

inviting that he decided to re-enlist and serve in the Air Force as a lifelong career.

Ray was well aware of the dangers that he would have to endure during his time in Iraq. He had to deal with being away from his family and friends. It was especially hard since Ray had to spend Thanksgiving and Christmas apart from his family and his wife and his young children for the first time. To cope with tough times, Ray would often make jokes to his family while he was away, saying that he was one of the lucky ones.

A firefighter based at Dyess Air Force Base near Abilene, Texas, Ray lost his life trying to rescue fellow soldiers that had fallen into a canal while their particular Humvee flipped over. Ray's mother was told that her son was the first to jump in the water to help the soldiers, and his selflessness in this act demonstrates the best a person can be.

Ray Rangel is the first Air Force member from South Texas killed in Iraq. He is also the ninth U.S. service member from the San Antonio area and the 42nd from South Texas killed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Ray's parents remember that despite criticism leveled at President Bush over the U.S. occupation of Iraq, Rangel did not want his family to be bitter if he got hurt or killed. He would often remind his family that he loved his country and he wanted to serve the best that he could.

Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to have had this time to honor Staff Sergeant Ray Rangel, a true hero that exemplifies the noblest qualities of the human spirit.

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

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

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.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL).

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

There was no objection.

WAR FUNDING ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from California (Mr. CARDOZA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for the War Funding Accountability Act, a bill that has been endorsed by the Blue Dog Coalition, a group of moderate to conservative Democrats with reputations for being fiscal and defense hawks. The members of the Blue Dog Coalition are some of the most pro-defense, pro-military Members of Congress, from either party. We are dedicated to seeing our troops achieve success in Iraq and Afghanistan and we applaud the Iraqi people for their recent election success.

The War Funding Accountability Act, sponsored by the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON), is about those troops, the dedicated men and women of the United States Armed Forces who put their lives on the line every single day to defend our way of life.

Mr. Speaker, I believe, as people across our Nation believe, that we must provide our men and women in uniform the resources they need to complete their mission as safely and securely as possible. Our military has performed brilliantly, protecting civilians, maintaining order and promoting democracy while facing threats and guerilla-style attacks every single day. My support for our troops is unwavering, and for that reason I have supported the supplemental requests that have come before this Congress. However, the job of Congress is to make sure that the money we are spending in Iraq is going to the appropriate places, going to our troops to keep our Nation's sons and daughters out of harm's way. We must make sure this job gets done right and gets done as soon as humanly possible.

So until all of our troops are withdrawn from Iraq, we need an accurate accounting method of where the money is being spent so that we can make sure our soldiers are adequately equipped and prepared. Accountability is not only patriotic, it is often determining of success or failure. If our troops do not have proper equipment, such as vehicles without armor plating, rather than them scrounging for scrap metal for do-it-yourself armor plating, we as Members of Congress can and should do something about it by re-directing the money.

The Department of Defense has received \$201 billion to date for the war on terrorism. While they have provided an allocation of some of these funds, they have not given Congress a full accounting. The White House has announced today that it will request \$81 billion more for these operations in its fiscal year 2005 wartime supplemental, including \$75 billion for the DOD. In addition, the Congressional Budget Office has estimated that the costs for the war could approach \$500 billion between this year and the year 2015.

There have been reports of wasteful spending. One private contractor, for example, overcharged DOD by \$61 mil-

lion to import gasoline into Iraq from Kuwait where the government agency provided the same service for less than one-third the price.

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The same contractor reportedly charged taxpayers \$10,000 a day for unauthorized and unnecessary expenses at the Kuwait Hilton, even though the same people could have stayed in air-conditioned tents like those used by our troops for less than \$600 per day. The entire justification for having private companies is that contractors can supposedly save the taxpayers money, not cost the taxpayers dollars.

With the War Accountability Act we have an opportunity to regain the oversight voice that has been lost for too long.

Congress should not give up its oversight powers, Mr. Speaker, the power of the purse. And it should not write the Defense Department a blank check. The President needs to be held accountable for where our money is going. This is a responsibility that we have to the men and women serving in combat, to their parents, and to all American taxpayers who are footing the bill to ensure that the billions of dollars in supplemental funds are going to be spent in the most effective and efficient way possible.

I hope all of my colleagues will stand with the Blue Dog Coalition and start to support the War Funding Accountability Act, an act for America.

PRESIDENT BUSH'S FISCAL YEAR 2006 BUDGET

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, when President Bush submitted his budget to Congress last week, he said it represented his values and his priorities. If that is indeed the case we really should question both.

One really has to wonder if this budget document represents his priorities. You will remember 2 weeks ago during his State of the Union address, President Bush spent the majority of that speech talking about his Social Security privatization plan and the continued war in Iraq. Supposedly these were his priorities for the upcoming year.

And yet the President did not include the additional \$80 billion needed to fund the Iraq war or the trillions that will be needed over the next decade to fund his costly Social Security privatization proposal in his budget.

Mr. Speaker, it is impossible for the President to reverse our Nation's fiscal collapse if he continues to send incomplete budgets to Capitol Hill. The President can say that he is going to cut the Federal deficit in half in several years; but the fact is, that cannot happen if the President does not send us an honest budget.