same war that cost Max Cleland his limbs. Those attacks cost him an election, too.

This year, the vicious attacks are leveled, as we knew that they would be, against Senator JOHN KERRY, who volunteered in Vietnam while others used their connections and deferments to avoid service. Senator KERRY earned three Purple Hearts, a Silver Star, and a Bronze Star, but now his patriotism is also challenged. Evidently, Senator KERRY's wounds were not deep enough for some of his critics.

And now, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA) is the target of this disgraceful, venal slander.

It is time to stop.

Americans deserve, and they want, an honest discussion on the issues, not a vicious assault on the integrity and the patriotism of distinguished men who carry their wounds of war.

WHERE IS THE OUTRAGE?

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, earlier this afternoon, like so many Americans and citizens of the world, I watched the news with disgust as they announced the beheading of Pennsylvanian Nick Berg, a young man, 26 years old, who was working in Iraq as a civilian. Somehow, Abu Musab Zarqawi and other al Qaeda decided it was time to show us, once again, their version of justice which, to we Americans, is more of what we call murder.

Repeatedly, the stations talked about this and then cut back and forth to hearings taking place here on Capitol Hill to review the hearings about the Abu Ghraib prison and the terrible behavior of several soldiers there.

I was struck by the idea that while the actions of the soldiers in the prison were reprehensible and that they should face court-martial, I am also wondering where is the outrage about the murder of an American citizen? Where was the outrage also about the four contractors who were killed, their bodies mutilated, drawn and quartered and hung and burned? Where was the outrage about the terrorists living in Iraq and showing us the way that they see the world: innocent citizens who had no trial, because no trial could be held, because they committed no crime.

But it continues to give us a flavor of what we are up against when we note how terrorists view Americans and view Western culture and the world. Whether or not we are in Iraq, whether or not we are in Afghanistan, they will continue to perpetrate their war to kill us; not because they want land, not because they are seeking economic gains, but simply because they feel they are on a mission to kill anyone who is Western, who is from America, who is Christian or Jewish, and they will not stop until they have killed us or we have killed them.

But let us not forget who Abu Musab Zarqawi is. He is not just someone who appeared on television today.

World history tells us that in 1999, Zarqawi planned a terrorist attack for the millennial celebration in Jordan. The Radisson Hotel in Aman and other American, Israeli, and Christian cites were targeted. The plot was discovered before it was carried out, and Zarqawi escaped before he could be indicted.

In 2000, Zarqawi went to Afghanistan where he oversaw a terrorist training

camp. He also specialized in chemical and biological weapons.

In 2001 Zarqawi was sentenced to 15 years for his terrorist plots in Jordan. However, since he escaped before he was arrested, he has not served any of his term.

In October 2001, after the Taliban lost control of Afghanistan, Zarqawi fled to Iran with a wounded leg. While he was there, Zarqawi dispatched two Palestinians and a Jordanian who entered Turkey, and then they were supposed to go to Israel to conduct bombing attacks.

In February of 2002, the three terrorists who were sent by Zarqawi were caught in Turkey.

Then in May of 2002, Zarqawi traveled to Iraq; yes, Iraq. He had his leg amputated and had a prosthetic limb to replace it.

From May through July of 2002, Zarqawi spent time recovering in Baghdad and, at the same time, several extremists also came to Baghdad and established a base of operations.

In the late summer of 2002, Zarqawi traveled to Lebanon to meet with leaders of Hezbollah, another terrorist group.

And then in October of 2002, Lawrence Foley, a United States official with the Agency For International Development was assassinated, and after some arrests were made of the actual shooters in December of 2002, Zarqawi was linked to the plot by providing the murder weapons.

In early 2003, Zarqawi returned to the Ansar al-Islam camp in northern Iraq. Other terrorists who have trained in this particular camp have plotted chemical attacks with various toxins in Britain, France, Georgia, and Chechnya.

In January 2003, several terrorists were arrested in Britain for planning to put the toxin ricin in the military food supply. These terrorists were linked to Zarqawi. He continues on with his murderous ways.

It is important to note that as this history tells us that indeed this terrorist was plotting in Iraq, this terrorist was working in Iraq to train other terrorists. But where is the outrage? Where is the outrage among us?

Instead, we talk on and on, snipe back and forth, point fingers, call each side names on both sides of the aisle, trying to score political points instead of trying to achieve peace; looking at polling numbers, and not working on policy.

It is time that we lay these things to rest and look at the outrage and look at the ties that bind us and say, this is why we are fighting terrorism. It is to stop the murders, and it is to ask ourselves where is the outrage of their behavior.

MISMANAGEMENT IN IRAQ THREATENS AMERICAN TROOPS

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

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, the scandal at Abu Ghraib prison is indeed a stain on our national honor and a grave disservice to the brave men and women of our Armed Forces. More importantly, it is a threat to their safety in the field, as these despicable pictures have increased the fury of our opponents as they fight against us.

Only two items I think reflect in any form or fashion of positive sense for the United States. Actions speak louder than words. Two things may be positive actions. First, the apology of the President and the Secretary of Defense, in a rare display not of humility, but at least of a sense of concern for the feelings of others around the world and, in particular, in the Muslim world. This was a good thing. Second, and I think this is very important, the serious congressional hearings and investigations that are underway now are shedding a great deal of light on the scope and nature of abuses. We are showing the world how we respond when our misdeeds are uncovered, and that is a great example of our democracy: public, transparent hearings and investigations. Compare this, then, with the barbaric terrorists who hide behind masks when they commit acts of terrorism, assassination and, most recently, beheading.

However, unfortunately, apologies and investigations are not enough. The Taguba report says we have in this country a failure of leadership at the highest levels. I find it ironic in this context, then, that the President says that Mr. Rumsfeld, Secretary Rumsfeld is a superb leader. I beg to differ.

First, Secretary Rumsfeld was a party to false and misleading prewar intelligence and analysis. There are no WMDs, weapons of mass destruction, and we have not been viewed as liberators. I am someone who put aside partisanship based on representations made by this administration that there were, indeed, legitimate threats to our security.

Second, we find that Secretary Rumsfeld engaged in inadequate planning for postwar transition. We simply do not have enough troops. Not just Democrats are saying this. Experienced retired generals have said, almost unanimously, we do not have enough troops to do the job that we are required to do.

What about winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqis? We are losing. We are actually creating recruiting posters for terrorists, because the Iraqis have not seen us as liberators, they have seen us as an oppressive force. This administration has not done the things that would convince the Iraqi people that we are there to do them good.

One minute the Baathists are out, the next minute the same old Baathist generals are back in. How does that work for an administration that describes Secretary Rumsfeld as a superb leader?

This is the same Secretary Rumsfeld that set aside the Geneva Conventions and then wonders why we are having this problem at Abu Ghraib. Well, he set the tone. This administration and Secretary Rumsfeld bear the responsibility for inadequate planning of confinement facilities and for inadequately training our military police.

We heard one of our colleagues on the Republican side talk about all of the great accomplishments that our troops have done. Unfortunately, those accomplishments are undermined by this scandal and these outrageous pictures of sexual abuse of prisoners at the hands of our own troops.

What about the role of military intelligence in directing Army MPs to ''set the conditions'' and ''soften them up?'' This too falls at the feet of Secretary Rumsfeld. This is a great disservice to our men and women in the field.

Not only is this prisoner abuse a disgrace, it is the kind of behavior that we condemn on human rights grounds in other countries such as Cuba and other Third World countries. I am sure those countries now understandably scoff at our high-minded words.

We have created tremendous anger and hostility towards the United States by the Iraqi people and around the world. This will make the job of bringing stability to Iraq much more difficult.

What is to be done? First, we must hold those up the chain of command accountable. One of the things that concerns me as we review this scandal is that a few sergeants and privates are being made scapegoats for a failure of leadership at the highest level.

Second, since we are about to turn over sovereignty to the Iraqis, perhaps now would be a good time to invite them in as a show of good faith and let them serve as observers, those who have been properly screened, in the prisons to say that yes, we are not only turning over sovereignty, we have nothing to hide.

Finally, we need more troops. The generals have said it, the Democrats have said it. Most people realize we have not managed this war well. More troops would help us do a better job and help ultimately to protect our troops.

IRAQ OIL FOR FOOD PROGRAM

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

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address what I believe to be important facts about the United Nations Oil for Food Program with Iraq and how it ultimately was corrupted by Saddam Hussein with the aid and willing cooperation of allies from the international community.

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In addressing this issue, Mr. Speaker, a few simple facts should be reiterated.

In February of 2000, President Clinton's administration registered their dissatisfaction with Saddam Hussein's government when he complained that approximately $2 billion was spent to build nine lavish palaces and import liquor and cigarettes under the Oil for Food program.

During the postwar occupation, some very serious allegations have been made regarding people and corporations who circumvented the Oil for Food program by receiving illicit payments from oil surcharges. Among those implicated were U.N. officials administering the Oil for Food program. This was first reported by Al Mada, an independent Iraqi newspaper. Some people and organizations who have been accused have been confirmed in this account to have violated the program. Others have so far denied it.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that a tremendous number of companies signed oil exploration contracts with Iraq that would ultimately have served to undermine any remaining viability of the Oil for Food program. Not surprisingly, the companies predominantly seemed to have come from countries which opposed the liberation of Iraq.

Just this March, the General Accounting Office testified before our own Committee on Financial Services that it believed that Saddam Hussein's regime increased its revenues through illicit activities in the Oil for Food program by approximately $10.1 billion between 1997 and 2002. These funds were spent to oppress the Iraqi people and provide a lavish lifestyle for the regime's rulers.

Mr. Speaker, the facts are clear. Saddam Hussein engaged in an ongoing circumvention of the Oil for Food program, flouted the U.N. resolutions, persecuted his own people, and was engaged in widespread corruption. He was assisted in these activities by a number of companies and perhaps countries, as well as people within the U.N. bureaucracy itself. This is just one more example that gives credibility to our campaign to remove the regime of terror and replace it with one that truly represents the Iraqi people.

Mr. Speaker, thanks to the Oil for Food program, Iraq was able to successfully advance its foreign policy by offering future contracts to companies for oil exploration, thus receiving a buy-in from other countries, bolstering Saddam Hussein's legitimacy.

The Oil for Food program was suspended just before Operation Iraqi Freedom began on March 19, 2003. The U.N. staff in Iraq departed on March 28, 2003. As U.N. forces moved north towards Baghdad, the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1472, restarting the program's operations, empowering the United Nations to take direct control of all aspects of the program, and directing the United Nations to set priorities on the delivery of already contracted supplies. This actually enhanced U.N. authority and then was later extended on June 3, 2003, a remarkable usurpation of power given the record of the U.N. up to that time administering the program.

On May 22, 2003, Resolution 1483 was adopted, lifting sanctions on Iraq and providing for the phasing out of the Oil for Food program's ongoing operations within 6 months. In accordance with the resolution, the program was terminated on November 21, 2003, and was taken over by the U.S. occupation authority, the Coalition Provisional Authority.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues can be assured that the CPA is now more effectively delivering food and resources to the people of Iraq than Saddam Hussein ever did. Today, Iraqi resources are being used for the Iraqi people for the first time in decades. Our achievements are impressive in this area and should demonstrate our commitment to the people of Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, before I close, I would once again call for a full and thorough investigation of the expenditures of all funds involved in the Oil for Food program. The corruption was so deep in the Saddam Hussein administration and in those countries, companies and international institutions that propped up the regime, I am convinced that we will not like what we discover.

IRAQ ABUSES MAY GO UNPUNISHED

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to suspend your emotions for a moment and look closely at the pictures from Iraq. The Americans appear to be dressed about the same, but there is one major difference. Some of the photos include U.S. soldiers and U.S. civilian contractors. In fact, in one photo the civilian contractors are turned away from the camera. Maybe they were trying to protect themselves. From what?

Some of the U.S. soldiers involved will face a military court martial. The civilian contractors will not face a military court or an Iraqi court or an American court. Civilian contractors involved may not face any punishment thanks to the Pentagon.

Secretary Rumsfeld outsourced the President's war. He outsourced the checks and balances. He outsourced the chain of command. He outsourced due process.

The Pentagon wrote an order that specifically protects civilian contractors from prosecution in Iraq for crimes committed under the umbrella of official duties, and if a civilian contractor commits a crime while off duty in Iraq, U.S. Administrator Paul Bremer has to agree in writing to local prosecution. Does that sound like the United States? Is this the model of democracy we are trying to install in Iraq? Does this sound like adhering to the Geneva Convention?

Last week, the Attorney General rushed to the microphones to tell America that he can prosecute civilians implicated in Iraqi crimes, but the Attorney General neglected to tell the American people that not a single FBI agent has been dispatched to Iraq to investigate. Not one. When two U.S. embassies were bombed in Africa during the Clinton administration, 900 FBI agents went to the scene. The Attorney General says he will wait until the Pentagon finishes its investigation. What is he waiting for?

The International Red Cross has been sounding the alarm for over a year, but the administration and its war machine turned a deaf ear and a deaf eye to what was happening. Now the United States and every soldier is paying the price for benign neglect.

Civilians were given authority to interrogate, clearly using any and all means. Civilians had some mission control over U.S. soldiers, and they exploited this control.

Civilians were immune from local prosecution and immune from military chain of command. We know there has been torture and likely even murder; yet some soldiers were involved, but we cannot stop there and pretend that is the end of it.

There are thousands of civilian contractors in Iraq. We owe it to every good and decent American soldier to get to the worst black mark in military history. We must know what role, secret or otherwise, the civilians were playing in the war. What else were they given besides protection? What secret orders are they carrying out? Who is accountable for the civilians? What assurances will the Iraqi people have that any civilian implicated will be brought to justice? How can we say that we stand for freedom if we let the criminals go free?

The U.S. military told the administration before the war that hundreds of thousands of troops would be needed. The administration refused to listen. Instead, the administration deployed a hand-over strategy concerning Iraq. The administration handed over critical duties to people outside the military and then protected them.

The administration keeps talking about handing over Iraq on June 30. They have already handed over to the wrong people. We need to get back in control of what is going on in Iraq. This administration has got to come clean on what those contractors were hired to do, by whom, and who supervises them.

Are there bosses in Virginia that run those companies? Are they exempt, too? Is nobody responsible for the interrogations that went on in that prison or in the other prisons in Iraq?

These are the questions that must be answered by this administration, and I am afraid that if Mr. Rumsfeld does not want to do it, he is going to have to go.

CURRENT AFFAIRS AND SMART SECURITY

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, I rise today with a heavy, heavy heart. When we turn on the television or the radio or open a newspaper, what we hear and what we read is the great sadness that accompanies the deaths of so very many people around our world.

Reading the newspaper this week, we read that the lives of innocent men, women, and children are being taken in such disparate places as Sudan and Uganda in Africa; Israel, the Palestinian territories and Iraq in the Middle East; Haiti in the Caribbean; Chechnya and Afghanistan in Asia; and countless others places around the world.

Today, another distressing event took place, the beheading of an American civilian in Iraq, a video of which was posted on a militant Islamic Web site. This was a man who ventured to Iraq to help with the rebuilding of its infrastructure, a man whose only crime was traveling to an unstable country, thinking he might be able to make a contribution in the midst of all the chaos. He was 26 years old. This is a terrible tragedy.

But we are no longer surprised to hear that tragedies of this sort are occurring every day around the world. No country is immune. No group of people can avoid the misfortune that is accompanied by simply existing, by simply being alive in today's world.

In Haiti, for example, hundreds of innocent people have died of starvation. They are so hungry they are eating cakes made of butter, salt, water and mud. Mud. Yet here in the United States we do not act.

The gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) has introduced a sensible resolution that would establish comprehensive health systems in Haiti. Despite the amount of news coverage that Haiti has received these last few months, less than 10 percent of this House has signed on to the gentlewoman from California's (Ms. LEE) important legislation.

We watch, as we did during the catastrophic Armenian genocide of the early 1900s and during the Holocaust of the 1940s. We make claims of never again, but then we sit back and watch as these events occur again and again and again.

Is this the way humans are going to live out their lives on this Earth? Are we not destined for more? Are we not better than the sum of all these innocent deaths? Can we not address the economic gap between rich and poor, between rich countries and poor countries, between rich individuals and poor individuals?

There has to be a better course for humankind than the one we are currently on; and there is, one that emphasizes brains instead of brawn, one that is consistent with the best American values.

I have introduced legislation to create a SMART security platform for the 21st century. SMART stands for Sensible Multilateral American Response to Terrorism. SMART treats wars as an absolute last resort. It fights terrorism with a stronger intelligence and multilateral partnerships. It controls the spread of weapons of mass destruction with a renewed commitment to nonproliferation, and it aggressively invests in the development of impoverished nations with an emphasis on women's health and education.

The Bush doctrine has been tried, and it has failed. It is time for a new national security strategy. SMART security defends America by relying on the very best of America: our commitment to peace, our commitment to freedom, our compassion for the people of the world and our capacity for multilateral leadership.

SMART security is tough, pragmatic, and patriotic. SMART security is smart, and it will keep America safe.

CONGRATULATING ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to, first of all, congratulate St. Joseph's Hospital in Houston, Texas, in this week of acknowledging the uninsured for a briefing this morning to emphasize the numbers of uninsured in my community, in Houston, Texas, that draws our attention to the 44 million who are uninsured around the Nation. I would only say that is it not tragic that we have made choices that do not allow us to effectively provide the resources for our Nation and those within it.

□ 2045

And then I would like to acknowledge the World Food Program, because they feed 110 million people in 82 countries. It would be wonderful if we could focus our attentions on feeding the hungry and ensuring that those who need to be insured are.

St. Joseph's Hospital opened for the first time since Hurricane Allison in Houston, Texas, in 2001, their emergency room. But we are most glad they are a hospital with a conscience who are prepared and willing to sacrifice and work hard so that the doors of their hospital can be open to those who are in need.

This week, we will proceed with debates on a number of health policy initiatives. Unfortunately, I think they play right into the hands of politics and politicians. Frankly, we have individuals, children, the elderly and others who are sick and uninsured, and we need to do something about it, which would be full insurance and coverage for all Americans so that we can rise to the level that is not with shame.

I speak about choices this evening, Mr. Speaker, because it is imperative that we continue to raise the consciousness not only of our colleagues but the American people. I have often said that we can debate, as we are supposed to debate in the halls of Congress and on the floor of this House, because democracy is the underpinning of what these two Houses are about, the House and the Senate, and the three branches of government. But I ask the American people, where is your outrage? This morning I asked if your prisoners of war were held in a sovereign nation and the abuse that was shown over the last couple of days were rendered unto those who carried American citizenship, where would be your outrage?

Would you accept the fact that enlisted men and women, no matter whether they were from North Korea or some other country, was sufficient to answer the question of how these young men and women were put in the position of being the only ones that would find themselves before courts of law and the military court of justice? Or would you express such outrage that you would suggest it went to the highest levels of government?

I ask that question because I believe that is what we find ourselves in today. Let me remind you of what has happened. The human rights record of the United States is now in question. The United States foreign relations and policy is now in question. Adjudication under the Uniform Code of Military Justice is now in question. The separation of powers is now in question under the Constitution. Adherence to and respect for international law is now in question because of the Geneva Convention. The state of national security of the United States is now in question. The safety of Americans is now in question. The very fact that we have military personnel now endangered by our acts is now in question.

Today, tragically, one more mother and one more father lost a young man who had gone to Iraq simply to do good, to participate in the rebuilding of Iraq. We saw the horrific and terrible indication that he was murdered in a most intolerable way. What can we say about this, other than the fact that the pictures that have been distributed all over the world have contributed to America's demise, with people suggesting that we have lost our high moral ground.

I know the American people have not lost that position in this world. We are defenders of peace. We view the importance of life over death and peace over war. So, I say to the President and to this administration, it goes to the very highest levels of government. We are required by the world's sentiment and what is right to be done, which is for the removal of all of those who have been engaged, from the very lowest to the very highest, Secretary Rumsfeld, Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz and

others who may be included in this, whether they are at the very highest levels of military personnel. We must begin the healing.

Secretary Powell has to be heard on the international arena to begin to bring nations together. Condemnation must be loud, and punitive measures must be swift. I ask that this Congress not shun its responsibility. Shame on us if we do not investigate this in the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on International Relations, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. And these hearings must be open to the people of the world and the American public.

Yes, we are going to hold an international crime trial, but that is not enough, Mr. Speaker.

And as I close, is it not worthwhile to investigate the three women? Were they intimidated, were they stigmatized, did they feel they had to go along with the boys? What is happening to women who are in combat?

Shame on us, Mr. Speaker, if we do not investigate this and bring this to a point where the world knows that we are ashamed and we are moving forward to clear the slate and fight this war so that we can bring about the peace.

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

(Mr. KIND 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 Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania 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 Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. EMANUEL 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 Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CONYERS 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 New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE 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 Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MEEK of Florida 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 gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Asian American and Pacific Islander community and commemorate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

Before I begin, I would like to recognize the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WU) former chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, or better known as CAPAC, for his leadership, as well as the current vice chair of the caucus, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA).

As chair of CAPAC, I am proud to stand here to honor the accomplishments and diversity of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community. In 1978, my good friend Norman Mineta and Representative Frank Horton from New York, along with Hawaii's Senators DANIEL INOUYE and Spark Matsunaga, first introduced the first resolution establishing Asian Pacific American Heritage Week to recognize the ongoing contributions to our Nation of the API population.

The first 10 days of May were chosen to coincide with two important anniversaries, the arrival in the United States of the first Japanese immigrants on May 7, 1843, and the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. In 1992, the month of May was designated as Asian Pacific Heritage Month. I take great pride to see the celebration of our community expand from 10 days to a month.

For centuries, America has been enriched by our diverse and rapidly growing API communities and by the contributions that Native Hawaiians, Chamorros, and Samoans have made in their ancestral homelands. The first API settlement in this country dates to 1763, when Filipinos escaped imprisonment aboard Spanish galleons and established a community near New Orleans. Chinese and Japanese immigrants, likewise, started communities in Hawaii and California, where they sought labor and agricultural opportunities.

From the time of these settlements, APIs have experienced dual currents of discrimination and assimilation. In the difficult times, APIs were singled out for persecution by such acts as the Exclusion Laws of 1882 and 1924, and the Alien Land Act of 1913, which prohibited API property ownership.

This year, 2004, marks the 62nd-year anniversary of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's signing of Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, pursuant to which 120,000 Japanese Americans and legal resident aliens were incarcerated in internment camps during World War II. Many of these families lost their property and possessions during the several years they were jailed behind barbed wires.

In order to learn the important lessons from our own history, I sponsored House Resolution 56, which sets aside a ''Day of Remembrance'' in memory of the relocation and internment policies of World War II. This year, House Resolution 56 was passed due to the support from my fellow colleagues here in Congress and support from community groups throughout the country.

I realize we need to learn from our own history. It is more important than ever to speak up against unjust policies. Also it is more important than ever to educate Americans of the Japanese American experience during World War II, as well as the experience of other groups, like Japanese Latin Americans and certain German and Italian Americans. We must remember that the decision to issue the order was shaped by racial prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.

At the newly opened Manzanar National Historic Site Interpretive Center at the Manzanar War Relocation Center, we have the opportunity to explore our past and reflect. Additionally, these past few days, the Enemy Alien Files Consortium has set up their exhibit in the Rayburn foyer. This traveling exhibition, featuring photographs, objects, documents, artifacts, art forms and oral history excerpts examines the little-known history of Italian, German, and Japanese immigrants in the U.S. and from Latin

America who were classified as enemy aliens during World War II.

Over 31,000 of these enemy aliens were apprehended, detained, and thousands interned based on suspicion and the potential dangerousness they posed to the U.S. national security. The internees were held without charges for indefinite duration and without trial. These internees, including many American-born children and spouses, languished in Army and Department of Justice camps throughout the USA.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to now yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. Linda Sánchez) to speak to this particular item.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) for all of his leadership.

Today, I am proud to join him and to join Asian Pacific Americans in commemorating the 27th anniversary of APA Heritage Month. This month allows us to recognize the tremendous contributions the Asian Pacific American community has made to our State and to our Nation.

It is fitting, then, to remind others of important APA legislation. For instance, H.R. 677, the Filipino Veterans Equity Act, which would provide U.S. veterans benefits to World War II veterans of the organized military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines and the Philippine Scouts who fought for the U.S. and its allies. These veterans deserve to be recognized for the service they provided to our Nation in a time of need.

It is also a good time to bring attention to H.R. 333, which would amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to authorize grants for higher education institutions serving Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. This important bill would open doors for many underserved APA communities.

I am extremely proud my home State of California has the largest Asian American population of any State in America, and I am also extremely proud to represent a region of Los Angeles County that includes many members of the Asian Pacific American community. The diversity represented by the different APA communities of our region is a source of strength in our local economy, our culture, and the education we can provide our children.

Asian Pacific Americans are contributing to every aspect of American life, from business and government to sports, science, research and the arts. I am proud that the political landscape in my district reflects this diversity.

I want to take two seconds to recognize two important female city councilwomen in my district from the APA community: Laura Lee, of the City of Cerritos, and Michiko Oyama, of the Hawaiian Gardens City Council. They are pioneers in California's 39th District. They are smart, tough, compassionate leaders and great role models for all Americans.

As we recognize the many contributions of the Asian Pacific American community during this month, let us also celebrate where the APA community is going and the future impact it will have on our country. I urge all Americans to remember their important contributions to our country not only today but every day. The Asian Pacific American community, like the many diverse immigrant communities in this country, makes our country richer and stronger, and to them I am grateful.

□ 2100

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the good work of the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA), who has done an outstanding job in representing the concerns of the Asian Pacific Islander community. I was very proud to have the gentleman be part of a very instrumental conference that we held in Los Angeles on health care access. It was a tricaucus effort, and it was the first time the Hispanic Caucus, the Black Caucus, and the Asian Caucus came together in Los Angeles and started to talk about the health care disparities that affect our communities. It has been a pleasure working with the gentleman here in the House; and as a former colleague in the State Assembly in Sacramento, California, I had the pleasure of working with the gentleman there. He continues to shine a bright light here in the House, reflecting all the concerns and needs and issues that we need to pay close attention to.

As a Member representing the 32nd Congressional District, which I believe is the second largest community concentration of Asian Pacific Islanders, there are over 120,000 individuals who represent various Asian communities that live in my district, I have been very, very blessed to represent them for the past several years in any capacity as assembly woman, a State senator, and now as their Congressperson.

I want to tell Members how important it is to help build leadership amongst our community there. I am proud to represent one of the cities which is 70 percent Asian, Monterey Park, known as Little Taipei, which has one of the few city councils which has a majority of Asians.

One of the first assemblywomen came out from Monterey Park City Council, and that is the Honorable Judy Choo, who now serves on the very powerful appropriations committee in the State of California. I am proud to be a part of her accomplishments also in our district.

I want to say also it is very important to be reminded of the many contributions that Asian Americans have made. I am proud that now that my district has been somewhat redistricted, even in new parts of my district, for example in a city known as West Covina, that the Asian population there grew from 4 percent in 1980 to now 23 percent. We have a very distinguished councilman who sits on that city council, and that is Ben Wong, who is also representing our interests very well there, and someone who has been very politically active in making sure that diversity is encompassed and embraced by everyone.

That is why I have a particular joy in being here tonight to help promote the contributions that this community has made in so many ways, and so much is not reported in our history books. I had the pleasure of visiting just a few weeks ago some gentlemen who were actually represented in one of the major battlefields that we were involved in World War II, and these were the Japanese Americans that served in the Armed Forces as a part of the 442nd Infantry Regimental Combat Team. There was still two or three of my members alive in my district. I was very proud that we could present them with their awards and honors and pay tribute to what they bring to our history here that often goes unreported.

As I close my comments, I want to thank our colleagues here that represent a part of the Asian Caucus, and they are so open and willing that even myself, as a member of the Hispanic community, is welcomed as a member in that caucus. I feel very privileged to continue to work with them to see that our issues are in the forefront here in Congress, and that we represent the interests and needs of all of our communities. I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA).

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to the gentlewoman, in spite of the growth of the Asian American communities, rather than feel threatened, the gentlewoman embraces them; and I think that is why the gentlewoman has been such a welcomed leader for political leadership in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO).

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and to recognize the great contributions of Asian and Pacific Island Americans to our Nation. I, too, as the previous speaker said, am very proud to represent the territory of Guam in the Pacific, and I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA), the chairman, for his sterling leadership. Ever since I have come to Congress, I have noted he is out there working hard for the Asian Pacific recipients and the representatives from the various areas, as has the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA), the vice chair of the Asian Pacific American Caucus. I thank them for their efforts on behalf of our communities.

Asian and Pacific Islanders are contributing in every aspect of American life, from business to education, government, public relations, the military, sports, entertainment and the arts. In each of these professions, we find prominent Asian and Pacific Islander Americans making their mark. The late congresswoman, Mrs. Patsy Mink, was a champion of women's rights and

a leader in social justice who worked tirelessly to provide opportunity to the poor and disenfranchised. Today her legacy lives on and inspires many to remain strong in their convictions.

With her award-winning book, ''A Single Shard,'' children's author and Korean American, Linda Sue Park, has instilled important lessons of honesty, integrity, hard work, and perseverance in millions of children.

My predecessors, the Congressmen Antonio Won Pat, Ben Blaz, and Robert Underwood, faithfully served the people of Guam; and they have served as an inspiration to a generation of Chamorros.

Our communities have embraced America as our new homeland, and our unique cultures have survived and continued to thrive because America has come to know and appreciate how our contributions have enriched our Nation.

Today, as we celebrate ''Freedom For All, a Nation We Call Our Own,'' and as our military operations to win the war against terrorism continue to hold national attention, we are reminded of the sacrifices made to ensure our freedom. No one can doubt the patriotism of Asians and Pacific Islanders who have served this country with pride and distinction, and many without the benefit of citizenship.

Let us honor the 21 Asian American World War II veterans from the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team who were awarded the Medal of Honor for extraordinary heroism and bravery on the battlefield.

I especially want to remember those who have given their lives to protect our freedom, including Army Specialist Christopher Wesley, Lieutenant Michael Vega, and Sergeant Eddie Chen, soldiers from Guam who were killed in Iraq. We are saddened by their deaths, but their courage is an inspiration to all of us.

This year the people of Guam will be commemorating the 60th anniversary of our liberation from enemy occupation by U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. As the only American territory with a civilian population occupied by the enemy during World War II, they risked their lives to protect American soldiers from capture and endured great hardship and suffering. I want to recognize the people of Guam for their steadfast loyalty during these trying times.

As we celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, let us remember and honor all of the contributions of Asian Pacific Islanders. Let us appreciate the cultural diversity, the patriotism, and the communities that make our Nation so great.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Guam for raising the profile of Guamanians in the history and the patriotism of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), the Congresswoman from Oakland.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, first let me just say tonight that I also rise to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, which commemorates the significant contributions of Asian Pacific Americans throughout our country's history.

I would just like to take a moment and especially thank the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA), the leader of our Asian Pacific American Caucus, for organizing this Special Order this evening and also for the gentleman's consistent leadership on so many issues which affect not only the Asian Pacific American community, but the entire country and the entire world. I thank the gentleman for his leadership and for making sure that we stay on point.

Let me say tonight that I, too, honor the memory and the legacy of a very good friend, a great woman who left this Earth much, much too soon, the first woman of color to serve in the House of Representatives, our great sister, Congresswoman Patsy Takemoto Mink. She made such an impact in this body, and tonight as we celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, I want to just remind us of Patsy's great legacy.

Also, I would like to recognize the contributions of Asian Pacific Americans in my district, the 9th Congressional District of California, the East Bay of Northern California, and really commend everyone for their dedicated service and vision in making life better for those in our community and our Nation.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have long played a crucial role in the life and the history of the East Bay. The region's identity has been profoundly shaped by its place on the Pacific Rim. However, today Asian Pacific Americans still face a wide variety of challenges, including access to educational opportunities and community resources.

I specifically want to talk about three great organizations in my own district that are working to strip down the language and educational barriers that isolate far too many Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders today. They are the Asian Immigrant Women Advocates, Oakland Asian Students Educational Services, and Asian Health Services.

First, the Asian Immigrant Women Advocates has been providing resources to low-income Asian immigrant women workers for over 20 years. They work with women workers employed in the garment industry, in hotels, in restaurants, and other low-wage industries in the Bay Area. Every day they stimulate positive change and empower disenfranchised women through education, leadership development, and collective action so they can fight for dignity and justice in their working place and for enhanced and more rational, fairer, and more equitable living conditions.

Secondly, the Oakland Asian Students Educational Services motivates youth who have limited access to maximize their potential through education and social support. OASES provides personalized academic support and enrichment programs for youth from the first grade through their high school graduations. Through OASES, students take technology classes to gain computer skills and are tutored in areas such as math, science and, social studies. Recent young immigrants who face linguistic and social barriers in their schools can also receive language support. With so many social, educational, and economic challenges, health and access to quality care is also a major concern.

Now the four leading causes of death among Asian Americans and Pacific Islander women are cancer, heart disease, stroke, and unintentional injuries. That is why the work of the third organization that I would like to highlight tonight, the East Bay Consortium of Health Care Centers, their work is critical, especially as being part of the Asian Health Services.

Asian Health Services is a comprehensive community health center that provides medical care, health education, insurance counseling, and client advocacy to the underserved Asian and Pacific Islander population in Alameda County. Serving the community since 1974, they now provide medical services to 15,000 patients annually. Their staff of 150, which includes 18 doctors and physician assistants and 23 nurses, is bilingual in nine languages. In addition to providing high-quality health care, AHS is home to the Language and Cultural Access program, a medical interpretation and translation service, and Community Voices for Immigrant Health, a health policy development program.

As Members may know, recent immigrants face many obstacles today. Organizations like these help their clients to conquer these barriers. I want to salute them tonight for their achievements and congratulate them for a job well done and a job that continues to soar on behalf of our community.

□ 2115

In addition, as part of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, I believe that it is also very important to celebrate the accomplishments of prominent Asian American leaders in our community. Let me just recognize Oakland City Council members Jean Quan and Henry Chang and Danny Wan. Also our supervisor, Alice Lai Bitker and one of the most powerful persons in the California legislature, our majority leader Wilma Chan. They work daily to enhance the quality of life for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, also for our entire community, the States and the entire Nation. For this, I am deeply grateful.

Finally, I want to recognize a hero for many of us, someone who has profoundly affected the lives of all Americans, Professor Ronald Takaki. Professor Takaki is a foremost thinker in

the field of multicultural education and ethnic studies. He has been a professor in Asian American studies at the University of California Berkeley for more than 30 years. His research and teaching have shed light on the vast contributions that Asian Americans have made to the history, to the culture, and to the achievements of our country.

Professor Takaki believes that the study of multiculturalism results in a more accurate understanding of who we are as Americans. The grandson of Japanese immigrants to Hawaii, Professor Takaki cites the moral vision of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the civil rights movement as the stimulus for his study of race in America. Since then, much of the core curriculum in ethnic studies has grown from his own wide-ranging original research. In 1984, he was a founder of Berkeley's Ph.D. program in ethnic studies, the first of its kind in America. Professor Takaki is retiring this year from the University of California Berkeley and tonight I want to honor him for his vast contributions to bettering our society and in championing diversity and minority rights in our country.

Mr. Speaker, tonight in conclusion, as a proud member of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, I am pleased to join the gentleman from California tonight. I want to thank him again for organizing this Special Order. As we commemorate and as we celebrate the crucial role that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have played and continue to play in the development of this Nation, we must also recognize at the same time the unique needs and challenges of the 13.1 million Asian Pacific Americans in the United States and work towards supporting efforts to improve their future. I again thank the gentleman for his leadership and his friendship.

Mr. HONDA. I thank the gentlewoman from California, and I appreciate her sharing the work that the community-based organizations are doing for the community in order for the members of the community to be able to access and be full participants in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO), another great leader.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague and dear friend, the gentleman from California. I rise to honor, recognize, and celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and thank my friend for making us aware that all of us are immigrants to the United States and that we need to work together to be able to forge a better partnership for the betterment of the whole of the United States.

I have the privilege of representing a large and diverse community of Asian Pacific Americans in my California 38th District. As part of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus leadership and a member of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, I extend my gratitude to the gentleman from California, chair of CAPAC, for organizing this Special Order and for bringing us together to recognize and celebrate this very special evening.

This month, the members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus pay tribute to Asian Pacific Americans, especially, as we have heard, our great deceased friend, Patsy Takemoto Mink. We also have a great leader in the United States in Transportation Secretary Norm Mineta who has been a great friend to all of us and made a very heavy impact in transportation for the whole of the United States.

The last day of this month is Memorial Day. I extend my appreciation to all Asian Pacific Americans who have died in combat and also to the more than 60,000 Asian Pacific Americans currently on active duty in the armed services. For over two centuries, Asian Pacific Americans have helped to strengthen and define America. In the 1700s, Filipino immigrants fled from Spanish oppression and settled in Louisiana. In the mid-1800s, Chinese immigrants were actively recruited to work on the transcontinental railroad, a vital line for early settlers in the West. In the face of discrimination, many Chinese and Japanese workers continued immigrating to Hawaii and California in the late 1800s to work long hours in agriculture long before other immigrants. Despite playing a critical role in the United States westward expansion, believe it or not, laws were passed to exclude Asians from citizenship. Today immigration policy is still fraught with some of the same systemic problems and hypocrisy early Asian Pacific immigrants encountered.

Last week the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) introduced H.R. 4262, an immigration reform bill that addresses the needs of the immigrant community labor organizations and business groups. It fixes many of the systemic problems and honors the hard work of today's immigrants, all immigrants, including Asian Pacific Americans, provides better security for our country and gives the framework for managing future immigration.

I have the highest regard for the determination and entrepreneurship and the spirit of these Asian Pacific immigrants. They have one of the highest levels of self-employment in the U.S. It is even higher than their American-born counterparts. America must pass an immigration policy that respects their hard work and the jobs that they bring to the United States.

As a community, Asian Pacific Americans have never forgotten the struggles of those who came before us. The Tri-PAC which the Asian Pacific American Caucus, the Hispanic Caucus, and the Congressional Black Caucus have formed have been working together and will continue to work together to better the very, very hard issues that face our different communities. We have had the privilege to work with our friends in the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, CAPAC, to make the path smoother for those who come after us. The members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus look forward to continuing to work with CAPAC on improving minority health, increasing education resources, and working for real immigration reform for all those that need it in this great country of ours.

Mr. HONDA. I thank the gentlewoman from California. Let me also comment and thank her for her leadership in helping this country understand how diverse and how colorful this country is.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the charismatic gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. CASE).

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, our country is obviously going through times of great difficulty, but it is vital in such times that we pause to reflect on all that is good in our country, that we reflect upon the glue of our country, what holds us together. In that context, I am very pleased to join the gentleman from California, a most worthy and passionate advocate for our people, and my other colleagues on the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus on commemorating Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. I stand here as the proud Representative of my Second District of Hawaii, the most ethnically diverse district in the most ethnically diverse State of our country.

In my Hawaii, out of a total population of 1.2 million, over half are comprised of Asian and Pacific Islanders. And so as we commemorate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, I want to reflect on the history of Hawaii, not just because I am immensely proud of our history but also because I believe very strongly that we remain a beacon for where this country is going and what this country can be in the area of ethnic contributions and ethnic diversity.

Of course among our country's original Pacific Islanders were and are the indigenous peoples of Hawaii, the native Hawaiians. They came from elsewhere in Polynesia in the early centuries A.D. and built one of the most amazing societies that this world has ever seen. The circumstances under which their kingdom gave way to the Republic of Hawaii remain controversial and far reaching, the subject even today of vital legislation to reaffirm the special relationship between our government and native Hawaiians everywhere. But what is unquestioned is that our indigenous peoples, like other Asians and Pacific Islanders, have seen a remarkable and deeply moving renaissance in their own culture and ethnic pride that has not even begun to approach its zenith.

Modern Western contact in 1778 started Hawaii on the journey to ethnic and cultural diversity, a journey on which we are still embarked. As our economy turned to large-scale agriculture and we saw many foreign workers come in, we saw the Chinese come

in beginning in 1852, Japanese in 1868, Portuguese in 1878, Puerto Ricans in 1901, Koreans in 1904, Filipinos in 1907. Today we continue in Hawaii to attract immigrants to our shores, including Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians from southeast Asia and other Pacific Islander groups including Tongans, Samoans, Fijians, Maori, Chamorros, Marshallese, Palauans and other Micronesians, Polynesians and Melanesians.

Today Hawaii's Asian and Pacific Islander community counts all of these as valuable members of our society. My own congressional district is home to many, including the largest number of native Hawaiian and Filipino populations of any other district in the country. So it is no surprise that Hawaii leads our country in interracial marriages, including my own, where the undisputed head of my household's family originated in the great country of Japan a century ago. More than one-third of married couples and more than one-half of unmarried couples are interracial. More than 50 percent of the children born in Hawaii nowadays, including my own, are interracial. So you can see that in Hawaii, we live Asian Pacific American Month every month. We are proud of our API community, their contributions to our national and international life. For example, of the 33 Asian and Pacific American Members of Congress ever elected, seven have been from Hawaii, including Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaole, Senator DANIEL KEN INOUYE, Senator Hiram Leong Fong, Senator Spark Masayuki Matsunaga, Congresswoman Patsy Takemoto Mink, Senator DANIEL KAHIKINA AKAKA and Congresswoman Patricia Fukuda Saiki.

We have boasted a few firsts at the gubernatorial level. The first Governor of Japanese ancestry, George Ariyoshi. The first Governor of native Hawaiian ancestry, John Waihee. The first Governor of Filipino ancestry, Governor Ben Cayetano. We have seen today in the halls of Congress the incredible contributions of a patriot, Major General Antonio Taguba, a Leilehua High grad from Hawaii and a proud member of our Filipino community. And, of course, former General Eric Shinseki, 34th Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, of Kauai.

Like everywhere else in our country we have tragically given thousands of the lives of our sons and daughters, including from the Asian and Pacific American community for the cause of freedom. The exploits of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team remain legendary, but more recently we have seen the tragedy, the tragedy of the loss in Iraq of Maui native Sergeant First Class Kelly Bolor and Big Island native Wesley Batalona.

In sports we have seen Michelle Wie, a 14-year-old Hawaii high school freshman referred to as the Tiger Woods of women's golf. We have seen Benny Agbayani in baseball, Duke Kahanamoku and Rell Sunn in surfing, Ben Villaflor in boxing, Tommy Kono in weightlifting. Ellison Onizuka gave his life for the cause of science. Miss Universe Brooke Lee. Miss America Angela Baraquio. In music, Braddah Iz, Israel Kamakawiwo'ole. In Hollywood Kelly Hu, Jason Scott Lee, Tia Carrera. In sumo, Takamiyama, Akebono, Musashimaru and Konishiki. In civil rights, Bruce Yamashita. And, of course, how could we end the night without mentioning Camille Velasco and more recently Jasmine Trias? If you want to show your support for Asian and Pacific Americans, tonight you know what number to call on what TV show right about now. Jasmine just finished singing.

Mr. Speaker, this is just some of what our proud Asian and Pacific American community offers our country and world. We are deeply committed to sharing with our fellow Asian and Pacific American community nationwide a bright future. I have only the utmost thanks and respect for the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) again for his leadership and for my other colleagues, not just in the APA community caucus here but on all of the other ethnic minority caucuses. Together we are working for a much brighter, a much better, a much more vibrant and diverse and amazing culture and future that lies in front of us here in this country.

□ 2130

I thank him and bid him a warm mahalo.

Mr. HONDA. Mahalo. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE) to round out the great State of Hawaii.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the opportunity to speak here this evening on Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Special Order. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues on the congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus to recognize Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. As a member of the caucus's executive committee, I want to honor the many achievements and contributions of more than 11 million Americans of Asian and Pacific Islander descent in our country.

As has been mentioned by the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. CASE), back in 1978 my friends and colleagues, Senator DANIEL K. INOUYE, former Senator Spark Matsunaga, former Representative Frank Horton, and former Representative Norm Mineta, helped establish the first 10 days of May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Week. Fast forward to the 102nd Congress: legislation establishing the entire month of May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month was signed into law.

The congressional district I represent is composed of approximately 70 percent Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. There is a special strength and resilience embodied in Hawaii's unique cultural mix. We have chosen to be defined by our diversity rather than divided by our differences. That resolve to work together with Aloha can serve as an example for the rest of the country and I might say, Mr. Speaker, for the world.

For those of us from the State of Hawaii, there is something missing in this year's heritage month celebration, however: the dynamic presence of our colleague Patsy Takemoto Mink. Patsy fought all her life for social and economic justice. Throughout nearly 50 years of public service, she championed America's most deeply held values: equality, fairness, and, above all, honesty. Her courage, her willingness to speak out and champion causes that others might shun resulted in tremendous contributions in the fields of civil rights and education. She has earned an honored place in the history of the United States House of Representatives as the co-author of title IX, which guarantees equality for women in education programs. Every single woman in this Nation who today has access to equal opportunity in education and by extension in virtually every other field of endeavor owes a debt to Patsy Mink.

She was one of the pioneers who transformed Hawaii and transformed the Nation. Whenever any of us felt some sense of discouragement, whenever any of us felt some sense of despair or feeling we could not succeed, it was only required for Patsy to come into the room to change the atmosphere. Patsy Mink had the capacity to make dead air move. Patsy Mink, this little dynamo from Hawaii, was a giant in her heart and in her commitment. I miss her every day. I measure all I do by her unfailing standard of integrity.

She would be the first to say while we can look at Asian Pacific American Heritage Month as a time to recognize and celebrate many individual accomplishments, we must also take action. The other members of Hawaii's congressional delegation and I are working every day to respond to the issues raised by people of Hawaii and the Nation. I hope I can work productively to resolve them, always remembering that our Nation should be defined by our diversity rather than be divided by our differences. I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA).

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE), and he makes Hawaiians very proud; and we are privileged to have him as one of our members of CAPAC, and I always look toward him to understand how to deliver a speech eloquently.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and I am very proud to be here as one of Hawaii's answers to affirmative action this evening.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I was hoping he would say that.

Mr. Speaker, I too would like to extend my gratitude to the patriotic men and women serving our country and the

military including the 60,813 Asian American and Pacific Islanders serving on active duty in the U.S. armed services as well as the 20,066 in the Reserves and National Guard. I also commend the 351,000 API veterans. Last week I had the privilege to meet a young soldier, Army Specialist Bermanis of the Army's 82nd Airborne Division. He was presented with the Bronze Star, a Purple Heart for Meritorious Conduct in Operation Iraqi Freedom. On July 16, 2003, the award presentation ceremony took place bedside at Walter Reed Army Medical Center where he was convalescing from grave injuries. Specialist Bermanis and a fellow soldier were on guard duty in southern Baghdad when they sustained an attack by rocket-propelled grenades on June 10, 2003. His fellow soldier died instantly, and Specialist Bermanis lost both his legs and his left hand.

Specialist Bermanis hails from Pohnpei in the Federated States of Micronesia. Officials from the Federated States of Micronesia and the U.S. Government had visited him at Walter Reed and praised him for his courage and exemplary service. A senior U.S. official commended Specialist Bermanis's service as representative of the Federated States of Micronesia citizens' commitment to the security of the United States and Pacific region.

Mr. Speaker, this month also affords us time to reflect on the various social needs that exist in the API community. Today there are 12.8 million APIs, which represents 4.5 percent of the U.S. population. Between 1990 and 2000, the community grew nationally by 72 percent.

APIs are one of the fastest growing populations in the country. The API community in this country encompasses 49 ethnicities speaking over 100 languages and dialects. The population enriches our culture linguistically through a range of languages, such as Japanese, Chinese, Samoan, Thai, Vietnamese, Hmong, Cambodian, Micronesian, and Korean.

Our linguistic diversity has contributed greatly to American society. It has allowed us to exercise international leadership economically and politically. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, slightly less than half of the 7 million API who speak a language other than English at home report that they speak English ''very well.'' We need to better address the educational and health care needs of all limited-English proficiency students, children, and adults.

Additionally, data is a cross-cutting issue. Lack of data impacts our understanding of the health problems in our communities as well as the problem of access and quality. Adequate data collection continues to be a challenge for the API community. Although we are often mistaken to be a homogenous group, our community is extremely diverse in ethnicities and languages. Aggregating such a large and diverse group makes it difficult to understand the unique problems faced by the individual ethnicities.

This year as chair of CAPAC, I have looked into these and other critical issues within the API community. Through our CAPAC task forces, we have targeted such goals as eliminating racial ethnic health disparities, enacting comprehensive immigration reform, fighting to create jobs, and providing educational opportunities for the underserved.

CAPAC has had the privilege to work with our colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and the Congressional Native American Caucus to advance dialogue on these important issues.

I yield to the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA), the vice chairman of CAPAC, a Member of the Congress for many years, a leader and a person who represents American Samoa.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) for yielding to me and not only for his leadership but as chairman of the Asian Pacific American Caucus and for him to request this Special Order to allow Members of this institution to pay tribute and to recognize the contributions of our Asian Pacific American community to our Nation.

I think with some sense of perspective in history, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about the Asian Pacific American region, we talk about all those countries that comprise Asia as a region as well as those Pacific Island nations. The Asian Pacific region constitutes two-thirds of the world's population. This region also has six of the 10 largest armies in the world. The U.S. commercial and trade relations with this Asian Pacific region far exceeds other regions of world. In fact, the U.S. trade with the Asian Pacific region is twice that of Europe alone. As I recall, Senator INOUYE once made the observation that for each 747 that flies across the Atlantic, four 747s fly between the Asian Pacific region and our Nation.

Americans whose roots are from the Asian Pacific region are over 13 million strong and among the fastest growing demographic group in the United States today.

Permit me to share with my colleagues an overview of some of the contributions that Asian Pacific Americans have given to our Nation. Just 3 months ago, a world renowned Chinese American physicist, Dr. Chien-Shiung Wu, perhaps little known to the average American, passed away quietly in her home in New York. For decades she dedicated her life to the study of beta decay. She was born in Shanghai, and in her youth studied with Nobel Laureate E.O. Lawrence, the inventor of the cyclotron at U.C.-Berkeley, where Dr. Wu also received her doctorate degree in physics. For some 30 years, Dr. Wu taught physics at Columbia University. In 1957 she won the Nobel Prize in physics for her work on emission of electrons from radioactive nuclei. I think there are approximately 10 other Nobel Laureates who are of Asian Pacific ancestry in the field of physics, mathematics, and chemistry.

A couple of years ago, Time Magazine featured as its Man of the Year Dr. David Ho. Dr. Ho is a Chinese American who was born and raised in Taiwan. His family moved to the United States when he was a young man, and he is now a leading scientist in the field of medicine and has been recognized for his research efforts to find a cure for HIV/AIDS.

For several decades now, Dr. Makio Murayama, a Japanese American, conducted vital research in the United States that laid the groundwork for combating sickle-cell anemia. In 1973 Dr. Leo Esaki, a Japanese American as well, was awarded the Nobel Prize in physics for his electron tunneling theories. And in the field of engineering, few have matched the architectural masterpieces created by the genius of Chinese American I.M. Pei.

In the fields of law and finance, the names of prominent Asian Pacific American corporate leaders and legal scholars are too numerous to mention. One need only to read our Nation's top newspapers and periodicals to document that Asian Pacific American students, both in secondary schools and universities, are among the brightest minds our Nation offers to the world. We have every expectation that they now and will in the future contribute their talents and expertise to solve major issues and problems now confronting our Nation today.

In the fields of entertainment and sports, the late Chinese American kung-fu martial arts expert Bruce Lee captivated movie audiences around the world by destroying the common stereotype of the passive, quiet Asian Pacific American male. Now another sports and movie icon is moving his way through the movie industry and is believed to be the heir apparent to Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. His name is Dwayne Johnson, commonly known today as the Rock. The Rock is a former World Wrestling Federation champion wrestler and has completed his third movie. First it was The Scorpion King, then The Rundown, and now Walking Tall. And just a unique thing about the Rock, Mr. Speaker, is that his father is African American and of European descent, but his mother is pure Samoan Polynesian. Now just about every Samoan claims kinship with the Rock, including myself, Mr. Speaker.

When we talk about sports, for example, golf, Mr. Speaker, it is ironic that the two best golfers in the world are of Asian Pacific descent. Tiger Woods's mother is Thai. Vijay Singh from the island of Fiji is of Asian descent. And as mentioned earlier by my colleagues from the State of Hawaii, we have a new Tiger Woods among the women's professional golfers, and this is a 14-year-old junior golfer from the State of Hawaii. She is Michelle Wie.

About 4 decades ago, Mr. Speaker, a native Hawaiian named Duke Kahanamoku shocked the world by winning the Olympic gold medal for the United States in swimming, followed by Dr. Sammy Lee, a Korean American, who also won the Olympic gold medal in high diving. Dr. Lee told me during the 1988 Olympics in Korea that in his day, because he was nonwhite, he was not allowed to train along with his fellow Olympic American athletes.

□ 2145

So he had to become creative by performing high dives off cliffs and tall trees. Despite all this, he still won the gold medal for our country.

And what can you say about Greg Louganis, the Samoan American, perhaps the best high diver ever in the world. Dr. Lee, who was his former teacher, I asked him in Korea, ''Why is it that Greg Louganis is such a fantastic high diver?'' He said, ''ENI, look at his legs. Because of the power that he gets from his legs,'' this high diver named Greg Louganis, ''he is able to perform more difficult tricks in his routines when he does this.'' I think everybody knows that Greg Louganis has been the greatest diver ever known to the world.

Let's talk about the National Football League. We have had Asian-Pacific Americans who have also made All-Pro: Charles Ane with the Detroit Lions, Rockney Freitous with the Detroit Lions; Luther Elliss; and the perennial All-Pro, Junior Seau, formerly with the San Diego Chargers, now with the Miami Dolphins. We have Jesse Sapolu with the Forty-Niners and Dan Saleaumua with the Kansas City Chiefs, and also Jim Nicholson, also formerly with the Kansas City Chiefs.

We also have Asian-Pacific Americans who are making their mark on history, not in our country, but in Southeast Asia. About 20 years ago, an 18-year-old Samoan kid named Saleva'a Atisanoe, then weighing only 384 pounds was an All-State football player who had intended to play college football. While walking Waikiki Beach with his buddies, he was immediately brought to the attention of the famous Native Hawaiian sumo wrestler and teacher, Jesse Kuhaulua—or Takamyama—as he was known throughout Japan.

After convincing Saleva'a's parents to have their son try sumo wrestling as an optional sport, Takamyama brought this Samoan young man to Japan. Saleva's left with only a little lavalava and a t-shirt on his back and started a training program so rigorous and demanding that very few foreigners make it through the first 6 months.

Saleva'a told me that he trained every day for 6 or 7 hours. His body took every form of pain and physical punishment including stretching, pushing, pulling. If you want to know how rigorous the training is and what a sumo wrestler has to do in order to be successful in this ancient sport, let me just say that a 500 pound man must be able to do the splits just like a seasoned ballerina dancer does at an opera concert.

Saleva'a's name was later changed to Konishiki, and he weighed in at 570 pounds and at six feet in height. Konishiki took the entire sumo wrestling world to a different level. His successes in winning his matches within 2 years usually would take most sumo wrestlers 5 years to achieve. Although he achieved the second highest level in sumo, which was Ozeki, Konishiki became a household name throughout Japan, and was forerunner to two other Polynesian sumo wrestlers who eventually became Yokozuma or grand champion.

Indeed, two Americans of Polynesian descent scaled even greater heights by attaining the highest status—Yokozuna or Grand Champion—in this ancient Japanese sport of sumo wrestling. A Native Hawaiian, Chad Rowen, or Akebono as he is known in Japan became Yokozuma. Of course, he weighed about 500 pounds and stood six feet eight inches tall. The other was Samoan-Tongan American Peitani Fiamalu also known as Musashimaru. He tipped the scale at 550 pounds and stood six feet four inches.

Mr. Speaker, if I may, I would like to now direct my attention to another area in our Nation's history, where Members of our Asian Pacific American community were severely challenged. As a Vietnam veteran, it would be ludicrous for me not to say something to honor and respect the hundreds of thousands of Asian Pacific Americans who served then and now in all the branches of the U.S. Armed Forces.

As a former member of the U.S. Army's Reserve unit known today as the 100th Battalion and 442nd Infantry Combat Group, I would be remiss if I did not tell you about the contributions of the tens of thousands of Japanese American soldiers who volunteered to fight our Nation's enemies in Europe in World War II.

Some of us may not be aware of the fact that after the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, by the Imperial Army of Japan, there was such a public outcry for an all-out war against Japan, and days afterwards our President and the Congress formally declared war.

But caught in this crossfire were hundreds of thousands of Americans, Americans, mind you, who just happened to be of Japanese ancestry. Our national government immediately implemented a policy whereby over 100,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry were forced to live in what then called relocation camps, but actually in my opinion they were more like prison camps or concentration camps. Their lands, homes and properties were confiscated without due process of law.

Mr. Speaker, it is also a time in our Nation's history when there was so much hatred and bigotry and racism placed against our Japanese American community. Yet, despite all this, leaving their wives, their parents and brothers and sisters behind barbed wire fences in these prison camps, the White House accepted the request of tens of thousands of Japanese Americans who volunteered to join the Army.

As a result of this request for service, two combat units were organized. One was known as the 100th Battalion, also known as the Purple Heart Battalion; and the other was known as the 442nd Infantry Combat Group. Both were sent to fight in Europe.

In my humble opinion, Mr. Speaker, history speaks for itself in documenting that none have shed their blood more valiantly for our Nation than the Japanese American soldiers who served in these two combat units while fighting enemy forces in Europe in World War II.

The military records of the 100th Battalion and 442nd Infantry are without equal. These Japanese Americans suffered an unprecedented casualty rate of 314 percent, and received over 18,000 individual decorations, many of them awarded posthumously, for bravery and courage in the field of battle.

For your information, Mr. Speaker, 52 Distinguished Service Crosses were awarded to these two units. 560 Silver Stars and 9,480 Purple Hearts were awarded to the Japanese American soldiers of the 100th Battalion and 442nd Infantry Group. However, I find it unusual that only one Medal of Honor was given.

Nonetheless, the 442nd Combat Group emerged as the most decorated combat unit of its size in the history of the United States Army. In fact, Mr. Speaker, President Truman was so moved by their bravery in the field of battle, as well as that of the contributions of African American soldiers World War II, that President Truman issued an executive ordered to desegregate all branches of the Armed Forces.

It was while fighting in Europe that Senator INOUYE lost his arm while engaged in battle against two German machine gun posts. As a result of his valor, Senator INOUYE was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Four years ago, a congressional mandate was issued calling for review of the military records of these two combat units, and I was privileged to attend the White House ceremony where President Clinton presented 19 Congressional Medals of Honor to the Japanese Americans of these two units. Senator INOUYE was one of the recipients of the Medal of Honor.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, these Japanese-Americans paid their dues in blood to protect our Nation from its enemies and it is a shameful black mark on the history of our country that when the patriotic survivors of the 100th Battalion and 442nd Infantry returned to the United States, many were reunited with their parents, brothers and sisters who were locked-up behind barbed-wire fences, living in prison camps—and could not even get a haircut in downtown San Francisco because they looked Japanese—despite the fact that they, too, were Americans.

My dear friend and former colleague and now U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Norman Mineta, and Congressman BOB MATSUI from Sacramento remember well the early years of their lives in these prison camps. Secretary Mineta told that one of the interesting features

of these prison camps were postings of machine gun nests all around the camp—and everyone was told that these machine guns were posted to protect them against rioters or whatever. But then Secretary Minea observed—if these machine guns are posted to guard us, why is it that they are all directed inside the prison camp compound and not outside?

Mr. Speaker, I submit that the wholesale and arbitrary abolishment of the constitutional rights of these loyal Japanese-Americans should forever serve as a reminder and testament that this must never be allowed to occur again. When this miscarriage of justice unfolded during WWII, Americans of German and Italian ancestry were not similarly jailed en masse. Some declare that our treatment of Japanese Americans during WWII was an example of outright racism and bigotry in its ugliest form. After viewing recently the Holocaust Museum in Washington, I understand better why the genocide of some 6 million Jews has prompted the cry, ''Never Again, Never Again!'' Likewise, I sincerely hope that mass internments on the basis of race alone will never again darken the history of our great Nation.

To those that say, well, that occurred decades ago, I say we must continue to be vigilant in guarding against such evil today. Not long ago, we had the case of Bruce Yamashita, a Japanese-American from Hawaii who was discharged from the Marine Corps officer training program in an ugly display of racial discrimination. Marine Corps superiors taunted Yamashita with ethnic slurs and told him, ''We don't want your kind around here. Go back to your own country.'' The situation was made worse by the Commandant of the Marine Corps, a four star general, who appeared on television's ''Sixty Minutes'' and stated, ''Marine officers who are minitories do not shoot, swim or use compasses as well as white officers.'' The Commandant later apologized for his remarks, but it was a little too late.

After years of perseverance and appeals, Mr. Yamashita was vindicated after proving he was the target of vicious racial harassment during his officer training program. The Secretary of the Navy's investigation into whether minorities were deliberately being discourage from becoming officers resulted in Bruce Yamashita receiving his commission as a captain in the Marine Corps.

Mr. Speaker, I am also greatly disturbed by media coverage in recent years involving illegal political campaign contributions made by a small minority of the Asian-Pacific American Community. The media has implied that the Asian Pacific American community as a whole is suspect and corrupt and I find this racial scapegoating to be repugnant and morally objectionable. Playing-up fears of the ''Asian Connection'' serves to alienate Asian-Pacific Americans from participating in our political process.

When Americans raise money, it is called gaining political power. But when Asian-Pacific Americans begin to participate, we are accused of being foreigners trying to inflilrate the mainstream of our Nation's political system. On this note, remember the Oklahoma City bombing incident? Americans of Arab descent were immediately targeted and investigated as terrorists by local and Federal law enforcement agencies. An Anglo turned out to be the bomber which leads me to say that it is wrong to stereotype and this type of negative stereotyping must and should not continue.

In conclusion, I think Bruce Yamashita's case and the hysteria surrounding Asian-Pacific American political contriibutions bear implications not just for the military and the media but for our society as a whole. It begs the question, how long do we as Asian Pacific Americans and other minorities have to be considered as lesser Americans?

I applaud Captain Yamashita and others like him who have spoken out to ensure that racial discrimination is not tolerated. During this month, as we recognize the diverse experiences and contributions our Asian-Pacific American community has made to our great Nation, I would hope that we will take inspiration from the examples I have shared with you this evening.

Mr. Speaker, when I envision America, I don't see a melting pot designed to reduce and remove racial differences. The America I see is a brilliant rainbow—a rainbow of ethnicities and cultures, with each ethnic group proudly contributing in its own distinctive and unique way—making America better for now and generations to come. Asian-Pacific Americans wish to find a just and equitable place in our society that will allow them—like all Americans—to grow, to succeed, to achieve and to contribute to the advancement of the great Nation.

This is why I would like to close my remarks by asking all of us here tonight, what is America all about? I think it could not have been said better than on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in the summer of 1963 when an African-American minister named Martin Luther King Jr. poured out his heart and soul to every American who could bear his voice, when he uttered these words.

''I have a dream. My dream is that one day my children will be judged not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.''

That is what I believe American is all about.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I would like to comment on the White House initiative that was initiated by the past administration of President Clinton. It is now in its fifth year, and the initiative suffers from neglect by the current administration.

Executive Order 13216 authorizing the initiative and its corresponding Advisory Commission expired on June 7, 2003; and since that time, both the initiative and the commission have laid dormant.

The commission is mandated to develop, monitor, and coordinate Federal efforts to improve API participation in government programs, foster research and data collection for API populations and sub-populations, and increase public and private sector involvement in improving the health and well-being of the API community.

API citizens deserve the coordination of services that the commission can facilitate.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to recognize also among other names, the gentleman from California (Mr. MATSUI), a member of the Democratic leadership, and Governor Locke, the first API elected as a Governor in the lower 48 States.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by indicating that in this country, we have participated in the functioning of this country in every aspect of society, having athletes, both professional and amateur; we have had Nobel Prize winners; teachers and scholars. We are thankful for this time to share information regarding the Asian Pacific Islanders in this great country and the islands that our Members come from.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, for centuries, American has been enriched by our diverse and rapidly growing Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, and by the contributions that Native Hawaiians, Chamorros, and Samoans have made in their ancestral homelands. Since the 1700s, when Filipino immigrants settled in the Louisiana bayou and Chinese and Japanese immigrants worked the sugarcane fields of Hawaii, Asian American and Pacific Islander communities have worked hard to call America their home.

In the face of prejudice and poverty, interment and exclusion, the Asian American and Pacific Islander community has always remained strong in spirit, proud of its heritage, and committed to making progress. Today, there are 11 million Asian American and Pacific Islanders in the United States, tracing roots to nearly 50 different countries and ethnic groups, each with distinct cultures, traditions, and histories.

The achievement of the community demonstrates the critical role of civic participation in making the American Dream a reality. With more than 200 Asian American and Pacific Islanders running for elected office in the U.S. last year alone, the community's participation in politics ensures that its concerns are addressed at the highest levels of government.

This Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, we salute such pioneers as Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaole, who is 1903 became the first Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander to serve in Congress; Dilip Singh Saund, who in 1956 became the first Asian American elected to Congress; Hiram Leong Fong, who in 1959 became the first Asian American Senator; and my dear friend Patsy Mink, who in 1964 became the first Asian American woman elected to Congress.

We also celebrate the political leadership of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders today. As the Leader of the Democrats in the House of Representatives, I am proud to work in the Democratic leadership with Congressman ROBERT MATSUI of California, the highest ranking Asian American in congressional history. We are both proud to lead the only truly diverse caucus in the Congress, which includes our great Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC). Under the leadership of Congressman MIKE HONDA of California, CAPAC has promoted greater understanding in Congress of the concerns of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community. CAPAC is fighting for educational opportunities for our children, for better access to health care including an end to minority health disparities, for real immigration reform, and to grow the economy and create good-paying jobs.

This Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, we take pride in our history and the promise of our future and we rededicate ourselves to the fight to make the American Dream a reality for all.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker. Today I join my distinguished friend from California, Mr. HONDA, and the rest of my colleagues on the occasion of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

During this month, we recognize and celebrate the important contributions Asian Pacific Americans have made to our great country.

Mr. HONDA, as the leader of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, has helped all of us learn more about the concerns and issues facing the Asian American and Pacific Islander Community and I salute his work on these issues.

I would also like to commend the leadership of Representative ROBERT MATSUI, who has devoted his time and energy not just to the excellent representation of his constituents, but also to assisting the Democratic Caucus as chairman of the Democratic Congressional campaign committee.

Mr. Speaker, this year's theme, ''Freedom for all, a nation we can call our own'', speaks to both the hopes and the challenges Asian Pacific Americans face in America.

Asian Pacific American families, whether they have lived in this country for generations, or have recently emigrated, have worked as farmers, teachers, and business people, pioneering in the sciences and arts, and serving with distinction on the battlefield.

But achieving the American dream is not always easy for any group of immigrants seeking to establish roots in the United States.

Asian Pacific Americans have fought to overcome discrimination, language and cultural barriers, and even internment by their own government.

Today the Asian Pacific American Community is rightly proud of their rich heritage and the innumerable contributions they have made to the development of our nation.

During the last century, as America's frontier expanded west, hundreds of thousands of Asian citizens worked to build the first transcontinental railroad.

And Chinese and Japanese immigrants answered the need for laborers and agriculture workers in California and Hawaii.

The descendants of these settlers are now leaders in virtually every industry in the United States, from medical research to music education to professional athletics.

In fact, Asian Pacific Americans have the highest proportion of college graduates of any race or ethnic group.

Mr. Speaker, there are now more than 11 million Asian American and Pacific Islanders in America, comprising 5 percent of the total U.S. population.

Over 213,000 Asian Pacific Americans live in my home state of Maryland.

Immigrants from the countries of Asia and native peoples of Hawaii and the Pacific Islands form one of the fastest growing minority groups in the United States today.

And Asian Pacific Americans have the most diverse background of any minority population, tracing their roots to almost 50 different countries and ethnic groups.

The impressive list of notable Asian Pacific Americans is far too lengthy to read here.

To name just a few: First, The Honorable Patsy Mink, the first Asian Pacific American woman elected to Congress, who many of us had the honor to know.

Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalanianole, who in 1903 was the first native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander to serve in Congress.

Maya Lin, the accomplished architect, whose striking memorial to those killed in Vietnam lies close by on the National Mall.

Yo-Yo Ma, the internationally acclaimed cellist.

Tiger Woods and Michelle Kwan, both young champion athletes.

Charles Wang, chairman emeritus of Computer Associates and co-owner of the New York Islanders.

Jerry Yang, who co-founded Yahoo.com in his 20s.

In every profession, it seems, Asian Pacific Americans have made their mark.

Mr. Speaker, let me again say that it gives me great pleasure today to recognize the significant advances and contributions made by the Asian Pacific American Community to our country during Asian Pacific Heritage Month.

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, we commemorate Asian and Pacific American (APA) Heritage Month to acknowledge the tremendous achievements of Asian and Pacific Americans and honor their contributions to our families, communities and our nation.

The Asian and Pacific American community has played a vital role in the development of the United States since the first immigrants came to the United States in the 1700's. Today, over 11 million Asian and Pacific Americans live in the U.S., making extraordinary contributions to every aspect of American life. From David Ho, who has performed breakthrough work on AIDS research, to Maya Lin, the architect who designed the Vietnam Memorial; from the lyrical musings of novelist Amy Tan, to the sublime skills of Tiger Woods, the gifts of the APA community have changed the fabric of American society.

The APA community has also changed America's political landscape and I commend all of the APA organizations across America for enhancing the voice of APAs in the political and social arena. Their tireless efforts inspire others to achieve their dreams. All Americans, regardless of their ethnic background and heritage, benefit from their work.

Not only is the APA community working today to improve their families and communities, but they also understand the role of history in teaching future generations. As we celebrate APA Heritage Month this year, we also commemorate the opening of the Manzanar National Historic Site and Interpretive Center in Independence, California. Manzanar was the first interment camp created by Executive Order 9066 and was the site where 11,000 of the more than 120,000 American citizens of Japanese ancestry were uprooted from their homes and communities and interned in 1942. The new Manzanar Center is a critical component in recognizing and understanding the events of the past so that we Americans may maintain our country's fundamental commitment to freedom, democracy, and individual rights. I would like to thank the thousands of individuals who made this project a reality.

Asian and Pacific Americans are as diverse as each of the traditions and cultures they represent. The strength of this diversity and the commitment of all Americans to a shared set of values unites our nation as we work toward a common future. As we celebrate APA Heritage Month, we reflect on the past successes and struggles of the APA community, the diversity that binds us together, and the work we can all do together to make the American dream a reality for all people.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate May 2004 as National Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

I am proud to represent the 29th Congressional District of California, a diverse and thriving area of our country where hundreds of thousands have come to raise their children and devote their talents to the community at large. Some of these families have been in the United States for many generations; others are newly arrived. But all of these Americans enrich the fabric of our society with unyielding patriotism and selfless devotion to their neighbors.

The 29th District is home to one of the largest Asian American and Pacific Islander populations in Southern California; almost one-fourth of my constituents are of Asian Pacific heritage. Notable among them are Assemblywoman Judy Chu, Assemblywoman Carol Liu, Asian Youth Center Executive Director May To and Alhambra Chamber of Commerce Board Member Gary Yamauchi; countless Southern Californians enjoy a better quality of life from the leadership provided by these public servants.

It is certainly timely and appropriate to honor Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the same month as the dedication of the National World War II Memorial in Washington. The foundation of that memorial was enshrined by the courage and gallantry of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team—Japanese American soldiers who formed the most decorated unit in U.S. military history. I cannot help but think that the fountains and reflecting pool of this new Memorial symbolically contain not only the tears of joy of millions freed from the chains of racism and imperialism, but also the tears of sadness of more than 110,000 Japanese Americans wrongly interned during the war. The deprivation of their liberty while their children were fighting for freedom in Europe is a story of injustice that should be long told to all American children.

But the military service of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the United States actually began long ago. In fact, many soldiers of Asian descent fought bravely in the Civil War, only later to be denied the opportunity for citizenship by the draconian Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. When the United States was at its most divided and imperiled, these noble individuals took to battlefields far from their home of birth to protect the promise of the American dream for future generations. I am proud to be a sponsor of H.J. Res. 45, which would posthumously proclaim these soldiers as honorary citizens of the United States.

The various ethnicities, cultures and nationalities that compose the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities are bright stars in the wonderous evening sky that is our country. I thank and congratulate the many Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders for allowing us to share in their rich heritage.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, over 100 Members of Congress work together in the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus to promote Asian Pacific American issues and concerns, led by my long-time friend and colleague, Congress MIKE HONDA.

Today and throughout the month of May, we celebrate the many contributions Asian Pacific Americans have made to the fabric of our communities and to this Nation as a whole.

In this Congress, there are five Asian Pacific Americans serving our Nation and their communities as members of the House of Representatives and two Asian Pacific Americans serving in the Senate.

In the field of science and technology, Asian Pacific Americans have long contributed to our country, from Ellison Onizuka, the first Asian-American in space, to Flossi Wong-Staal and Dr. David D. Ho, for their work on HIV and AIDS. Moreover, several Asian Pacific Americans have received Nobel Prizes for their accomplishments in science and technology.

Hundreds of thousands of Asian Pacific Americans have also loyally served our Nation in the military willing to give their life for the United States of America. Asian Pacific American veterans of the Armed Forces number 284,000.

In sports, Asian Pacific Americans have helped bring home Olympic gold medals for the United States, including the first woman to win gold medals in the ten and three meter diving events—Filipina American Victoria Manalo Draves.

Although it is important for us to celebrate Asian Pacific American heritage this month, we must not forget the plight that Asian Pacific Americans endure despite the community's many accomplishments.

The pitfalls of immigration law and the backlog of immigration applications continue to prevent many Asian pacific American families from reuniting for several years.

We must also not forget the APA community suffers from greater poverty than non-Hispanic Whites, especially in the Hmong, Laotian, Cambodian, and Vietnamese American communities.

We must work to ensure that Asian Pacific Americans are appropriately counted when our government collects date that will be used to understand the needs of the APA community.

We must make every effort to invite Asian Pacific Americans to participate in government to ensure that our government meets the needs of the APA community.

In commemoration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, I honor the contributions of millions of Asian Pacific Americans who have contributed to our Nation and who I am sure will continue to contribute in the future. But while I celebrate this month, I also renew my pledge to address the issues affecting Asian Pacific Americans around the country.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and to celebrate the lives and accomplishments of Asian Pacific Americans in U.S. history. I want to thank Congressman HONDA and Congressman ENI FALEOMAVAEGA, the new Chair and Vice Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, for organizing this special order. In particular, I want to recognize the contributions of Korean Americans in my district and commend them for their tireless work in improving the city of Los Angeles.

Last month this chamber unanimously approved legislation that I sponsored to designate a U.S. Post Office in the Koreatown section of my district be named the ''Dosan Ahn Chang Ho Post Office.'' Dosan Ahn Chang Ho, who spent his formative years in the United States, is credited by many as the spiritual father of modern, independent, democratic Korea. During his stay in Los Angeles, at the beginning of the 20th century, he worked to unite the Korean-American community, founding schools and cultural organizations, and helping improve living and working conditions for his fellow Korean Americans. I am proud to be the sponsor of this legislation and grateful to the House for paying this timely tribute to a great Korean American.

Mr. Speaker, the contributions of Asian Pacific Americans to the growth and success of this great nation can never be overstated. The history of their struggle and triumph in the United States must be re-told. We need to remember that it was the Chinese immigrants who toiled in the mines during the California Gold Rush of the 1800s and helped construct the transcontinental railroad in the 1860s. And we can never forget how Americans of Japanese ancestry were placed in internment camps during World War II, one of the saddest and most notorious chapters in our nation's history.

I also want to take this opportunity to share with you the rich and diverse history of Korean immigration to Los Angeles. Although a small number of Koreans had immigrated to the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century, major waves of Korean migration to America did not occur until Congress passed the 1965 Immigration Act abolishing the quota system that had restricted the numbers of Asians allowed to enter this country. Since then, Korea has become one of the top five countries of origin of emigrants to the United States.

Among the more than one million Korean Americans today, roughly 33 percent are settled in California, making it the state with the largest Korean American population. Today, Los Angeles is home to the largest concentration of Koreans outside of Korea, roughly 160,000 people. Located in my district, Koreatown is the hub of the Korean community and vital to our local economy. It is fabled that from the establishment of a single Korean store at the corner of Olympic Boulevard and Hobart Street in 1969 emerged today's Koreatown, which stretches from Beverly Boulevard and Pico Boulevard to the north and south and Hoover and Crenshaw on the east and west. Although 68 percent of the people living within these boundaries are Latinos, Korean Americans are the predominant business owners, and the area serves as a cultural, business, and social center for not just Korean Americans but all of Los Angeles.

Indeed, for the past four decades, the district that I represent has thrived with the contribution of Koreatown. The willingness of Korean-American merchants to sacrifice for their future generations by working extremely long hours and overcoming linguistic and cultural barriers has led to many successful enterprises crucial to the growth of our local economy. For example, today Korean Americans own 46 percent of small grocery markets, and 45 percent of one-hour photo shops in Southern California, all of which demonstrate the critical role Korean Americans play in our communities. The Hanmi Bank, located on Wilshire Blvd., has become a major financial institution in the Korean-American community as well as to others in the greater Los Angeles area.

Mr. Speaker, today Asian Pacific Americans continue to gain new grounds in ever greater social and political representation. As we commemorate and celebrate the crucial role Asian-Pacific Americans have played in the development of this Nation, we also must work harder to improve the lives and opportunities for the 12.5 million Asian Pacific Americans today, who are still confronted daily with prejudice, discrimination, and economic inequalities. The 1992 Los Angeles civil disturbances, in the aftermath of the Rodney King verdict, is one such tragic example that illustrates the need for continued dialogue and understanding.

Nationally, Asian Pacific Americans continue to experience a crisis in health and health care disparity and face unique challenges in education, immigration, and economic development. It is very disappointing to me that this Administration has failed to renew the Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and the White House Initiative on Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAIPs) in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). As a member of Congress I will continue to fight to ensure that our government address the needs of Asian Pacific Americans. Let's work to renew the American Dream for many future generations of Asian Pacific Americans to come.

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

REPLACING THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE WITH A NATIONAL SALES TAX

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHOCOLA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to add my voice to those of my friends in the Asian Pacific community for honoring those who have served.

I would like to spend the next hour talking a little bit about the economy and what we can do to even improve it more. We should be grateful for the growth we have seen. Four years ago, we saw the dot-com bust that cost $5 trillion in value for shareholders, we saw the beginnings of corporate fraud, which have been dealt with, and we saw a downturn in the economy which is causing losses of jobs.

President Bush, to his credit, stood tough by a decision to leave people more of the money they earn in their own pockets, and had several important tax cuts; and the American people, not government, not Congress, not us, but the American people have turned around an economy to create a boom that is going on right now, with 600,000 jobs created just in the last 2 months.

The American people deserve the credit for that, but there is still one anchor on the neck of the economy. The biggest drag on the neck of the economy is the IRS. 230 years ago, Adam Smith wrote that the market was the invisible hand of the economy. I agree with that. And 230 years later, we can say that the visible foot on the throat of the economy is the IRS code.

We spend 6.9 billion man-hours just filling out IRS paperwork. At $20 an hour, which is a $40,000-a-year job, that is $240 billion lost.

Corporate leaders tell us they spend more calculating the tax implications of a business decision. A friend of mine who was on a board of directors came back from a meeting of one of the Fortune 100 companies, and he said, ''We spent 80 percent of the entire meeting calculating the tax implications of a business decision. We should be thinking about our shareholders, our employees and our customers, and not the government.'' We believe we spend more than 6.9 billion man-hours just calculating that.

Studies have shown that we lose 18 percent of our economy to people making decisions for tax reasons instead of economic reasons. That is a $180 billion loss.

All of this is to say the following: the American people spend upwards of $500 billion a year to comply with a code to send in just four times that much to the government. And who pays it? The consumer. This is not rich corporate America or investing America. All of the bills of corporate America are paid by the final consumer, who cannot pass those costs on. The consumer picks up the entire tab.

We have studies that show for a small business to collect $100, comply with the Tax Code, remit that $100 to the Federal Government, it costs them $724. This is not an efficient way to raise our revenues.

It is time for the IRS to go away, it is time for the income tax to go away, and H.R. 25 will do just that. H.R. 25, which has tonight I think 49 cosponsors, would abolish all taxes on income, the corporate income tax, the personal income tax, the payroll tax.

Seventy-five percent of America pays more in payroll taxes than they do in income taxes. It would get rid of the gift tax, the estate tax, the capital gains tax, the Alternative Minimum Tax for a one-time-at-the-checkout retail sales tax.

Americans would pay taxes when they choose, as much as they choose, by how they choose to spend. And to untax essentials. We would not define them; that is a political operation that would be fought in the halls here. Nor would we follow you around to make sure you spend on essentials. That is a police operation we cannot afford.

We would use the government's definition of poverty-level spending, which is that spending necessary for a given size household to buy their essentials. It is determined every January by the Department of HHS. For my mother that is $9,500 a year. For my daughter and son-in-law and four grandsons, that is $30,000 a year. For George and Laura Bush and their two daughters, that is $24,500 a year.

Their check at the beginning of every month would totally rebate the tax consequence of spending up to the poverty line. Beyond that, we are all discretionary spenders, and we all pay the same.

Over the last 9 years, Americans for Fair Taxation has raised privately and spent $25 million on economic research, market research, spreading the word. The most compelling study we have is from Dale Jurgensen, who is the head of economics at Harvard, that says today, 22 percent of what you spend at retail is the imbedded cost to the IRS.

Twenty-two percent of what we pay for at the checkout counter is paying the tax bills of America. If you take a loaf of bread that has been touched by a seed company, a farmer, a combine operation, a trucking company, a processing company, a bakery, a cardboard manufacturer, a distribution company, a retail outlet, the people who make tractors and plows, all of those companies have income tax costs and payroll tax costs, and accountants and attorneys to avoid the tax costs, and the consumer pays it. The consumer pays everything. And when you think about it, there is no mechanism for a business to pay a bill, other than through price.

In 41 years, my wife and I have built six businesses. We always looked for that ''secret drawer'' where the money just kind of piles up and you help yourself to it to pay your tax bill and your payroll taxes. It is not there.

Our patients, when I was a dentist, our customers in business, paid our labor cost, our light bill, our rent and our tax bill; and our studies say that the tax component in the price system is 22 percent of what you spend.

We say abolish that system, repeal the Tax Code, let competition quickly work that out of the system and replace it with an imbedded 23 percent, a frank and transparent tax. It will fund the government at the current level, but you get to keep your whole check, and you will all be voluntary taxpayers, as I said earlier, paying taxes when you choose, as much as you choose, by how you choose to spend.

What will happen in the world? The first year we will have a 26 percent increase in exports. That is good for jobs, corporate profits and good for America. The first year you will have a 78 percent increase in capital investment.

We know in a study done from 1945 to 1995, that every time we increase capital spending, we increase real take-home wages in exactly the same proportion because workers are more productive.

We have overseas somewhere between $500 billion and $1 trillion floating around in Euro dollar markets because it is cheaper to borrow at 6 percent than to repatriate those dollars at 35 percent, and it is easier to spend them overseas at no tax consequences.

All of that money would come home. All that money would come home and put new liquidity into our economy and create jobs. We know it costs $100,000 to create one job in all America. All of that money would come to job creation.

We have seen studies that suggest that every major international corporation that is domiciled overseas, in Europe or Japan or Latin America, if we had no tax on capital or labor, every one of those corporations would build their next plant in the United States.

□ 2200

We know that DaimlerChrysler really wanted to be ChryslerDaimler; they really wanted to be in New York City, but the crushing way we treat capital in America with our tax system led them to Stuttgart.

We have a Social Security system and a Medicare system that is destined for collapse. A very recent study by Larry Kotlikoff from Boston College says that the 75-year unfunded liability in Social Security and Medicare; that is to say, promises we have made for retirees in that period of time for which there is no money set aside and will not be any, a shortfall, in today's dollars, not inflated dollars, but today's dollars, the 75-year unfunded liability to those programs is $51 trillion.

To put that in perspective, if you started a business on the day Jesus Christ was born and lost $1 million a day through yesterday, it would take another 720 years to lose $1 trillion. In 75 years, we are going to have a shortfall of $51 trillion in those programs. The entire wealth of America, that is everything we own of value, our cars, our homes, our retirement programs, and our shares, including Bill Gates and Warren Buffett. The entire wealth of America is $43.8 trillion. If we were to take everything away from every American and apply the value to the shortfall in those funds, in those two programs, we would cover 80 percent of the shortfall.

We say fund Social Security and Medicare out of the sales tax, go from 138 million workers paying into the system to 300 million Americans buying every day, paying into the system, plus 51 million visitors to our shores, and fund Social Security and Medicare off the overall size of the economy as opposed to the number of people working in it or the amount we are willing to tax those workers, and we would double the revenues to those categories in 15 years by doubling the size of the economy in 15 years, well before we need to do so.

We hear a lot of talk from people, in our Treasury Department particularly, that a tax of that amount would cause evasion of an enormous scale. My response to them is twofold. Number one, we are already paying this; it is just hidden. The cost of living is going to be about the same, but we will keep our whole check. But more importantly, currently, all you have to do to evade taxes is to lie on your tax return, put down the wrong numbers, sign it, send it in, and the chances are that nobody will know. You have a less than 1 percent chance of being audited. Under our system, you are going to have to have somebody cooperate with you, conspire with you to cheat. Now, I do not know how many friends you have

that are willing to go to jail for you. I have none. I have none. It is going to be tougher to cheat on this system, because it is going to take two to do so.

Secondly, on the evasion issue, the IRS currently tells us that they collect 75 percent of the taxes that they know are owed. They are unwilling to guess how large the underground economy is, because no one knows. Well, 6 or 8 months ago a book came out on this issue by an economist who said that three pieces of the underground economy, pornography, illegal drugs, and illegal labor, those three pieces comprise a $1 trillion economy, untaxed.

Under our system, if they wanted to buy that loaf of bread or a new house or a new car, they would pay their fair share. Always in these discussions in politics, it comes down to who is going to win and who is going to lose. My argument has been consistent: Everybody is a winner. If you can become a voluntary taxpayer and be untaxed on essentials, everybody wins. If we can give you a tax system that gives you in a free society the privilege of anonymity, no one should know as much about it as their government does, you are a winner. But in point of fact, the people coming out the best in this system are people living at or below the poverty level who are currently losing 22 percent of their purchasing power to the current system. They will have a huge increase in purchasing power.

Frankly, this is a tax on accumulated wealth. The left should love this idea. If you pay taxes on your earnings, you pay taxes on building a business, you pay capital gains tax when you sell it, this system is going to tax you one more time when you or your heirs spend the money. They should love that.

To those who have accumulated wealth, I would just say this: You are already paying this tax. But what do you think is going to happen to your nest egg if all the world's investors are going to invest in our economy with no tax consequences? I do not know, but I can tell my colleagues of two nationally known names who manage money and say, I do not know what the value of the Dow Jones would be at when you pass this bill, but in 2 years it will have doubled. All the trillions in the world would be in our economy, buying our shares, increasing the value of the nest egg, and creating jobs.

There are all kinds of reasons to do this, most important of which is freedom, giving you the freedom to make your own decisions and not be under a corrosive system. But right now, as the Secretary of the Treasury told me, this would make us the largest magnet for capital and jobs in history.

So I suggest to my colleagues, several of them who have not signed this bill, to sign it. I suggest to you that if you want to create jobs, the way to do it is to get the tax off capital and labor and the jobs would come. For the very reason today jobs are going overseas because of the Tax Code, they would come flocking to our shores tomorrow. And let us move on and build our economy.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Georgia yielding, and I want to thank him, too, for bringing this event here tonight, this opportunity to speak on the fair tax, as well as introducing the fair tax bill into the House of Representatives. I am also pleased that our two colleagues in the other body have also introduced the same legislation over there.

I have the opportunity to speak quite often to large groups and people who are very interested in the tax system, particularly the change in the tax system. But I am asked a lot of questions and I just thought maybe we might go through some of those questions here tonight, if the gentleman does not mind.

The gentleman mentioned the rebate. This is for the necessities in life. Just exactly how would the rebate work? How is it structured and how would it work? Who receives the rebate? What do they have to have in order to receive the rebate?

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, first of all, the IRS would be gone. Our Treasury Department would have several thousand people contracting with the States to do the collecting. Forty-five States are already collecting sales tax. They have mechanisms in place to judge whether there is fraud involved.

We would contract with the States to collect the money and we would pay them a quarter of a percent for everything they brought in for doing so, just as we would pay the retailer a quarter of a percent for collecting it. Every household in the State would sign up with that State once a year or, if they had children during the year, sign up again, and list the numbers of people in the household and their Social Security numbers so we do not have people living in every household. And then the Social Security department, which currently sends out about 45,000 checks a month, would handle the rebate.

We envision the rebate to be nothing more than a computer click. This government is moving dramatically toward getting rid of checks, moving just to electronic transfers which are a nickel or a dime to make instead of the cost of taking postage and envelopes. So we think that every household will do nothing more than a computer click to put enough money in their account previous to the first day of the month; previously on spending it, that would totally untax them in terms of spending up to the poverty level.

Mr. COLLINS. Well, if I understood the gentleman right, it is based on a Social Security number and being a resident of the United States?

Mr. LINDER. A resident of the United States and a resident of that State.

Mr. COLLINS. Well, does the gentleman think that 23 percent as a fair tax is a comparable tax, equivalent to bringing in the revenues that we currently receive from the income tax, or does the gentleman think it would bring in more revenue and would it generate a stronger economy?

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, the 23 percent was calculated in 1995, and since we have had significant tax cuts since then, it may be less than 23 percent. We have to go back to the committees that the gentleman deals with on the Committee on Ways and Means to have new studies done on that.

But in 1995 it was revenue neutral, which means it brings in exactly the same amount of money as the current system does.

But let us point out that the average income-earner today spends 28 percent of their income to the withholding of the IRS, of the Tax Code, and another 8 percent roughly for their Social Security and Medicare. So as an individual spending, I would rather give up 23 percent of what I spend than 34 percent of what I earn. It will encourage great earnings and great savings.

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, in relation to that, we hear a lot about the whole exemption for interest on deductibles. I think the gentleman's numbers are very interesting and I think they would work the same way in the home deduction, would they not?

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, realtors would come in my office and say, we need the deductibility of home interest to calculate if they can afford to buy a house. My response has always been a little bit flip. I say, well, if you think that the deductibility of mortgage interest sells your houses, double the interest rate and you will sell twice as many houses. Well, it does not work that way. In fact, two-thirds of America uses a short form and does not use deductions anyway.

Secondly, what really sells houses is whether an individual has enough take-home pay at the end of the month to make that house payment. Currently, according to our studies, 28 percent of the cost of a new house is the embedded cost to the IRS. There are thousands of business entities that touch all the products that go into a new house, and each of them has tax costs. We think that 28 percent of the cost of that house is the embedded cost to the IRS. Under our system, it would be 23 percent of the cost of a house, so the house would be less expensive.

Secondly, if you are making $60,000 a year, you are currently taking home $3,800 a month to make the payment. Under our system, you would take home $5,000 a month, so you could make the payment easier. We also believe, our studies show that interest rates would decline by about 30 percent. So for that one-third of us that uses deductibility of home interest, you lose that, but you will not have anything to deduct against, because you will not have any income tax.

Mr. COLLINS. So you actually would have more take-home pay, pay a less

percentage in tax under the fair tax than you would under the current income tax system, even without a mortgage deduction?

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, the average income-earner, paying the 28 percent withholding and their share of the 8 percent of the payroll tax, would have a 56 percent increase in take-home pay the next day.

Mr. COLLINS. What about the one section of the Tax Code that seems to be the most abused section that you hear about and is reported to us in the Committee on Ways and Means, which is the earned income tax credit; How would this affect that?

Mr. LINDER. My understanding is, and the gentleman from Georgia could tell better than me, we spend about $34 billion a year on the earned income tax credit.

The reason it was put into place many years ago was to relieve people at lower income, $17,000 to $23,000 or $24,000 a year from the payroll tax. These people do not pay income taxes, so they are not paying for the military or the parks or the Justice Department or the FBI, and the earned income tax credit relieves them of paying for their own retirement. Nine billion dollars of that $34 billion is considered to be fraud.

Under our system, since nobody will have a payroll tax, there will be no reason to have an earned income tax, an earned income tax credit, and we will save a ton of money.

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, one last question, and I receive this question quite often too, and it deals with trade. We hear a lot about outsourcing and insourcing and, fortunately, we have more insourcing jobs today than we have outsourcing, and I think it has a lot to do with the American workforce and the work ethics, the reason companies from abroad are locating here and working our people, but they are headquartered in their country of origin, which means that is where they will pay their tax. I think it has a lot to do with our tax codes and the treatment.

But how does the gentleman think this will affect us to be competitive in the world market in trade?

Mr. LINDER. Well, as the gentleman knows, most of the companies support their governments largely on the value-added tax, which is a consumption tax.

□ 2215

We rebate that tax to the companies that export overseas so they come to America more competitive because they do not have much of a tax component in the tax system.

Under our system, we will be selling goods and services under the global economy, 22 percent less on average, making the same profits; but our imports to our shores will be taxed at the retail checkout counter exactly the same as the domestic competition and will be perfectly neutral, although I think we will be more competitive if we can totally get the tax component out of the tax system.

Mr. COLLINS. I believe prior to the income tax, our revenues did come from tariffs and excise taxes which dealt with trade. I fully agree with my colleague. I think it would be an excellent opportunity for our workforce in America to become more competitive with workforces in other parts of the world and would make us more competitive in the world market because we then would have a way to take all of the tax costs out of production of goods and service, whether we use them domestically or whether we export them; and it would be added back to any product that we imported, making it more fair and giving us not an advantage, but a more level playing field to be able to trade and compete in the world market.

I appreciate the gentleman's time and efforts.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I would yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Georgia's leadership with this issue. I have to be honest, I have been real excited about this chance to talk about the fair tax because I think it really is the future of America.

Let me just preface my remarks with the events of today. I was commuting from Texas to Washington. As I got off the plane, I learned today about American Nick Berg's murder by his al Qaeda captives. It took a great deal of air out of my balloon today just because of the barbarism of it all, and I think it is important for America to understand, for terrorists, for our enemies, this is not retaliation. It is routine.

We have seen it in the beheading of Daniel Pearl and the mutilation of American workers. Yet again today, America is not to forget who we are fighting and how serious they are to defeat us. We have to unite in this test of wills against international terrorism because if we do not prevail, if we back off, if we lose our backbone, I do not believe any nation, any country, any community will be safe again; and I hope Nick Berg's family and friends understand how heavy a heart we all have tonight. And in our discussion of how to improve America, it is one of the reasons why Nick went over to Iraq in the first place.

Mr. LINDER. I thank the gentleman for those comments.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me say, too, I serve on the Committee on Ways and Means and like the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) have seen firsthand just how horrible a Tax Code we have. I knew it was bad before going on the committee. I had no idea just how horrible and burdensome it is.

It is just impossible to comply with. It takes so much energy out of our economy. It is so complex; there are so many loopholes. You have got a secretary of a corporation who could be paying more than the CEO, and that is just not right.

It seems to me, too, that we tax all the good attributes of Americans, people who go to school to learn a skill, those who get married, those who start a family, go to work, start a business, invest for the future, save for retirement, build up a farm or a business to pass down to their kids. Those are the people we tax the most, regulate the most through our Tax Code. It seems to me people are smart, and when you tax them, punish them for doing the right thing, they start thinking about doing something else.

The fair tax, which my colleague is the leader of, I think reverses all that; and instead of taxing investment and hard work and savings, it taxes consumption and does it one time, at its final place of consumption. It does not tax used items. It does not tax business, buying something else from a business to create a product. It taxes it one time, and while at first I think for a lot of Americans you say we are going to have a 23 cent sales tax, their first reaction is a big gasp. Then you start talking about can you imagine if you kept all of your paycheck, not some of it, all of your paycheck, because I have got 23 percent coming out of my paycheck already. A lot of people seem to have the same.

Then can you imagine that when you go to the grocery store and buy a loaf of bread or you go to the auto dealership and buy a car or to a Realtor and buy a home, which we all cherish, can you imagine not paying the high prices in that product from all the taxes built up, from the cars, everyone who manufactures and builds the homes and constructs the lights and does the electrical items in there, and we pay the price of their taxes?

At a home, people who lay the foundation, who frame the house up, the plumbers, electricians, every part of their bill adds on the taxes they have to pay; and ultimately, my wife and I have to pay that.

Can you imagine not having to pay those extra prices? Then can you imagine that the person next to you in the grocery store pays the same amount that you do? There is no loophole. There is no exemption. There is no special treatment for people. All Americans pay the same amount.

I know, too, that, one, we are going to see prices go down, and people often say, well, I am not sure businesses would lower the price. Well, they do not have a choice. In America, consumers are king. All you need to do is go on the Internet and search for anything you want from a car to a toaster. My wife wanted a reciprocating saw, of all things, for Mother's Day, probably one of the strangest Mother's Day gifts I have given. We could search down to the penny throughout the country. There is intense competition and businesses are going to have to lower their prices to meet our consumer demand.

We are going to see a boost in the economy; and as the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) said, for the first time we are going to take this tax off of American products being sold overseas, and it is going to be placed on products coming into America. So for the first time, other countries are going to pay a share of the taxation here in America. We are going to create jobs, and we are going to capture that underground economy.

Then the final point is on Social Security and Medicare. This is probably, besides reforming Social Security to transition to traditional retirement accounts, which we have to do for our young people. I think the only way we can fund Social Security for our seniors is to go off the payroll tax, which is declining, fewer and fewer workers for more and more seniors. We are reaching a crisis point, and put it on something stable and growing like sales tax, which as the gentleman said will triple the amount of Americans paying into preserving Social Security.

Mr. LINDER. Reclaiming my time, on that point, people have said to me over the years, well, will people quit consuming? The studies that we have shown from 1945 to 1995 is that the consumption economy is a very steady predictor of economic activity. People will spend so much. The biggest downturn it has had since 1945 was 3 percent in the 1970s and early 1980s.

The income economy is very volatile. We are seeing collections right now down 20 percent because of layoffs and no corporate profits; and yet if we were on the consumption economy, the revenues would have increased in 13 of the last 14 quarters because the economy grows.

This is a predictable thing to build retirement programs on. We know it is going to grow. We know if we fund the programs off the overall size of the economy, as opposed to the number of people working in it, we will be able to fund those programs.

The gentleman is right, and you study it in your committee on a regular basis. This system is destined for collapse.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. It really is, and I think as more Americans examine the fair tax, the more they get excited about it because I am convinced, as you are, that our kids do not have to live under the same complex, burdensome income tax code we have. The fact that the IRS is so deeply involved in our lives and our businesses' lives, that does not have to happen. There is no one that says that has to be part of American life.

In fact, our traditions and our principles are just the opposite. We ought to have the freedom to choose, and we should do it not based on what the Tax Code encourages us to do, as the gentleman pointed out, whether it is in the board room or in our living rooms, but what do we need and how are we going to choose to use our money.

I will close with this. We have other Members here who are excited about this proposal as well, but I leave with the thought that we would push power out of Washington and give it back to the people, let them make their choices based on their decisions, and I know the gentleman and I believe the same thing. Given the choice between government and people, I have more faith in people to make the right decisions about their American dream than we do; and I think the fair tax gives them that power, gives them the economic boost and ensures that we have jobs and important programs like Social Security forever.

So I applaud the gentleman's leadership on this issue.

Mr. LINDER. I thank the gentleman, and I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BURNS).

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I would like to add my thanks to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) for bringing this significant and important concept to the American people. It is time we have a change. The IRS has been a burden on all of us for too many years, and the fair tax offers us an opportunity to right a wrong that is long overdue.

I think it is interesting, if we look back historically, that when our Founding Fathers first developed the Constitution, an income tax was illegal. It was barred. It was not even accepted. It was universally disdained, and the wisdom of our Founding Fathers in the Constitution, article I, section 9, said, ''No capitation, or other direct, tax shall be laid, unless in proportion to the census or enumeration herein before directed to be taken.''

In 1787 they said no income tax. What happened? What happened?

Well, it appears that later on in the 1894 time frame, Congress came along and decided that they were going to tax income. They were going to suggest that we needed to generate some revenue and that we were going to unfortunately have to address this issue with an income tax; and Mr. Speaker, the income tax was a whopping 2 percent, 2 percent, flat tax. Two percent on incomes over $4,000, $4,000.

Mr. LINDER. Which is about the top 2 percent of incomes.

Mr. BURNS. Absolutely. So what we are going to do is tax only those people who make over $4,000, a king's ransom at that time, and unfortunately, at least for the Congress, they were trying to use the existing Constitution. Because of its vagueness, the Supreme Court overturned it, said an income tax is unconstitutional. That led to the constitutional amendment in 1909 that fundamentally changed our tax system that we now struggle with today.

So I think it is interesting that if we went back to our Founding Fathers, they recognized the dangers of an income tax, and here we are in 2004 trying to say America, wake up. It is time.

Again, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for this visionary approach and the work that he has done in this environment, but we have talked about criminals and tax cheats and illegals who have an underground economy. Help the American people understand the challenge that we face just in that underground economy. Help them understand the numbers.

Mr. LINDER. There are 8 to 12 million people living in the shadows of our life doing jobs in America that other people are not doing. You could not get a crop out of the ground in your district without some of these folks. You cannot build a house in north Georgia without some of these folks; but the biggest concern that I run into among my constituents is that they think they are not paying anything for their fair share. I think if they were paying every time they bought a loaf of bread and they were paying their share to the government, attitudes would change.

There is no question we need to find these folks and identify them, and as President Bush has suggested, know who they are; when the job is over, send them back. But if the American people knew they were equally supporting the cost of government every time they bought a loaf of bread, I think the attitudes would change.

I think your point is right.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for the American people to understand that our current tax system does not provide all of those in our Nation the opportunity to contribute to our society; and the fair tax, a consumption-based tax, does just that. We all participate in a fair and equitable manner.

One of the biggest areas of concern is in the area of health care and in the need to support Medicare and our Social Security retirement system and all of the things that are an essential part of what we are as America; but this fair tax, this tax would eliminate an income tax, Social Security tax, all Federal withholding taxes, is that correct?

Mr. LINDER. There would be no taxes on income whatsoever.

Mr. BURNS. One hundred percent of your gross income would be your net.

Mr. LINDER. Let me just address an issue you raised that is kind of interesting and it is a bit arcane.

Health care. We made a decision in the 1940s to allow corporations to deduct health care insurance and not have it treated as income to the employees, and so the first dollar of third-party coverage has really caused the abuse of the system.

I was with a corporation where we had a huge health care debate in 1994, and they proudly told me that they spend $1,000 per employee per month on the health care.

□ 2230

I said, ''You ought to be ashamed of that.'' Because they were funding everything from fertility treatments to the grave, and hair transplants and everything in between. Under our system,

that benefit, the value of that premium would be taxed as a personal consumption. And if I worked for that company that was spending $1,000 a month for me, I would start saying, ''I do not need that fertility treatment or hair transplant. I do not need AIDS coverage. I want this, this, and this, and I am willing to pay the tax on the provision of those services.'' And then I think we would have, for the first time since 1946 or 1947, American citizens shopping for and selecting their coverage benefits, and they would bring some sanity to the health care world.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, I think he is 100 percent right. One of the biggest challenges we face is the uninsured and the working uninsured, those individuals who would like insurance but, unfortunately, their incomes are taxed before they have the opportunity to buy the insurance. And if they are fortunate enough to have insurance coverage through an employer, there are certain incentives for the employer then to not be taxed on the contribution they make to their employees' insurance coverage.

When we look at the current system, the current income tax system we have, I understand we are talking a 22 percent increase in the cost of everything we produce; is that correct?

Mr. LINDER. That is what we are currently paying for at retail.

Mr. BURNS. That is what we are currently paying for. So that means that Mexico and Brazil and the European Union and even Red China have a 22 percent advantage.

Mr. LINDER. Absolutely.

Mr. BURNS. An advantage over everything we produce.

Mr. LINDER. If we could lower the cost of production in Florida of fruits and vegetables by 15 percent, Latin America could not compete with us. If we could lower it by 20 percent, we would blow them out of town.

Mr. BURNS. It is about fairness. It is about a fair, competitive, global environment. And right now the current income tax system is putting us at a severe disadvantage. The fair tax would relieve that, make that playing field more level, and more reasonable on an ongoing basis.

I am always amazed at the simplicity and the obviousness of a fair tax, a tax based on consumption. And again I will go back to our Founding Fathers and point out that they saw this even then. Even in the late 1700s, they recognized that taxing income was the wrong thing to do; that we need as a Nation to incentivize development and progress and investment and opportunity. Unfortunately, our current tax system does not provide those incentives.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman for his leadership. I would like to thank him for his determination in ensuring that this message is brought to the American people and to this Congress. It is time we had a full debate. It is time that we had a full vetting of this issue, full discussions, and ultimately a vote in this body and certainly in the body across the way in the Senate. But, ultimately, the American people will benefit if they will understand the opportunities given within this fair tax proposal.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the legislation of my friend and colleague Congressman JOHN LINDER of Georgia, the Fair Tax Act.

As this bill would enact a major and historic change in our system of federal taxation—one which would significantly alter the functioning of our economy—I think it important to review how we got to the system of income tax that we have today.

The founders of this country barred the federal government from enacting income taxes in the Constitution proper.

''No Capitation, or other direct, Tax shall be laid, unless in proportion to the Census or Enumeration herein before directed to be taken.''—U.S. Constitution, Article 1, Section 9 (1787).

We need to consider the full implication of the importance of this ban being placed where it was in our Constitution.

All of the liberties outlined in our famous Bill of Rights—the right of free speech, worship, the right to bear arms, the right against unreasonable search and seizure—all were added to the Constitution after-the-fact, as Amendments.

Many of the founders felt that the Bill of Rights was unnecessary, as the Constitution didn't give the federal government the power to control the mentioned liberties to start with.

The primary authors were legal and policy purists. They thought it would be redundant and confusing to add Amendments barring the federal government from doing what it had no legal authority to do.

They also sensed more than a little danger to their liberties by doing so, since whatever freedoms and protections were not specifically addressed might be considered up for grabs by future power-hungry bureaucrats.

Without going on for hours concerning the original debate over the Bill of Rights, I believe most historians will agree on the essence of the discussion.

The winning side argued that if the provisions really weren't necessary, then it wouldn't hurt to add them, just to reinforce the fact that the federal government had no power to tamper with these rights.

The point of bringing this up is that the Founders of our nation, those who devised our entire system of government, actually argued with great passion over whether to pass the revered Bill of Rights, which are now copied and emulated worldwide as detailing the basic rights of mankind.

Yet these same founders had no such question over an income tax.

They were so fundamentally opposed to the concept it was banned by universal agreement, specifically, in the First Article of the Constitution itself.

Did our Founders view the income tax as a greater threat to liberty than the lack of a Bill of Rights? I believe they did, and that's why we find that ban in our original Constitution.

The governmental powers necessary to enforce an income tax, and the individual rights and freedoms implied and detailed in our Constitution, simply cannot logically co-exist.

The Constitution gave no power to the government to conduct unreasonable search and seizure, but that power would have been implied as a necessary enforcement tool to collect an income tax. The only way income taxes can be enforced is through opening every home in America to search both physically and electronically.

The Constitution gave no power to the government to force people to be a witness against themselves. But that power would have been implied as a necessary enforcement tool to collect an income tax. Every American would have to be required to file potentially incriminating documents to prove their income.

Further, a tax on income threatened to turn Americans against each other, and ultimately destroy our free-market economy, and all our liberties in the process.

All those with smaller incomes could be tempted to use their democratic vote to simply seize the incomes of anyone with more money than themselves. In short order there would be no financial incentive for anyone to seek to create new wealth, and our economy would be identical to the former Soviet Union's—poverty for all.

In addition, there would be no natural check on excessively high and confiscatory tax rates.

Many of the founders, who were strong advocates of the principles of Natural Law, felt that all governmental systems should have natural restraints built into their structure.

Alexander Hamilton wrote in Federalist Paper 22 in 1787:

> It is a signal advantage of taxes on articles of consumption that they contain in their own nature a security against excess. . . .
>
> If duties are too high, they lessen the consumption; the collection is eluded; and the product to the Treasury is not so great as when they are confined within proper and moderate bounds.

If we fund our government with taxes paid equally by all, every American is infinitely aware of tax increases and high rates.

They have within their individual power the ability to legally avoid or lessen those taxes by spending as little as possible.

That's precisely why unfortunately a big-spending peacetime Congress in 1894 tried to adopt an income tax as a way to raise taxes, without the majority of the voters feeling it.

They came up with a two percent flat tax on incomes over $4,000, which was a very large income at the time, and argued that the restriction in the Constitution was sufficiently vague to allow their pernicious scheme to survive.

Within a year, the Supreme Court held income tax unconstitutional as an unapportioned direct tax.

But the spending appetite of an industrial-age Congress could not be whetted by the wisdom of the founders. In one of the few cases in history of Congress rising to overturn a Supreme Court decision, Congress passed an Amendment in 1909 to reverse the foundational decision of Jefferson, Hamilton, Madison, and Jay.

By 1913, a sufficient number of states having been persuaded that this new tax would only affect a tiny percentage of Americans with extreme wealth—and not their voters—had brought the sixteenth amendment into law, and removed all limitations on the imposition of federal income taxes.

"The Congress shall have the power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration."—16th Amendment to the Constitution as passed by Congress in 1909, and ratified by the states in 1913.

Congress immediately passed a federal income tax with low rates that affected only a few people with very high incomes. In the early days, it was considered a status symbol to have to pay income tax, as only the wealthiest had to pay.

But over time, the rates changed to shift the burden increasingly to lower income Americans, to a point in recent years in which people at the lowest incomes still pay high federal taxes, and the middle class shouldered the largest share of out-of-control federal spending.

We reversed a little of that with the tax cuts this Congress has enacted since 1994, but not nearly enough. In fact, just as the founders envisioned, it has become increasingly difficult to enact any significant reform, as the cry immediately arises, "tax breaks for the rich."

This evil system has indeed pitted American against American.

But it has done far more damage than even the moral decay based on economic envy envisioned by our founders.

It is now undermining our health care system, our manufacturing base, even our ability to feed and clothe our families.

It is allowing criminals, tax cheats, and illegal immigrants to live tax-free lives of opulence, while middle-income, two-wage earner families, no longer can save for their children's college or their own retirement.

And it has created a federal agency—the Internal Revenue Service—that far too often has shown sniveling contempt for the basic natural rights of mankind, when dealing with their fellow Americans.

We have created an income tax system which adds 22 percent to the cost of every thing we make in this country—a whopping 22 percent advantage in international trade for Mexico, Brazil, Europe, and most notably, Red China. Dump this tax, and our sorely-pressed manufacturing and agribusiness sectors can once again start competing on a semi-level field.

Illegal immigrants enter our country, earn cash, and pay no taxes, as they report to no one, leaving law-abiding native-born citizens and legal immigrants to pick up their tab.

Drug dealers and pimps earn fortunes tax-free, leaving single-parent working class homes to pay their share of our federal tax burden.

The very wealthiest Americans, and the wealthiest corporations—a legal entity which did not even exist during our Founder's Day—can and do avoid paying any federal taxes through the system of credits and write-offs created over the decades since 1913, as incentives for any number of things former Congress's at one time or another wished to encourage.

Nowhere have those income tax incentives wreaked more havoc than in health care.

Corporate America is given a free tax ride on everything they spend on health insurance, while the waitress making $25,000 and having to buy her own policy is taxed on her premiums.

As a matter of fact, she's taxed on what she spends directly on health care, up to seven-and-a-half percent of her income, while the corporate executive making $100 million a year gets his top-of-the-line, zero deductible health insurance benefits tax-free.

All while the tax-subsidized health insurance industry subsidizes the spiraling cost of health care, driving more and more middle-income Americans into the ranks of the uninsured, with second rate care at best.

We inherited this system of travesty and tragedy. We should remember how it came about—by a foolish Congress overriding the foundational principles laid down at our Nation's birth.

That foundation was built of the carefully constructed tenets of republican democracy, designed to overcome the historical failure of previous systems of direct democracy.

Every other attempt down through history came unraveled once the populace learned they could vote themselves largesse at the expense of others.

Our founders protected us against that evil, with one of the only direct restrictions in our Constitution.

The Congress of 1909, a Congress of a new century, faced conditions they believed outdated the quaint freedoms held in such high regard by the first Congress. So they robbed us of that political inheritance.

We are a Congress of a new century as well, and I believe our great challenge is the restoration of the individual freedoms and protections of our Constitution, in the face of new and challenging national and global economic conditions.

Freedom and fairness is never outdated. Surely, economic conditions and needs change from one generation to the next.

But I believe it is the duty of this body to faithfully and accurately translate the historic freedoms of this Nation into the economic language of the day—not to cast aside the very principles to which we owe our national wealth.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman LINDER's bill restores the freedoms that have lain trampled and forgotten for nearly a century.

It will provide the economic seed for a rebirth of American manufacturing, farming, health care, and fairness.

It will begin the healing process from the injury and division sown in the past by pitting Americans against each other, resulting in devastating economic damage among those with the least.

Mr. Speaker, this bill deserves consideration at every committee level, and it deserves a fair vote in this body and the Senate. I urge my fellow Members to support that consideration, and support this bill.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I would now like to yield to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding to me and to the contributions of my colleagues here tonight on this subject matter.

It occurs to me as I listen to the gentlemen from Georgia, the offices that I can go to and always get the right price on a small complimentary bag of peanuts, that a person would have to be nuts not to go for this program. And you all know that in Georgia. It is endemic down there. You have had campaigns on it politically and you know the public in Georgia understands how important it is to eliminate the IRS and go to a consumption tax.

We will get most of the questions answered here tonight, but the balance of the questions can be answered at fairtax.org on the Web.

Mr. LINDER. I thank the gentleman for that.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, when I put out that Web page, it is important to go there and take a look. There is always another question and another question.

Myself, I would like to announce how I got to this position. It is almost 25 years ago. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BURNS) addressed how simple and obvious it is. Twenty-five years ago, I got audited one too many times. That one too many times caused me to go back to work fuming after all the time I had lost and money that I had lost, and I still to this day believe I filed everything exactly correctly and honestly and legally. But I went back to work and started with the premise I want to eliminate the Internal Revenue Service and I want to eliminate the Internal Revenue Code.

I did not think too much about how to do it, I just wanted to get rid of it. So I looked at how do we replace that, how do we replace the revenue stream? And there is only one way, and that is a fair tax, a national consumption tax on sales and service. We have heard about that here tonight.

The simplicity of it is impressive. And after weeks and weeks of working this through, answering these devil's advocate questions that I asked of myself, and trying to find people around my neighborhood in 1980 that could answer this, and my colleagues that could answer this, and no one had been thinking about it. They looked at me and said, well, that sounds like a good idea, Steve, but we never heard of that before, therefore it must not have a lot of credibility.

I finally concluded they must know something intuitively about this that was wrong with it that I could not begin to comprehend, so I set it on the side shelf of my mind. I always kept it there as something to think about, but I moved along.

In 1993, I picked up a book and the title was "Fire the IRS," written by Dan Pilla, a former IRS agent. He had done all the research and compiled all the data that I had speculated on myself, and that book clicked with me just exactly.

So I will take you back to the biggest reason why I think we need to eliminate the IRS, and that is this over $1 trillion anchor we drag through our economy. These numbers go back to references in 1985 dollars in Dan Pilla's book. He took the dollars that we have to fund the IRS with, the dollars that we pay our tax preparers, the dollars we pay some people to compile the numbers to go to our tax preparers, and then pay ourselves about $10 an hour to sit up most of the night on the 14th of

April, and then the dollars we spend to enforce the Internal Revenue Code. We also go through the litigation process.

And then add to that the cost to our economy of people who make a decision that they are not going to risk any more sweat or any more capital or any more equity, and to try to earn more money for that year because the tax risk is too high. So they make a decision they are going to pick up their golf clubs or their fishing pole, or spend a little more time with their family and not make that extra sales call, not work those extra overtime hours.

Add all those dollars up that I have described; the disincentive dollars to the actual literal cost, and those 1985 dollars were $720 billion a year. Billion with a B. And if you index that for inflation, that number rolls up to over $1 trillion a year. That is trillion with a T.

And no one, no one has an equation that can evaluate the positive impact on our economy when you take those millions of people that are now working in the regulatory sector, enforcing the IRS and keeping the books and putting the data in. All those bright, creative, productive people out there that are producing something in the nonproductive sector of the economy. They will go find something to do. They are creative. They will come out of that nonproductive sector of the economy and they will do something in the productive sector. They will produce a good or a service that has a value that also is a multiplier in our economy. And that contribution today cannot yet be measured.

So we have this anchor of over $1 trillion. Then, when you add to that the part we cannot measure, it is an anchor that is substantially over $1 trillion to our economy. To give you an idea of the magnitude of that, in 1992, when Bill Clinton was elected President, he called for the United States Congress to issue a $30 billion economic incentive plan. Some will remember that request that the President made, because we needed to jump-start the economy, by his argument.

Well, Congress negotiated that $30 billion request down to $17 billion, and then he decided, well, that is not enough to make a difference and so he decided to drop the proposal. But it was an idea like we would consider AmeriCorps to be today; make-work projects where you put borrowed money into the hands of people that would be spent in the economy to stimulate the economy.

Well, if $30 billion made a difference to this economy, at least in theory in 1992, borrowed money, think what over $1 trillion injected into our economy in the real productive sector of the economy would do. Not borrowed money, real money, multiplied not just one time borrowed at $30 billion but every year over $1 trillion. We cannot, with our normal on-the-street minds, comprehend the contribution to this economy, the jobs that would create.

And when we look around the world and we see where we stand with this Nation, this economy that is growing thanks to the President's jobs and growth plan, but we are also seeing a balance of trade that is a minus $503 billion a year, and we are seeing our industrial base slide off to overseas where they are paying 68 cents an hour, and they are buying lathes and punch presses and training their people to run them.

Those jobs will be hard to get back, but we get to discount 22 percent on average of everything we sell to these foreign countries when we untax our companies that are producing export products as well as our domestically consumed products. That discount keeps us in that market longer and it holds our industrial jobs here in this country longer. That is good for our blue collar jobs and that is good for the sector of our economy that is starting to decline.

And on the other side of this coin, on the high-tech side, we incent capital formation. We no longer punish productivity or capital formation or savings. So when we untax corporations, businesses, your wages, income of all kinds, interest income, dividend income, pension income, no tax on Social Security income, we untax all of that, and we untax also inheritance tax, that means there is an incentive for capital formation. It will not be sewn into a mattress, it will be invested in something that returns on its investment. And that return will result in increased productivity of the American worker.

So whether that money goes into research and development or capital investment so we get more technology in our factories and in our plants, or whether it goes into higher education, or whether entrepreneurs are able to borrow that money and roll that into a new business, all of these things may be temporarily delayed gratification for the retailers, not much, maybe a little, but in the end it is more money in their pockets.

So when I look at the things we are up against here, this idea ultimately makes so much good sense. Every time I take this Rubik's cube of H.R. 25, or you can find out about it at fairtax.org, and I turn it around and I look at it another way and another way, it looks better, and better, and better. It makes so much sense that I am just going to illustrate the two sectors of the economy that need to take a look at this thing and actually be convinced.

One of them are the retailers. They have a study out, and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) and I have sat with people on that study. I think the study shows that about 5 years down the road, there is maybe a half percent decline in total gross retail sales. The premise on that study, it is a 5-year-old-study, by the way, or 4½ anyway, some of those premises I will take issue with. I think it starts with a pessimistic base.

Even if they are right, and I disagree with them, but even if they are right, is $1 trillion in the economy not more than enough to overcome that? They assume that money is not going to come out of research and development or higher education.

Mr. LINDER. If the gentleman will yield for a moment, Mr. Speaker, their own study, because the gentleman and I have met with them, shows the economy will grow faster under this system than the current system.

Mr. KING of Iowa. The economy will grow faster.

So when we look at it from that perspective, there are easy answers for the retailers. More money in the hands of people. They will spend that money.

The other question out there is the one that has to do with large investments, annuities, life insurance, and those kinds of issues. And at first I will say the tax structure around those kinds of investments is a tax structure that has been built and evolved around our income tax system. It is a distortion. It is more akin to something today that is not really economic reality. And I think we can take our $1 trillion and inject it into our economy and find a way to transition our way through making adjustments through annuities, life insurance, and those other kinds of long-term investments and tax deductible investments.

And by the way, another concern will be the dollars that go into charitable contributions. Statistics show that 70 percent of the charitable contributions are not itemized deductions anyway. People find a good cause and put their dollars in there without regard to the tax.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I am so glad the gentleman raised that point. I want to throw one thing in here. Seventy-four percent of the money that goes to not-for-profits come from businesses they run. Universities sell hats and mugs, the Red Cross sells blood. Eighteen percent comes from the checks we write, and the rest comes from interest earned on interest-bearing accounts.

People do not give money away to charities just for tax reasons. The great fortunes that have been given away, the Goulds, the Fricks, the Melons, the Carnegies, were given away before 1913. Carnegie funded 2,437 libraries before the Tax Code came into effect. People with a lot of money give it away because they like to give it away.

In 1980, when the value of a charitable contribution's margin was a 70 percent deduction, we gave $48 billion to charity. Over several tax changes since then, the value of charitable giving has dramatically declined, and last year we gave nearly $200 billion to charities. People give money away if they have more money. If they have more money in their pocket, we will put more money in their pocket.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, that is the answer to charitable contributions.

There is an answer to every single aspect of this. Every time we look at this Rubik's cube it looks better and better and better.

Also, the corporations that have moved offshore to avoid the taxes in United States of America will come back to this country, many of them, and other corporations will move to the United States. An example would be Ireland. They untaxed corporations in Ireland for a period of 10 years, and they ended up with 560 American corporations domiciled in that little island of 4 million people. So imagine multiplying this across this huge continent of almost 300 million people.

□ 2245

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, let me close with one point, and that is 47 percent of America does not pay any income taxes today. They pay payroll taxes, but we have a huge bias that is a dangerous bias in my judgment because people who do not pay taxes are disproportionate beneficiaries of government, and they want more government and more taxes because they think they do not pay them.

I want a tax system that is so fair and equal that the next time we decide we want a tax increase, my mother is willing to pay it. We had two tax increases in 1990, both promised at the top 2 percent; it works its way through the system, and we all pay. I want a system that everyone sees they are the ones paying the taxes, and they are the beneficiary.

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, a recent study by the National Association of Manufacturers said a long-term solution to being competitive in the world market is to change the income tax system, to replace the income tax system. This is a question that Lou Dobbs asked me about 2 weeks ago when I was on the ''Lou Dobbs Tonight Show'' talking about the fair tax: Do you really think this can happen and how?

Mr. LINDER. We hear from everyone, and you talk about it, and people say it will never happen. This town responds to our constituents, and if the American people want this to pass, it will pass. There is no organized opposition to it. If the American people catch on, it will pass. But one thing that I have learned over the last 6 years on this issue, and I have been on several hundred talk radio shows, I have been in many States, the American people are so far ahead of the politicians on this it is scary. Politicians have no idea how close the American people are to throwing them out over this issue. The American people want the simplicity of it, the fairness of it, and they want it to be equal.

All of the polling and focus groups we did, they want everybody treated the same. Half of the people in the focus groups thought they were the only ones paying taxes, and everybody else had a deal. They want everybody treated the same. Cab drivers want wealthy people treated the same because they want to be wealthy one day, and they want to be treated exactly the same.

I believe there is a confluence of events occurring. The Social Security and Medicare crisis is going to force us to make some tough decisions. The fact that our revenues are not dependable, when under the sales tax and the growing economy, would not only be dependable, we may not even be facing deficits, and the projected long-term growth of the economy of a significant percentage above what we can do now. And lastly, we cannot continue to compete in a global economy with such a large tax component in our price system.

These various things are coming to bear on our economy, and I believe the American people will catch on to this. As the gentleman knows in Georgia, he cannot run for office without discussing it. We need to do that in all of the States. I believe the American people will move this country, and it will take them to move the politicians. Politicians are, more than anything, followers. They want to know where the country is going, and they want to get in front of the parade, wherever it is. We are looking for some leaders, and the American people will show the way. Yes, it will happen.

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I concur that the American people will drive this issue. That is the reason it is important that the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) holds hearings in the Committee on Ways and Means. Let us vet it and let the people understand it, and I think the people will respond to Members of Congress, and we will have action taken on this issue.

I was offered the cushy job of being the IRS commissioner about 2 years ago, but I turned it down. I chose not to join them; I want to end them. In order to do that, we have to abolish the income tax, and that will end the IRS as we know it today. I appreciate the gentleman's effort, and I am 110 percent behind you.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I thank all Members who have participated tonight and continue the fight. This will happen.

30-SOMETHING CAUCUS REPORTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHOCOLA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is recognized for half the time until midnight, approximately 36 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, we are here on our second weekly 30-something working group, and I am joined by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK). We started this last week on Tuesday. Every Tuesday night we are going to come here and talk about issues facing the young people, not only in our own communities in Florida or in the State of Ohio, not only young people who are at universities or private schools throughout the country, but people who are in their 20s, in their 30s and the kinds of challenges they are facing in society here today.

As Members can see, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), who we would like to thank for the opportunity to do this, sponsoring the 30-something working group, we are going to ask young people, and you do not have to be 30, you can be 20, 40, 50, to contact us by e-mail at 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov, and we will repeat the mailing address later, but just to talk about issues that are facing young students, young people today.

Last week we talked for about an hour about the challenges that are facing young people with summer jobs, student loans, Pell grants, and issues related to getting into college, having access to college, having access to higher education in this country. The majority of the discussion we talked about last week revolved around the priorities of the country. As we sit in this Chamber late on a Tuesday night, the issue again is priorities.

We just want to communicate to young people today that there is active participation in this democracy in which young people who think that democracy does not matter, who think that their vote does not count, who think that somehow they cannot participate in the system, we are here to tell them that they can, and they do have an opportunity to participate in this system; and for two young people like the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) and myself and several others who are here, have gotten to this establishment, this institution, the United States Congress, through the help of a lot of young people. You can either say no, reject the system, you can say no, we do not have an opportunity to talk, we do not have an opportunity for our voice to be heard, or you can say, yes. Yes, we can participate in the system; we can participate in our democracy.

I heard some of the gentlemen before us talk about how the democratic process works and how people will, if given the opportunity, they will dictate what kind of government we get and what kind of government as citizens we receive; but it has to be active participation.

We are here to say we believe, and I know I believe passionately and have spoken on the House floor and I know the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) has also participated in these discussions, that we believe that the priorities of this institution over the last year, year and a half, several years, have not represented the interests of young people. The Republican Party has controlled the House since 1994. They have controlled the Senate for a good portion of the years since then. They have controlled the White House for the last 3½ years; and the agenda for young people, the agenda for students has not been addressed. As we talked about last week, our discussion had a lot to do with Pell grants and access to college.

The question that we want to present to young people today, tonight, is: Do you agree with the priorities that this administration has established for you? Do you agree with trillions of dollars of tax cuts over the next 10 years? Do you agree with borrowing money to pay for the deficits that we have today in order to give tax cuts primarily to the top 1 and 2 percent? I know the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK), who has been very active in this discussion, has agreed with the majority of us on the Democratic side that we believe that money would be better spent balancing our budget, making sure we have fiscal responsibility in the country, and making sure we make the proper investments. We believe that some of those investments, and it would be misleading to say all of those investments, but a good portion or many of those investments should be made to our young people.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) has hit the nail on the head. I am glad we are here with our 30-something working group; and we are also joined by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ), as she was last week. We are showing a level of consistency; and just from last week, I hold in my hand, almost like the David Letterman Top 10, just some of the e-mails sent in from individuals who saw us here talking about issues not only facing college students, but also facing working families in America that are concerned about how they are going to pay back the second mortgage that they have taken out to allow their children to be educated, and also to students that are now working in student work study to try to pay for college. But they know they have loans that are under attack here in this Congress and the banking community is coming with a new scheme to have them pay more in interest rates rather than have a fixed low rate. I will talk about the e-mails later.

But first, I could not help but look at rockthevote.com before I walked over here, and I can tell Members something that is very, very disturbing. We talk about direct democracy and young people being part of the process to correct the issues that we are here to talk about tonight, health care; and in many locations throughout the country and in some States, students are being told that they cannot register to vote on their college campus.

This is very, very disturbing because it violates Federal law for a State to say you cannot vote, and if you are going to be on a college campus, the University of Ohio, whatever the case may be, if they are there, they are in school, they may register to vote. I would encourage parents and students that care about higher education, care about tuition costs, Pell grants and care about making sure that we have the workforce for the future to lead our country, I encourage them to go to rockthevote.com so they can learn more about this voter suppression.

Mr. Speaker, I am from Florida, and we cannot wait until the last minute to inform not only parents who want their children to be politically active.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, on that point, we have many kids in school surrounded by their peers who want to participate in the process, who are campaigning for a certain candidate or referendum on a State ballot, but they are from another State. How do they register to vote? I remember being from Ohio, and I went to school in Bowling Green which is across the State, how do you get registered to vote? Should it be by absentee ballot? You have to send a formal letter and you have exams, and you are trying to balance your duties at school to try to achieve a better life; and it becomes a very complicated process, instead of saying register to vote where your school is and being able to participate in the process.

There are many instances where we have a college or university in a congressional district that is controlled by a Member of Congress or a party that is not representative of the people who are at that university, where if all of those kids would be able to register to vote at that university, they would swing a congressional election.

□ 2300

Mr. MEEK of Florida. If I can, I just want to make sure that the listeners that are listening to us right now and also Members of the House, I would definitely urge them, because they should lead in this fight. Direct democracy is important, being able to do away with voter apathy. I do not believe that the folks that are not voting, that it is all voter apathy. It is voter access. I want to read something to you: Under Federal law, college students have the legal right to vote where their residence may be and that is at schools. The Supreme Court established this right in 1979. Yet 25 years later, many local elected officials across the country have not gotten the message. They are rejecting the voter registration applications of students claiming that they are not permanent residents in their community, but the Supreme Court has already said that this concept of permanent is not relevant to students. We have to get that word out.

I would say to the parents that are listening to us tonight, your children can vote in the fall elections. Where will they be in late August or September? They are going to be in school. Where are they going to be in November? They are going to be in school. We have to make sure their voices are heard.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Go to rockthevote.com. Or, if the C–SPAN cameras can come in here, 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov. Send us some e-mails. We received a bunch just from last week, our first week here. Send us some e-mails. Let us know what you think, what your issues are so we can develop a students' bill of rights in order to advocate.

I would like to welcome a great new Member of our freshman class the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ).

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. It is really great to be here. We are also joined by another colleague of ours, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. DAVIS). Just to catch the tail end of your conversation, I wanted to say that there seems to be something wrong when people are advocating that young people get involved in politics and express their opinions and vote, and you have 18- to 35-year-olds who want to do just that and then the rules are set up in such a way that make it nearly impossible for them to participate. There is something wrong with a democracy that does not embrace making it easier for folks to participate in the political process and exercise their right to be heard.

Not to get off topic, but one of the things that I wanted to talk about a little bit this evening is a subject that is troubling not just for students, for a lot of young adults all across America, folks that may have graduated from college and been out in the workforce for several years, but that is the need for access to health care. I can remember myself when I was at UCLA law school right after I graduated, there was this intense pressure to find a job, and I had this fear during the period when I was studying for my bar exam, I had this fear because I was not covered by any health insurance, this fear that if I did not get a job quickly after taking the bar, that I was pretty much going to be on my own where health care was concerned. I was fortunate in that when I graduated from law school, I graduated in a somewhat healthy economy and there were quite a number of employment opportunities that presented themselves.

But today students are not so lucky. They are graduating from universities and the job market is very dismal for them. Not only does that mean that they are going to have to struggle without having an income after they graduate and the thought of student loans on top of it, but chances are they probably will not be covered by any type of health care. As we rapidly approach the months of May and June, a lot of college students are going to be graduating and finding themselves in the situation that I have just described.

I know of one particular instance in which a female college student recently shared a story with me regarding her personal hardship where health care was concerned. She is about to graduate from college in California and just received a scare by testing positive for an ovarian cyst. She does not know where to turn. She does not have any idea where she is going to get the money to pay for the necessary procedures; and if this situation is not bad

enough because she is a student, currently some of the things are covered by student health, but imagine if she had just graduated and were covered by no health insurance whatsoever, she might not even be aware of the situation that she is in because she might not have gone to the doctor to be tested. I am sure she is not alone in that situation.

I do not know what it is about young people, and to young people that may be watching this, I say you absolutely have a right to affordable and accessible health care. Do not think because you are young that that is one of the dues that you have to pay. You absolutely should have access to affordable health care. Do not sell yourself short and do not demand anything less. Do not think that because you are young, the government can ignore you. You have an opportunity. You have a voice. Exercise it. You have an opportunity to try to shape the policy that this Nation abides by. Be vocal about that.

We have seen the number of people who are uninsured in this country continue to rise. That is just not the people that are uninsured, but there are many people who are underinsured, which means they have very superficial health care benefits; they are not really meaningful, they have high premiums, they have high deductibles. That means that people have just one more worry as they are starting out and embarking on what should be the rest of their lives and a positive experience.

Four years ago, the President promised us action on health care but every year since then, more and more Americans have lost their health insurance. It is particularly dramatic in young people. Young adults comprise a disproportionately large share of the Nation's uninsured. Despite only representing 15 percent of the population, young adults account for 30 percent of those who go without health care in our country.

It is a shame that an industrialized, modern society, supposedly the greatest country in the world, cannot find a way to make sure that every person in this country has access to health care. Those of you who are listening, all of us here on the floor tonight that are talking about these issues that impact young folks, we are fighting like crazy to try to make sure that big HMOs and pharmaceutical companies are not the ones that are receiving the benefits of the health care policy that we pass in this House. We are urging that 12 million young adults who currently find themselves without access to health care, to get involved politically, talk to your Representatives, let them know how critical this issue is for you.

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. I thank the gentlewoman, and let me certainly thank my colleagues from Ohio and Florida for their vision in putting this hour together and for making it a regular part of the congressional calendar and the congressional schedule. As I listened to the three of you before I had a chance to participate in this dialogue, something struck me. I am normally one who tends to be resistant to too many political analyses that rest on generation. I am one of these people who thinks that people try to load a whole lot of analytical content into that term when it should not always be there, but this is something that occurs to me from listening to all three of you. Maybe because we are new to this body, maybe because all four of us are relatively new to public life, maybe because all four of us are still young people, we still have a sense of the possible. We still have a sense of how the power in this institution and the power in this government can still be used to make better the lives of some of our people.

Sometimes when I listen to our friends and our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, I honestly think one of the most fundamental differences is that they do not have a very strong sense of the possible. They pretty much want to take this country as we found it. They want to take the divisions in this country as we found them, and they are pretty much happy to get by with that. Maybe what separates us as younger Democrats and as Democrats is that we have a profound sense of what is possible.

As I listened to the gentlewoman from California and I think about health care in this country, we do have an enormous amount still to do. One day some historian is going to look back at the fact that 4 years ago, we had a $122 billion surplus, and we somehow did not manage to spend a dime of it on providing health insurance for working Americans who need it, who are playing by the rules, who are doing everything that the system demands of them, and yet they somehow do not have health insurance. We had a $122 billion surplus and could not spend any of that largesse on addressing the problem of the uninsured. Here we are 3 years later, we have a $521 billion, and climbing, deficit. We are spending all of that money, and we are still not spending a dime of it on addressing the problem of the working uninsured. That is something that a lot of the young people who I hope are listening in their college classroom and in their college dorms tonight will hold us accountable for. That we have had an opportunity to spend an enormous amount of the Treasury in this country, and we have never touched this problem.

Understand something very basic about the problem of the uninsured. Sometimes when we listen to the debate, we almost think that the uninsured are all poor people. This is the reality. A significant number of people who are uninsured are people who are working and people who are earning between $50,000 and $75,000. Not poor by any stretch of the imagination. A lot of these are people who are working as young lawyers. They are people who are working as young legal assistants. They are people who by no means are what we think of as being on the margins of society.

□ 2310

So I would simply make this point tonight when we talk about the obligation that we have as young leaders, one of the most fundamental obligations that we have is to maybe finish some of the business that some other people have left for us, to maybe find some way to deal with some of these problems that have been sitting and festering. Forty-two million Americans are uninsured. That means 42 million Americans are essentially one health crisis away from seeing their financial security wiped out.

Again, my sense of the possible leads me to think that we can do something about that, and my sense of the possible leads me to believe that if we do not address this problem and we simply let it fester, that we are going to wake up one day in America, in this wonderful land of opportunity and we are going to see that we can split in two and become two Americas. We become one America for people who are well endowed and people who are wealthy. We become one America for those who are without.

And I will close on this point. A lot of us are institutional lawyers. The gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) I know is an attorney who practiced very ably in California. Unfortunately, in our profession as lawyers, we kind of accept the fact that the more money one has, the better legal service they can get. It is just something that we accept.

When it comes to accounting, as we are just finishing the tax season, the quality of one's bank account determines the quality of the accountants that they get. I hope that we never let ourselves lapse into a world where the quality of one's health and their capacity to fight the ravages of disease is a function of how much money they have got, because if we ever enter that kind of a world, we have entered a world that is fundamentally less fair than what we have had and we have entered a world that is less generous than what we need it to be.

And I would just in conclusion say this: I know that all four of us are fans of Robert F. Kennedy and the vision that he had for America. He was fond of saying, when he concluded a lot of his speeches, ''Some men see things as they are and say why? I see things that never were and say why not?'' And I think that is our challenge as young Democrats, not just to see the things in this country that trouble us and raise our hands and say why, but to see a better and fairer world and to say why not?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman was extremely articulate in his analysis of the situation that we are in, and I think he is right, that a lot of us that are here, and I have seen

many Members who are just a few years older than us, have maintained that attitude that say this institution and politics in general is about what can be for the rest of society.

We have talked a little bit about health care, and I think there are two ways to look at this. I think both are very valuable, but the one is we need to cover people because it is a justice issue. It is an issue where we all believe that every person in America should have adequate health care regardless of one's wealth, period, end of story. That should not be a debate that we are having in the 21st century in America.

And as we provide health care for young people, we are beginning to educate them on the way to behave, the way to treat themselves, the way to be more healthy, so that when they are in the Medicare program one day, that they are not costing us as much money as they would have cost us had they not had the education that they had at a young age.

This should not be just about providing health care coverage. This should also be about teaching wellness in our schools, whether it is through Leave No Child Behind or some other Federal program that we have, but to make sure we are teaching people at a very young age how wellness is the best way to approach life. That is one.

And then the second reason is an economic argument. Imagine if we were providing health care to manufacturers here today. Young kids graduate from school. They go and they work. Maybe they do not even go to college. They go get a 2-year degree, run the new machines, have a technical degree, and they have health care. Imagine the burden that would be released from those people who were owning small manufacturing shops and the money that they would save that they could put back into their business to create economic wealth in the country again.

So this is an investment that I think when we want the government to invest money, we say we want to get the best bang for the buck. We get a justice issue solved, and we also want to get economic development and assist small businesses in a way that they have not been assisted under the current regime that we have here in the United States.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, if I can, I just want to mention I am so glad that the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) is here and also the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. DAVIS). The gentleman from Alabama (Mr. DAVIS) represents a rural part and a very poor part of Alabama, and I have heard him on many other occasions, not only in the Committee on the Budget, share the stories of his constituents, and I just want to steal from that for a minute.

I represent Miami and also South Broward County, and it is a very urban area. I will share with my colleagues that not only with the educational institutions that we have there, we have children or we have young people that are gambling on health care. They do not have health care because they cannot afford health care, and they are what I call emergency room health care. As we speak right now, some mother or father has to take their child into an emergency room because they do not have health care coverage. They are working. They are not at home eating a bag of chips and drinking some sort of soda saying that, well, I do not want to work. They go to work every day. These individuals are walking into emergency rooms for their health care. Then we wonder why our health care cost is so high. Why do we have a pill in the hospital, Tylenol, that costs $10?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, so in essence we do have universal health care in the country but it is through the emergency room.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I do not want to start talking, but the first thing we instituted in Iraq was universal health care. So I do not want to bounce back and forth, but the gentleman from Alabama is on the Committee on the Budget, and I am glad we have a diversity because I know the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) is on the Committee on the Judiciary and the gentleman from Ohio is on the Committee on Armed Services along with me, and I am on the Select Committee on Homeland Security; but really where the rubber meets the road is how we set our budget here, and then how we are setting up future generations and even this generation for failure. Can the gentleman from Alabama talk a little bit about that? Because I am so glad he is here and he is knowledgeable on the issue.

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for raising the issue. One of the interesting things that we often hear in this town and we hear it from the other side of the aisle is we cannot justify their commitment, we are told, by the amount of money that we are spending. A lot of our colleagues and friends on the Republican side of the aisle say we care very deeply about health care, we care very deeply about education, we are just not spending a lot of money on those things and one cannot judge our commitment by that.

Most American families, I think, realize that people spend money on the things they value. They do that in their homes and they do that in the United States Congress. We are steadily walking away from commitments that are decades-long commitments to improving the quality of our educational system, improving the quality of health care. We made a commitment, or our predecessors did, because none of us were here. Not a single one of us voted on Leave No Child Behind. But before we got here in this institution, this House passed a bill called Leave No Child Behind and made a commitment to improve education in this country. That commitment has never been funded adequately. It has never been funded to set the original vision that was laid out.

And on health care, the prescription drug bill that all four of us voted against, incidentally, last November, this is a bill which has an enormous price tag. It is a bill that will leave large numbers of seniors still without prescription drug coverage. And in so many areas, and this is what is striking I think to a lot of our constituents, they hear about the obligations we are undertaking abroad. They hear about the commitment that we are making to improve the lives of people around the world. What they do not see is a commensurate commitment here at home.

And I think we have to recognize that if we want our country to move forward, if we want to fix a firmer and better foundation for our people, that is a matter of resources. It is incredible that we have run up a $521 billion deficit and we have left so many national problems untouched. Now we know why. It is because we have made it a priority to cut taxes by $3 trillion over the last 3 years. We know why, because we have made a commitment to engage in so many crises around the world when there are festering crises here at home. We know why. It is because we frankly have not had our priorities straight in this institution.

I strongly believe that we have to identify the unfinished business of America, and as we move into this congressional and Presidential election, maybe there is one very clear and simple challenge we ought to issue to our colleagues and ideological opponents on the other side of the aisle.

□ 2320

A very simple question: They are fixated on fixing the world and remaking the world. We have to be fixated on remaking America. Because what are we fighting for abroad? If we are fighting for anything, it is for a vision of the promise of democracy. Well, if we believe in that promise of democracy and we believe that the promise of democracy means expanded opportunity, then surely we have to fight for that here at home.

All of us, I know, have a great deal of admiration for John F. Kennedy. John F. Kennedy was a great Democratic President who believed that we can be bold in asserting our interests around the world, but that we can be equally bold in asserting our vision here at home.

You would almost think you could not have it both ways. You would almost think you could not do both of those things, if you listened to some people in this town. We have to have enough confidence and enough belief in the better powers of our government and the better angels of our nature to try to transform America.

I will make this last point. There is a reason, I believe, why so many of our people are disengaged and not voting;

why so many young people, why so many Americans who are struggling economically do not even want to participate. It is because they often do not hear this institution speaking to their values. They often do not hear their needs and their concerns being addressed.

They turn on the TV at 10 o'clock at night and hear us talking about a fair tax that is never going to be, some kind of a complicated esoteric tax thing that is never going to happen. They turn on the television in the middle of the day and they hear us talking about renaming bridges and post offices. They turn on the TV late at night and they hear us talking about cutting veterans benefits, the day we went to war in Iraq. So much of what they hear us say in this institution does not resonate, it does not seem a part of their lives.

I think if we want to get people to vote, if we want to get people engaged, then they need to hear something of themselves in this place. They need to hear something of the echoes that are going all around American living rooms echoing in this chamber.

It is a very real question of relevance, making the things that our people care about a part of our priorities in setting government.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I just want to make this one observation: When I was young I played sports and inevitably was plagued with injuries from time to time, and my mother once told me something, and I hate to admit when my mother was right, but she was so right.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Do not do it.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mom, here goes. She said, ''You do not feel it now because you are young. You have energy, you are strong, you recover quickly and you think you are indestructible. But when you get older, these injuries are going to come back to haunt you.''

I do not particularly consider myself very old, but it is true. As somebody in my thirties, my soccer ankle that I broke three different times playing bothers me.

For young people who do not have access to health care, who do not have access to treatments and medicines that can help prevent a minor injury from becoming a severe injury down the road, or prevent a mild form of a disease or an illness from becoming something full-blown, the sole thing standing between them and some kind of chronic illness or really devastating health problem is early access to preventive medicine and early access to medicine and to therapies that are going to help them.

Again, it is kind of hard to think when you are 18 years old that you are going to be old and sick and frail one day, but if you do not have access to health care and you cannot get a head start and make sure that you get yearly visits so that you are checked out for any potential conditions, that is a potential that is a very real potential down the line.

So, for young folks, again, I cannot stress this enough. I think sometimes we think, well, we are young, we are just starting out, we do not have the dream job that we are hoping for, but I am working full-time to put myself through school or working full-time right now and have no health care benefits or very minimal health care benefits. You deserve better. Again, you need to exercise your voice and make sure that you are getting better.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, as we are wrapping up here, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida, the gentlewoman from California and the gentleman from Alabama.

I want to take this opportunity to say e-mail us, 30-SomethingDems at mail.house.gov, and check out rockthevote.com for the voter suppression.

I just want to read a couple e-mails real quickly that we received last week. Melanie from Maryland said that she heard us last week. It almost brought her to tears, that people in the Congress were actually talking about her.

Amy from Abilene Christian University wrote. And there was also one other student who called and said he never watched C–SPAN, but ended up watching it for 45 minutes last week to watch ''Gregory Meeks, Tim Ryan and one other guy.'' That ''one other guy'' was the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK).

We will be back next Tuesday. Drop an e-mail to us. We are going to continue to have this dialogue and make sure that the students and 20-somethings and 30-somethings of this country are represented in the United States Congress.

PROVIDING HEALTH CARE FOR ALL AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHOCOLA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized until midnight.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker. I appreciate being invited here to be part of the youth leadership hour of tonight's session of the House of Representatives.

There were some interesting comments from the other side of the aisle. I am actually here to talk tonight about health care. Certainly the concept of voting where you live is one that I endorse, and always have. I have several universities in my district, and in fact the NAACP awarded a college chapter at the University of North Texas an award for their program of Live Here, Vote Here that they ran last year, and I certainly salute them in their efforts.

But let us talk a little bit more about health care. Maybe we can talk a little more in depth about health care. I believe the gentleman from Alabama, if I am quoting him right, said that his group had a profound sense of what is possible. Well, let us spend some time talking about what is indeed possible; what is doable right now, this year, even though it is an election year.

Mr. Speaker, I was on the plane coming back from my district in Texas back to the Nation's Capital today. I picked up a copy of the Fort Worth Star Telegram at the airport, and the headline above the fold was ''Firms Offer Plan for Uninsured Workers.''

Now, there is a novel concept. Here is a consortium of large companies. ''More than 50 of the country's largest employees said Monday that they will band together to offer health insurance to workers who would otherwise not qualify, offering coverage up to 4 million uninsured workers and their dependents by next year. The companies include major Tarrant County employers; American Airlines, Lockheed Martin, Bell Helicopter, as well as McDonald's, Sears Roebuck, Home Depot, Ford Motor and General Electric.''

I will not read the entire article, but the article goes on to say that ''uninsured workers tend to delay medical treatment and avoid cheaper preventative care, seeking expensive emergency room treatment.'' We know that emergency health care is some of the most expensive health care in the world. We know this is a huge driver in the cost of overall health care spending.

So here are these large companies back in Texas, many in my district, who are recognizing that the cost of the uninsured is a major cost driver for health insurance, and these companies are banding together to provide a type of coverage available to their employees, who otherwise would not have health insurance available to them. I think this is an example of the type of innovative, consumer-driven approach that we are seeing in health care.

One of the really disappointing things to me, to listen to the dialogue I just heard on the other side, actually goes back to an article written by Mr. Brownstein of the Los Angeles Times last December, where he said there are only two ways to pay for health care in this country. One is private, employer-based insurance, and the other is for the government, State or Federal Government, to pay for the cost of health insurance.

That completely ignores the cost of uncompensated care. As a physician, I know I probably gave away much more in medical care than any of these young lawyers will ever give away in legal fees. But there is a tremendous amount of care that is just simply uncompensated in this country, and that needs to be calculated into the overall expensing of health care.

But the other area that was completely ignored in Ronald Brownstein's article last December was those individuals who pay for health care themselves. We did a great thing in this

Congress last December with the passage of the Medicare Modernization Act, that the other side seemed to not care for. But the creation of Health Savings Accounts in that Medicare Modernization Act will allow more people to bring their own dollars into the health care system and spend their own dollars in the health care system.

□ 2330

Mr. Speaker, I believe that people, given the option of spending their own money in the health care system, will be wiser consumers of health care and, ultimately, that too will bring down the cost of health care.

Let me just say a word about HSAs, or the old term for them was a medical savings account. I had a medical savings account myself for 5 years prior to coming to Congress. In fact, it was kind of a surprise to me that I could not continue my medical savings account when I arrived in Congress, but because of the restrictions placed on medical savings accounts, they are only available to people who are self-employed or who are employed in small groups. So as a member of this body, I had to take the type of insurance that was offered to everyone else in the Federal Government.

But we have made some improvements. With the advent of HSAs last December, many, many more people are going to have this type of insurance available to them and be able to save for their own health care. It is going to give more Americans health care coverage portability, and it is going to promote savings and wealth generation.

Mr. Speaker, in January, the President came here and in his State of the Union address talked about his health care initiatives. Now, Morton Kondracke writes for a magazine or a newspaper up here called Roll Call and it is generally no friend of the administration. In fact, he made a comment in his column the week after the State of the Union address: Usually the only time Republicans ever pay attention to the social needs of ordinary Americans is when Democrats force them to do so. But he did at least allow that President Bush talked about health care in his State of the Union message.

Now, he was not very complimentary of President Bush, but President Bush talked about 3 initiatives in his State of the Union message that could bring down the numbers of the uninsured, and when the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. DAVIS) talks about the art of the possible or having the vision of being able to do what is possible now, these 3 things do not involve any heavy lifting, they are all within our grasp right now.

One of the things that President Bush talked about, of course, was the HSA and how good it was that that was part of the Medicare Modernization Act. The President also proposed, as a corollary to HSAs, making a catastrophic insurance policy available to any worker who wanted it, and allowing them to deduct the cost of that insurance policy from their personal income taxes, the same as a corporation or business can do if it buys insurance for an employee. This would mean, if we combine that catastrophic insurance policy with a health savings account, that anyone who paid income taxes who did not have health insurance would no longer have an excuse not to have health insurance. And, Mr. Kondracke estimated that 7 percent of the 43 million uninsured would indeed have access to insurance under that scenario.

There was another proposal outlined by President Bush in that State of the Union address and that was a bill that we passed in this House almost a year ago, in June of 2003, H.R. 660, called association health plans. Association health plans probably will not by themselves bring down the number of uninsured that dramatically, but it will certainly keep that curve from continuing upward the way it has for the last 7 or 8 years.

Association health plans, again, were passed by this body last June. It has languished over in the Senate and it is certainly time that that bill receive some more attention and get moving over there. In Mr. Kondracke's tally, he estimated that another 2 million people would be benefited by the passage of association health plans.

Finally, a bill that has not passed this House, but one that certainly deserves our attention, are what are called tax credits for the uninsured. Tax credits are perhaps the best and most immediate way to help the so-called working poor; that is, individuals who are out there working and earning a living, do not earn enough money to pay income tax, so they would not benefit from a health savings account necessarily, but do not receive health insurance as a benefit of their employment. This would provide for fully refundable prepaid tax credits that would give low-income individuals and their families immediate purchasing power. In other words, Mr. Speaker, it is not a tax refund; it is a tax prefund. It would be available to those families at the beginning of the year only to pay for their health insurance needs.

Mr. Kondracke in his Roll Call piece estimated that again, this would provide coverage for another 4 million people, but he did allow that this group is perhaps two-thirds of the actual group that is counted as the uninsured, so his estimate may have been a little bit low. But by combining all of Mr. Kondracke's numbers last January, we come up with a figure of 10 million people covered with health insurance who are not currently covered. Mr. Speaker, that is almost 25 percent of the current uninsured in this country who could be covered right now, this year, if we could simply take up and complete the work that we started last year and get association health plans, full deductibility for catastrophic insurance premiums, and tax credits for the uninsured; if we would take that up and pass that this year, those 10 million people would enjoy the benefits of insurance and, as a consequence of that, health care costs would come down.

I wanted to make reference to an article that appeared in yesterday's Christian Science Monitor. The title of the article was ''A Better Way to Pay For Health Care'' by Jonathan Decker, a correspondent for the Christian Science Monitor. It is datelined out of Washington. He starts out, It is rare when a government program actually earns heaps of praise from a taxpayer.

Mr. Decker is talking, of course, about the health savings accounts that were passed by this body last November in the Medicare Modernization Act. He goes on to say that HSAs are the latest method for controlling health care costs and represent a kind of a 401(k) for health care expenses. Since the beginning of the year, the accounts have been available to people underage 65 who have a qualifying health insurance plan with a deductible of at least $1,000 for individual coverage and $2,000 for family coverage. Individuals can dip into their plans to cover out-of-pocket health care costs up to $5,000 a year and $10,000 a year for families.

He goes on to say, What makes HSAs so attractive to many is that the money in the accounts can be spent tax-free on health care, and the funding can be provided by companies, their employees, or both.

Mr. Speaker, it just goes to point out the power of these so-called medical IRAs, these medical 401(k)s that will increase in wealth.

The thing is, the folks on the other side tonight were talking about some of the fundamental differences between Republicans and Democrats. Republicans like to own things. We like to be in charge. And if you own your own health care dollars, how much more in control are you when you become ill, when you go to the hospital, when you go to the doctor. It is a sense of power that I, for one, would not want to relinquish to the Federal Government for an entirely government-run health care system, as some have suggested.

The tax credits for the uninsured have been introduced in this body in a bill called the SAVE Act, Securing Access, Value and Equality in Health Care. This bill provides an immediate tax credit to individuals and families toward the purchase of health insurance. The credit will be $1,000 for individuals, $2,000 for married couples, and $500 for each dependent, up to $3,000 per family; also, an additional credit of up to 50 percent will be available to families that need insurance with higher premiums. The SAVE Act is a way to turn a costly, unwieldy bureaucratic health care system into a more personal, affordable, and accessible health care system.

Mr. Speaker, we heard earlier this evening from a group that was talking about fundamental tax reform, and

they spoke about it quite eloquently and they talked about the cost of embedded taxation in anything we buy.

Well, in health care, there is another hidden embedded cost that we oftentimes do not acknowledge or do not talk about, and that is the embedded cost of our medical justice system, or our medical liability system. Medical liability reform has been a big part of the agenda of this Congress, this Republican Congress this year. Again, we may notice a recurrent theme here. We passed that bill over a year ago, and we are still awaiting some action 400 feet across the rotunda on that. We certainly hope to see that action happen some time this year.

There is a direct cost, of course, for medical liability insurance. But one of the more pernicious aspects from what has happened with our medical justice system in this country with the runaway expenses associated with the medical justice system or the medical liability system, it leads doctors and hospitals to practice what is called defensive medicine. In other words, if I am called to see a patient in the middle of the night and something goes wrong down the road, am I going to look good if this case goes to court. So if you are called to see a patient in the middle of the night and they are complaining of a headache, it may not be anything too serious but, on the other hand, if it did turn out to be that brain tumor and you missed the diagnosis, it is going to look dreadful down the road in court, so let us go ahead and get the cat scan, and it leads to the type of environment where you tend to order every test, you tend to do every procedure to make certain that you are not one day involved in one of those dreadful medical liability suits.

□ 2340

The embedded cost of defensive medicine in our system is significant. There was a study done at Stanford University in 1996, so this is 8 years ago now, almost a decade ago, and these dollar figures would probably be higher if the study was done today. It was estimated the cost to the Medicare system alone of defensive medicine equated to approximately $50 billion a year.

Mr. Speaker, we were criticized for passing a prescription drug benefit last year that cost $400 billion over 10 years or $40 billion a year. The cost of defensive medicine is more than the cost of providing the prescription drug benefit to our seniors.

Let me finish up tonight with talking about the Medicare Modernization Act since the other side did seem to feel that perhaps this was not a wise thing that we did, and they all freely admitted that they voted against it. I do not think that was a wise vote, and I will tell you during the course of this why I do not think that was wise.

I think the Medicare Modernization Act that we passed here last November was, in fact, a significant piece of legislation. It provided that missing link, that thing that had been missing from Medicare since its inception back in 1965 when another Texan was President, President Lyndon Johnson, and signed that bill into law.

Back in 1965, the major health expenditures that a senior might face were if they had to have surgery, if they had to have an operation or they got a serious illness such as pneumonia or had an abscess and had to be treated in hospital with IV antibiotics for several days. Those were the types of serious cost problems that a senior could run into the mid-1960s. We did not have much in the way of prescription drugs back then. Oh, we had steroids and antibiotics, and some people argued those two were interchangeable or at least used interchangeably back then, but look at what we can do now.

The world has changed so much in the 21st century, and the ability to cure, without surgery or without a hospitalization, by the use of modern day pharmaceuticals is nothing short of astounding.

So, again, not having a prescription drug coverage in the Medicare program, gosh, we were paying $280 billion or we are paying $280 billion a year for our seniors on Medicare, for those 40 million people, 40 million Americans who are on Medicare, but we are not getting value for our dollar. This program, providing a prescription drug benefit for the first time, allows us to be able to treat things on the front end and get value for that dollar.

It is not just in the realm of prescription drugs. Yes, it is cheaper to treat illness; to treat the diabetes when it is merely a problem of a chemical abnormality with broad sugar before the retinal damage occurs, before the kidney damage occurs, before the vascular damage that leads to an amputation occurs. We are going to go do that and much more under this Medicare bill.

Every senior who enrolls in the new Medicare program after January 2006 will have a Welcome-to-Medicare physical. Health screenings will be included as part of the Medicare program. Chronic illnesses, such as adult onset diabetes, elevated blood pressure, heart disease, patients will have disease management programs available to them, and health outcomes will be monitored in a much more proactive way.

Unfortunately, when the Congressional Budget Office scored the cost on the Medicare Modernization Act that we passed last November, they could not take any of those things into account. I find it interesting that someone who is running for President has proposed a health care bill where these same types of things will be included, and yet that individual now says that because he is adding disease management and health screenings, his plan is going to cost $278 billion less. I read that in the Washington Post last Friday.

The fact is that this is a good program. It was passed by this Congress. It is choice-based, it is consumer-driven, and it is affordable.

One of the most exciting things to me is we are seeing the roll-out of the prescription drug discount card in just a few weeks, on June 1. Already you can go to medicare.gov or if you are a senior you can call 1–800–MEDICARE. All you need to know, calling 1–800–MEDICARE, if you will benefit from getting one of these prescription drug discount cards, the only information you are going to need to give to the people on the other end of the telephone or be able to type into the Internet is your ZIP code and which medications you are currently taking and the dosages of those medications. This is going to be a powerful tool that develops over the next 18 months as that database is assembled. For the first time, seniors can go to the Internet or go to that 800 number, say I live in this part of the country, I am on this medication and this is the medication and currently I am spending this much money on my medicine; would I benefit from your prescription drug discount card, and in 18 months time would I benefit from the prescription drug program when it does roll out January 1, 2006?

I am really looking forward to having that type of information at the fingertips of seniors. For heaven's sake, we are consumers, if we are nothing else in this country, and we are good consumers. We are cautious consumers. We compare prices every day. We compare prices for airplane tickets. We compare prices for cruises. We will be able to compare prices for prescription drugs on-line and be able to make the best decisions for ourselves. Again, it puts the senior, it puts the patient in the driver's seat, not the Federal Government.

In fact, I think former Speaker Gingrich talked about a time where you would just simply go to a travel-type site and type in your medication, and companies would be able to compete for your business real-time, on-line, and how powerful would that be.

One of the most important things about the prescription drug discount card is that it is going to be available. It is immediate help that is available to every senior, regardless of income, but those seniors who are at the 135 percent of the Federal poverty level will also receive an additional $600 subsidy for the remainder of this year and for next year, and in fact, if that $600 subsidy is not consumed this year, it will roll over to next year. So, essentially, a $1,200 subsidy will be available over the next 18 months time.

I have had people ask me what if I take this prescription drug discount card and then I do not want to go into the Medicare prescription drug program when it rolls out in 2006? You do not have to. It is fully flexible. It is fully your choice to do so, and if you do not take the prescription drug discount card when it is offered this June, you have not lost the ability to go into the

Medicare prescription drug program, if, indeed, it is to your benefit January 1, 2006.

Mr. Speaker, we did hear again a lot from the other side just before I came on this evening. I was particularly concerned that the comment was made that the Republican side of the aisle is walking away from its commitments. I would submit to you nothing is further from the truth, and in fact, if they want to talk about the art of the possible, we can cover one-quarter of the uninsured this year with no heavy lifting, simply by getting some activity 400 feet to the West of the Capitol building and having both sides of this House take up the health credits for the uninsured and the full deductibility of catastrophic health insurance before this term ends at the conclusion of this year.

Mr. Speaker, I know it has been a long day for all of us. So, with that, I will conclude my remarks.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MCNULTY (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of a family emergency.

Mr. REYES (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of a family health issue.

Mr. STUPAK (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of family reasons.

Mr. KINGSTON (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. ROHRABACHER (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of caring for his newborn children.

Mr. TAUZIN (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today and the balance of the week on account of medical reasons.

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 Mr. MCDERMOTT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material):

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GREEN of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KIND, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CONYERS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WYNN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MEEK of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. BURTON of Indiana) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material):

Mr. GUTKNECHT, for 5 minutes, May 13.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, May 17.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and May 12, 13, and 14.

Mr. PEARCE, for 5 minutes, today and May 12.

Mr. DREIER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HENSARLING, for 5 minutes, May 12.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MURPHY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. COLE, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey and to include extraneous material, notwithstanding the fact that it exceeds two pages of the RECORD and is estimated by the Public Printer to cost $746.25.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 48 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, May 12, 2004, 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:

8058. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 15-419, ''Practice of Naturopathic Medicine Licensing Amendment Act of 2004,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1–233(c)(1); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

8059. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 15-420, ''Mount Vernon Triangle Business Improvement District Temporary Amendment Act of 2004,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1–233(c)(1); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

8060. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Savannah River, Savannah, GA [COTP Savannah-04-006] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8061. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety zone; Portland, Maine, Tow of Rig Pride Rio de Janeiro [CGD01-04-010] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8062. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Indian River, Cocoa Village Mardi Gras, Cocoa, FL [COTP Jacksonville 04-001] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8063. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone: Severe Ice Conditions, Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts [CGD01-04-011] (RIN: 1625-AA97) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8064. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Presidential Visit, Boston, MA [CGD01-04-028] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8065. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Lake Eustis, Eustis, FL [COTP Jacksonville 04-002] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8066. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point and Lower Cape Fear River, Brunswick County, NC [CGD05-03-205] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8067. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Ohio River mile marker 374.5 to mile marker 867.5 [COTP Louisville, KY 03-035] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8068. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Ohio River Mile 600.7 to 609.0, Louisville, KY [COTP Louisville-04-001] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8069. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, Virginia. [CGD05-03-215] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8070. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, Virginia. [CGD05-03-216] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8071. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department

of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Mississippi Sound, Pascagoula, MS [COTP Mobile-03-025] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8072. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Hampton Roads, Elizabeth River, Intracoastal Waterway, Virginia. [CGD05-04-001] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8073. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Gulf of Mexico, Orange Beach, AL [COTP Mobile-03-026] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8074. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Hampton Roads, Elizabeth River, Intracoastal Waterway, Virginia [CGD05-04-004] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8075. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Presidential Visit to Gulfport, MS [COTP Mobile-03-028] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8076. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zones, Pascagoula Ship Channel, MS; Mobile Ship Channel, AL; Pensacola and Escambia Bay, and Choctawhatchee and East Bay, FL [COTP Mobile-03-033] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8077. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, Virginia. [CGD05-04-005] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8078. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; ICW from Pensacola, FL to Panama City, FL, Mobile Bay, Pensacola Bay, Escambia Bay, Pascagoula Ship Channel, Bayou Casotte Channel, Choctawhatchee Bay [COTP Mobile-03-034] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8079. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, VA [CGD05-04-026] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8080. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Escambia River Mile 0.0, U.S. 90 Bridge, Pensacola, FL [COTP Mobile-04-002] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8081. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, VA [CGD05-04-029] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8082. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Hathaway Highway 98 Bridge, Panama City, FL [COTP Mobile-04-003] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8083. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, VA [CGD05-04-030] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8084. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Old St. George Island Bridge, Apalachicola Bay, FL [COTP Mobile-04-004] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8085. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; US 90 Bridge, Escambia River, Pensacola, FL [COTP Mobile-04-005] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8086. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Hathaway Highway 98 Bridge, Panama City, FL [COTP Mobile-04-006] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8087. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; U.S. Mililtary Submerged Vehicle Recovery Operation, Outer Apra Harbor, Guam [COTP Guam 04-005] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8088. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, VA [CGD05-04-031] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8089. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; U.S. Navy Underwater Detonation Operation Agat Bay, Guam [COTP Guam 04-004] (RIN: 1625-AA00) Recieved April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8090. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, VA [CGD05-04-032] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8091. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, VA [CGD05-04-033] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8092. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, Virginia. [CGD05-04-034] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8093. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, Virginia. [CGD05-04-036] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8094. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, VA [CGD05-04-042] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8095. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, Virginia [CGD05-04-006] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8096. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, VA [CGD05-04-044] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8097. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, Virginia [CGD05-04-007] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8098. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, VA [CGD05-04-045] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8099. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, Virginia [CGD05-04-008] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8100. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, VA [CGD05-04-046] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8101. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Patapsco River; Baltimore, Maryland [CGD05-04-048] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8102. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Potomac River, Washington, D.C. and Arlington and Fairfax Counties, Virginia [CGD05-04-014] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8103. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, Virginia. [CGD05-04-050] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8104. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Ice Conditions, Upper Potomac River and its tributaries, Maryland and Virginia [CGD05-04-020] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8105. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, Virginia [CGD05-04-023] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8106. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Raccoon Creek, New Jersey [CGD05-04-056] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8107. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Chesapeake Bay, Hampton Roads, Virginia [CGD05-04-025] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8108. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone Regulations, Blair and Sitcum Waterways, Commencement Bay, Puget Sound, Washington and SS CAPE ORLANDO, SS CAPE ISABELA, SS CAPE INSCRIPTION [CGD13-04-006] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8109. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Patapsco River; Baltimore, Maryland [COTP Baltimore 04-001] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8110. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zones; Charleston Harbor, Cooper River, S.C. [COTP Charleston-04-018] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8111. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Charleston, SC [COTP Charleston 04-034] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8112. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Gulf Intracoastal Waterway Mile Marker 539, Ingleside, TX [COTP Corpus Christi-03-007] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8113. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Corpus Christi Ship Channel, Port Aransas, TX [COTP Corpus Christi-04-001] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8114. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations; University of Miami Crew Regatta, Indian Creek, Miami Beach, FL [CGD07-04-016] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8115. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; U.S. Navy Underwater Detonation Operation North of Glass Breakwater, Guam [COTP Guam 04-003] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8116. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations; Miami Beach Winter Sprints, Miami, FL [CGD07-04-004] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8117. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; USCGC ALDER (WLB 216) Launch, Menominee River, Marinette, Wisconsin. [CGD09-04-002] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8118. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations; Department of Homeland Security Anniversary Boat Parade, Port of Miami, Miami, FL [CGD07-04-020] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

8119. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, USCG, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Captain of the Port Detroit Zone, Renaissance Center. [CGD09-04-007] (RIN: 2115-AA00) received April 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

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. YOUNG of Alaska: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 3879. A bill to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal year 2005, to amend various laws administered by the Coast Guard, and for other purposes; with amendments (Rept. 108–482). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. SESSIONS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 637. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4275) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the 10-percent individual income tax rate bracket (Rept. 108–483). Referred to the House Calendar.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 638. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4279) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the disposition of unused health benefits in cafeteria plans and flexible spending arrangements; for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4280) to improve patient access to health care services and provide improved medical care by reducing the excessive burden the liability system places on health care delivery system; and for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4281) to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to improve access and choice for entrepreneurs with small business with respect to medical care for their employees (Rept. 108–484). 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. HUNTER (for himself and Mr. COX):

H.R. 4322. A bill to provide for the establishment of the headquarters for the Department of Homeland Security in the District of Columbia, to require the transfer of administrative jurisdiction over the Nebraska Avenue Naval Complex in the District of Columbia to serve as the location for the headquarters, to facilitate the acquisition by the Department of the Navy of suitable replacement facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. HUNTER (for himself, Mr. SKELTON, and Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia):

H.R. 4323. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide rapid acquisition authority to the Secretary of Defense to respond to combat emergencies; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia (for himself, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, and Mr. MURPHY):

H.R. 4324. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to eliminate the provisions limiting certain election opportunities available to individuals participating in the Thrift Savings Plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. LEE, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, and Mr. OBEY):

H.R. 4325. A bill to guarantee for all Americans quality, affordable, and comprehensive health insurance coverage; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. BURGESS:

H.R. 4326. A bill to authorize an outpatient clinic to be established in Denton, Texas, for the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CLAY (for himself, Mr. AKIN, Mr. GEPHARDT, Mr. SKELTON, Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri, Mr. GRAVES, Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. EMERSON, and Mr. HULSHOF):

H.R. 4327. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7450 Natural Bridge Road in St. Louis, Missouri, as the ''Vitilas 'Veto' Reid Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. FORBES:

H.R. 4328. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on 3-Cyclohexene-1-carboxylic acid, 6-@(di-2-propenylamino)carbonyl@-,(1R,6R)-rel-, reaction products with pentafluoroiodoethane-tetrefluoroethylene telomer, ammonium salt; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FORBES:

H.R. 4329. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Glycine, N,N-Bis@2-hydroxy-3-(2-propenyloxy)propyl@-, monosodium salt, reaction products with ammonium hydroxide and pentafluoroiodoethane-tetrafluoroethylyene telomer; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FORBES:

H.R. 4330. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on 5,5-bis@(y,w-perfluoroC4-20alkylthio)methyl@-2-hydroxy-2-oxo -1,3,2-dioxaphosphorinane, ammonium salt and 2,2-bis@(y,w-perfluoroC4-20alkylthio)methyl@-3-hydroxy proply phosphate, di-ammonium salt and Di-@2,2-bis@(y,w-perfluoroC4-20alkylthio)methyl@@-3-hydroxy proply phosphate, ammonium salt and 2,2-bis@(y,w-perfluoroC4-20alkylthio)methyl@-1,3-di-(dihydro genphosphate)-propane, tetra-ammonium salt; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FORBES:

H.R. 4331. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on 1(3H)-Isobenzofuranone, 3,3-bis(2-methyl-1-octyl-1H-indol-3-yl)-; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GIBBONS (for himself, Mr. PORTER, and Ms. BERKLEY):

H.R. 4332. A bill to provide for the proper development of Federal lands in Clark County, Nevada, to best promote public welfare and economic development consistent with surrounding airport usage; to the Committee on Resources.

By Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon (for herself, Mr. STENHOLM, Mr. CASE, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. FARR, Mr. HOEFFEL, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. SANDLIN, Mr. TOWNS, and Ms. LEE):

H.R. 4333. A bill to provide for homeland security grant coordination and simplification, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security (Select), and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, the Judiciary, Energy and Commerce, and Science, 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 Mrs. KELLY (for herself and Mr. SWEENEY):

H.R. 4334. A bill to establish a Tick-Borne Disorders Advisory Committee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York (for herself, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. ISRAEL):

H.R. 4335. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for a program of screenings and education regarding children with sudden cardiac arrhythmia syndromes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4336. A bill to amend part C of title XVIII of the Social Security Act to prohibit the operation of the Medicare comparative cost adjustment (CCA) program in the District of Columbia; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. PEARCE:

H.R. 4337. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, relating to the assurance required of owners and operators of airports with respect to long-term leases for construction of hangars; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. PLATTS (for himself, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. AKIN, Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin, Mr. ROSS, Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, and Mr. GRIJALVA):

H.R. 4338. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that the credit for adoption expenses shall be permanent and to repeal the 5-year limitation on carryforwards of unused credit; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PLATTS (for himself, Mr. FROST, Mr. WYNN, Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky):

H.R. 4339. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow volunteer firefighters a deduction for personal safety clothing; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SWEENEY (for himself and Mr. MCNULTY):

H.R. 4340. A bill to require investigations by institutions of higher education of violent felonies occurring on campus; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska (for himself and Mr. OBERSTAR):

H. Con. Res. 420. Concurrent resolution applauding the men and women who keep America moving and recognizing National Transportation Week; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. MCGOVERN (for himself and Mr. LEACH):

H. Res. 636. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives encouraging the active engagement of the United States in world affairs and urging the Secretary of State to coordinate with implementing partners to create an online database of international exchange programs and related opportunities; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. SESSIONS:

H. Res. 637. A resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4275) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the 10-percent individual income tax rate bracket.

By Ms. PRYCE of Ohio:

H. Res. 638. A resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4279) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the disposition of unused health benefits in cafeteria plans and flexible spending arrangements; for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4280) to improve patient access to health care services and provide improved medical care by reducing the excessive burden the liability system places on the health care delivery system; and for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4281) to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to improve access and choice for entrepreneurs with small businesses with respect to medical care for their employees.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 25: Mr. GOSS and Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 63: Mr. SIMMONS.
H.R. 66: Mr. SIMMONS.
H.R. 117: Mr. TERRY.
H.R. 218: Mr. CHANDLER.
H.R. 371: Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. DICKS, and Ms. LEE.
H.R. 450: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 463: Mr. MCCOTTER.
H.R. 504: Mr. MORAN of Virginia.
H.R. 770: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
H.R. 857: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
H.R. 996: Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. BONNER, Mr. GRAVES, and Mr. HOSTETTLER.
H.R. 997: Mr. HEFLEY.
H.R. 1057: Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. HINCHEY, and Mr. SNYDER.
H.R. 1101: Mr. COOPER.
H.R. 1120: Mr. BOSWELL.
H.R. 1231: Mr. STARK.
H.R. 1258: Ms. DEGETTE.
H.R. 1288: Mr. ROSS and Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H.R. 1306: Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 1414: Mr. UDALL of Colorado.
H.R. 1478: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H.R. 1613: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ACEVEDO-VILA, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. JEFFERSON, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. MAJETTE, Mr. REYES, and Mr. FORD.
H.R. 1653: Mr. DEMINT.
H.R. 1735: Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. CALVERT, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 1811: Mr. MCCOTTER and Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 1935: Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 1981: Mr. ACEVEDO-VILA.
H.R. 2213: Ms. SOLIS.
H.R. 2323: Mr. MCHUGH.
H.R. 2404: Mr. YOUNG of Florida.
H.R. 2490: Ms. WOOLSEY.
H.R. 2525: Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California.
H.R. 2728: Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina.
H.R. 2729: Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina.
H.R. 2730: Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina.
H.R. 2731: Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina.
H.R. 2759: Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 2773: Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. GREEN of Texas, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
H.R. 2801: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. WATSON, and Mr. FILNER.

H.R. 2821: Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland and Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico.
H.R. 2929: Mr. GONZALEZ.
H.R. 2933: Mr. OSBORNE.
H.R. 2967: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.
H.R. 3000: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3103: Mr. SHAYS.
H.R. 3309: Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA and Mr. PASTOR.
H.R. 3313: Mr. DEMINT, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. HERGER, Mr. POMBO, Mr. HALL, and Mr. KINGSTON.
H.R. 3352: Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 3378: Mr. ENGEL, Mr. CRENSHAW, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 3424: Mr. WEINER, Ms. WATSON, and Mr. GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 3425: Mr. KIND, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. DELAHUNT.
H.R. 3459: Ms. DELAURO, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 3473: Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. HOLDEN.
H.R. 3474: Mr. BURR and Mr. FOLEY
H.R. 3545: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 3573: Mr. BURTON of Indiana.
H.R. 3582: Mr. WATT.
H.R. 3602: Mr. BAKER, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Mr. PLATTS.
H.R. 3609: Mr. CRANE.
H.R. 3615: Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WYNN, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. EMANUEL, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. WEXLER.
H.R. 3716: Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. MILLER of Florida, and Mr. COBLE.
H.R. 3739: Mr. FOLEY.
H.R. 3777: Mr. HOEKSTRA.
H.R. 3779: Mr. WEXLER.
H.R. 3795: Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. OSBORNE, and Mr. MENENDEZ.
H.R. 3798: Mr. UDALL of Colorado.
H.R. 3802: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois and Mr. ABERCROMBIE.
H.R. 3815: Mr. KILDEE and Mr. GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 3831: Mr. FERGUSON.
H.R. 3832: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 3849: Mr. SMITH of Washington and Mr. UDALL of New Mexico.
H.R. 3880: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
H.R. 3881: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. SNYDER, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. ISRAEL, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. MCINTYRE, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H.R. 3927: Mr. ROTHMAN.
H.R. 3951: Mr. BERRY.
H.R. 3952: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, Mr. NEY, and Mr. BURGESS.
H.R. 3956: Mr. WEINER.
H.R. 3963: Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 3965: Mr. LANTOS, Ms. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. WYNN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. GREEN of Texas, and Mr. ACEVEDO-VILA.
H.R. 3974: Ms. LEE.
H.R. 3980: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 3988: Mr. JEFFERSON, Ms. LEE, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. MEEKS of New York, and Mr. GUTIERREZ.
H.R. 4011: Mr. BALLENGER, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. EVANS.
H.R. 4039: Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 4057: Mrs. BIGGERT.
H.R. 4067: Mr. LANTOS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. CLAY, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 4101: Mr. CASE, Mr. SABO, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4155: Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. LAMPSON, Mr. NADLER, and Mrs. MALONEY.
H.R. 4156: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 4182: Mr. LEVIN and Mr. MENENDEZ.
H.R. 4187: Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire.
H.R. 4204: Mr. ACEVEDO-VILA.
H.R. 4205: Mrs. BONO.
H.R. 4206: Mr. BOEHLERT and Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 4233: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER and Mr. ALEXANDER.
H.R. 4235: Mr. MCNULTY and Mr. WEXLER.
H.R. 4260: Mr. ACEVEDO-VILA, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. CASE, and Mr. SANDERS.
H.R. 4275: Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. WOLF, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. GILCHREST, Mr. WELLER, Mr. FORBES, Mr. BEAUPREZ, Mr. GILLMOR, Mr. TERRY, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. BOEHLERT, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. HART, Mr. KNOLLENBERG, Mr. BOEHNER, Mr. PENCE, Mr. KELLER, and Mr. PUTNAM.
H.R. 4279: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. CRANE, Mr. MCINNIS, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. BOEHNER, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. PAUL, Mr. MILLER of Florida, and Mr. CANTOR.
H.R. 4280: Mr. SHAYS, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. CRANE, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. MCINNIS, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. BURNS, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. MURTHA, Mr. PITTS, Mr. BOEHNER, Mr. KELLER, Mr. GOODE, and Mr. HAYWORTH.
H.R. 4281: Mr. SHAYS, Mr. KOLBE, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. CRANE, Mr. BALLENGER, Mr. GREENWOOD, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. MCINNIS, Mr. BURGESS, and Mr. KELLER.
H.R. 4284: Mr. HAYWORTH.
H.R. 4295: Mr. MORAN of Kansas.
H.R. 4313: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, and Mr. KUCINICH.
H.J. Res. 62: Mr. RANGEL.
H.J. Res. 91: Mr. DINGELL, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, and Mr. MCCOTTER.
H.J. Res. 93: Mr. SKELTON.
H. Con. Res. 247: Mr. BAKER.
H. Con. Res. 257: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida and Mr. BURGESS.
H. Con. Res. 311: Mr. KING of New York.
H. Con. Res. 319: Mr. HONDA and Mr. GORDON.
H. Con. Res. 356: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H. Con. Res. 363: Mr. GALLEGLY.
H. Con. Res. 366: Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H. Con. Res. 381: Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire, Mr. ANDREWS, and Mr. ROTHMAN.
H. Con. Res. 392: Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. HOLT, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ALLEN, and Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.
H. Con. Res. 403: Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. EVANS, and Mr. SCHIFF.
H. Con. Res. 409: Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. KIND, Mr. RADANOVICH, and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
H. Con. Res. 410: Mr. PAYNE.
H. Con. Res. 414: Mr. RYUN of Kansas, Mr. COX, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia, and Mr. BROWN of South Carolina.
H. Res. 103: Mr. MCCOTTER.
H. Res. 142: Mr. HONDA.
H. Res. 466: Mr. CASE and Mr. ROTHMAN.
H. Res. 550: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DOYLE, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. DINGELL, and Mr. BELL.
H. Res. 573: Mr. LEVIN, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. CAMP, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. DINGELL.
H. Res. 596: Mr. HUNTER.
H. Res. 604: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. LANTOS.
H. Res. 608: Mr. GOODE, Mr. SCHROCK, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. NEY, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. VITTER, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. HAYES, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. PORTER, Mr. BURNS, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. COX, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, and Mr. PETRI.
H. Res. 612: Mr. SCHROCK and Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia.
H. Res. 613: Mr. MORGAN of Virginia, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. ROYCE, and Mr. WOLF.
H. Res. 615: Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. BURR, Mr. FILNER, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. BROWN of South Carolina.
H. Res. 616: Mr. KING of New York.
H. Res. 617: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, and Mr. SAXTON.
H. Res. 622: Mr. PORTER.
H. Res. 625: Mr. COX.
H. Res. 626: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.