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No. 97

## House of Representatives

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

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,  
July 18, 2005.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM PRICE 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 4, 2005, 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 Florida (Mr. STEARNS) for 5 minutes.

### THROUGH FOGGY LONDON TOWN THE SUN WAS SHINING EVERYWHERE

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express sorrow and solidarity for the London subway and the bus bombing of Thursday, July 7.

I also wish to express my incredulity at the continued brazenness of the pockets of terrorists who attack non-combatants, civilians, and commuters going about their everyday lives.

Certainly, the murder of civilians for political statement did not just begin on September 11, 2001. Nearly 20 years

ago, my colleagues, October 1985, four Palestinian terrorists shot Leon Klinghoffer, a retired disabled appliance manufacturer of New York. He was peacefully celebrating his wedding anniversary on a cruise ship on the *Achille Lauro*.

They then threw him overboard in his wheelchair. He was still alive. And his wife, Marilyn, watched in horror as did all civilized people.

Today's terrorists are pursuing a distinct route. They are increasingly attacking civilians in symbolic targets, such as those of economic importance, or venues of bustling life like public transportation or entertainment, like nightclubs. From New York, Arlington, and Pennsylvania, to Morocco, Istanbul, Bali, Madrid, London, and this week in Kusadasi, a popular beach resort in Turkey, where a bomb on a tour bus killed five and wreaked havoc.

Indeed, this approach of disrupting commerce has been advocated by bin Ladin in his recent recorded speeches. In his videotaped speech to the American people last November, on the eve of the United States elections, he boasted of "The success of the bleeding until bankruptcy plan."

Well, they are failing because the markets are resilient. Markets rebounded quickly from morning jitters after the London Thursday terrorist bombing. By week's end, stock markets had more than recovered from the initial sell-off, while oil prices fell back below \$60. The markets had become injured to the effects of the terrorist attacks.

Fundamentalist terrorists are slipping in combating other so-called evils to their way of thinking. First, they think a woman's place is under wraps, both physically, financially, and figuratively. Well, today women are prominent leaders in two formerly oppressed nations. Dr. Massouda Jalal is Afghanistan's Minister of Women's Affairs. In Iraq that position is held by Narmin Othman.

Another defeat for terrorists? Some of them decry technological innovation as instruments of consumerism and capitalism. And yet even as the debris fell on Londoners, the images of the carnage were captured immediately by bystanders and even victims themselves on cell phone cameras. This is happening in Communist China too, where it is even harder for autocrats to quell protests, as the dissenters can broadcast it around the world. The message to take from this technology exposes, shares and liberates all of us.

Why do they harm us? Maim us? Obviously they dislike our way of life, our freedoms, our opportunities our joys, our liberties and our freedom of religion, and they kill with no particular target. On September 11, the murders of World Trade Center employees and visitors took the lives of numerous nationalities, ethnic groups and religious followers.

As London's mayor, Ken Livingstone, said, "The London bombings were aimed at ordinary working class Londoners, black and white, Muslim and Christians, Hindu and Jew, young and old, it was indiscriminate slaughter."

How bittersweet that just the day before, they celebrated the selection of their city to host the Olympic Games, the very showcase of multiethnic excellence and talents.

In the days last week, I recalled a song by the great American composers, the Gershwin Brothers. The song appeared in the 1937 film, *A Damsel in Distress*. The song is by Americans, the movie and screenplay is a product of notable campy British writer, P.G. Wodehouse.

What a delightful combination of American and English artists. The song is *A Foggy Day in London Town*. I thought it was appropriate and I will give it this afternoon in recognition of the pain that they feel in London. "A foggy day in London Town had me low,

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g.,  1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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had me down. I viewed the morning with much alarm, the British Museum, had lost its charm. How long I wondered could this thing last, but the age of miracles had not passed. For suddenly, I saw you there, and through foggy London Town, the sun was shining everywhere."

I offer to you, our ally, our partner, our friend, as long as you in England and we in the United States continue to show strength and resolve against enemies of our peace and prosperity and our freedom, both on our soil, and in foggy London Town, and lands of all people, the sun is shining and will be shining everywhere.

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#### RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 37 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

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□ 1400

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan) at 2 p.m.

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#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Often when we are called to prayer, Lord, we bow our heads and close our eyes. We do this out of reverence and close the windows of this world to focus our attention on the spiritual, which cannot be seen.

But when Your spirit quickens our spirit within, Your holiness penetrates our being and illumines everything around us. For this reason, prayer is truly an awakening. Our minds and hearts are lifted and we become more aware of sin and grace within us and around us.

Prayer itself helps us face the tasks of the day and the problems to be solved with new determination and the gift of creation of new possibilities. Therefore, send Your spirit of prayer upon the House of Representatives today, this week, and forever. Amen.

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#### THE JOURNAL

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

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

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#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. FOXX 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.

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#### CONGRATULATIONS TO OFFICER ANDREW PHILLIPS

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Marietta police officer Andrew Phillips. On July 13 he received the National Public Safety Medal of Valor from President Bush at a White House ceremony. Officer Phillips is the first officer from Georgia to receive the award, the Nation's highest accolade for bravery.

The award was created by the U.S. Justice Department, and it honors public safety workers who show exceptional courage in the line of duty.

Officer Phillips was recognized for saving the lives of two fellow officers last year after they were shot upon entering a house with a search warrant. Instead of retreating, Phillips returned gunfire until the man threw down his weapon and surrendered.

As an officer on the Narcotics Task Force, Officer Phillips is the epitome of the kind of courageous and valiant men and women we want on our police forces. I thank him for going to work every day and putting his life on the line for all of us. It is because of his type of heroic actions that we all feel protected in our communities.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to say Officer Phillips is from Georgia's Sixth District. He is a leader in our community, and I am thrilled to honor his service and his accomplishments. Congratulations, Officer Phillips.

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#### THE PEOPLE OF ALEXANDER COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA HAVE PLENTY TO CELEBRATE

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Paragon Films, Incorporated, which is scheduled to open a new 40,000-square foot manufacturing facility in Alexander County, North Carolina, in October.

The company, which is the sixth largest manufacturer of stretch film products in America, will create 25 new jobs during its first 2 years of operation and will invest \$10 million into the county. Paragon Films predicts that within 8 to 10 years it will produce \$100 million in revenue and employ 150 people.

Madam Speaker, I am confident that Paragon Films is making a wise investment and am pleased they are bringing a high-quality company with great ca-

reer opportunities to the hard-working people in Alexander County.

I am also impressed by the values of this company. Paragon plans to establish a Paragon for Christ trust fund shortly after opening to help reach those who are in need. The company's president and CEO, Mike Baab, said, "We take care of people. If your focus is on the almighty dollar, then you lose sight of the people."

Madam Speaker, the people of Alexander County have plenty to celebrate.

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#### PASSING CAFTA IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO

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

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, this morning I heard on National Public Radio a report of a survey, a bipartisan survey, that was conducted in which people were saying that while they feel good about their own economic situation, they are less optimistic about the overall economy.

I think it is very important for us to note that the underlying figures that we have, as well as empirical evidence, show that we have a very strong, bold, and dynamic economy that has been brought about, in large part, due to the tax cuts proposed by President Bush and that we in this Republican Congress have implemented.

We now have an unemployment rate of 5 percent, which is lower than the average for the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s; a 3.8 percent gross domestic product growth, and 146,000 jobs created in the last month. That is a number that has been continuing to grow, and we need to recognize that it has been our policies that have created that.

We have on the horizon a very important issue in the coming days that we are going to be voting on, and that is a market-opening opportunity for us with passage of the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

The world has access to the U.S. consumer market, Madam Speaker, and unfortunately, because of the tariff structure, and a tariff is a tax, we are unable to sell into other parts of the world. Ninety-four percent of the world's consumers are outside of our border.

We need to do everything we can to pass the CAFTA so that we, immediately upon implementation of it, will see 80 percent of our products get into these Central American countries tariff-free. It is the right thing for the American consumer, and it is the right thing for political stability in this hemisphere.

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#### SOUTHWESTERN BREEDS FUTURE LEADERS

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, this weekend, I had a really wonderful opportunity. The Southwestern Company of Nashville, Tennessee, a company that I worked with through my college years and then as soon as I graduated from college, celebrated their 150th anniversary.

What we did was bring together alums of this great company for a reunion. We had a great time. Our focus was on the principles and the skills that Southwestern teaches that have not only made it a great company, but have also added to this country's free enterprise system.

We talked about how this is a company that builds character in young people. It builds the skills that are necessary to become entrepreneurs: tenacity, perseverance, self-reliance, vision, how to be self-reliant in your business, to be small business people, to build an understanding that hard work pays off, and that you should seek risk and the rewards that go with that risk.

This is all an understanding of free enterprise and how free enterprise works.

Madam Speaker, this Nation has the best, the greatest free enterprise system on the face of the planet. That is why we have seen 146,000 jobs created, we have had 25 consecutive months of economic growth, and unemployment is at near historic lows.

Madam Speaker, I commend the Southwestern Company, and I commend the small business people and entrepreneurs of this great Nation who build this free enterprise system.

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#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

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#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 3 p.m.

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□ 1500

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina) at 3 o'clock p.m.

#### RECOGNIZING 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF ESTABLISHMENT OF VET- ERANS ADMINISTRATION

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 361) recognizing the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Veterans Administration on July 21, 1930.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 361

Whereas in the history of the United States, more than 48,000,000 citizen-soldiers have served the Nation in uniform, of whom more than 1,000,000 gave their lives as a consequence of their duties;

Whereas as of July 21, 2005, there are more than 25,000,000 living veterans;

Whereas the Nation's obligation to its veterans is encapsulated in the following words of President Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, delivered on March 4, 1865, ". . . to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan";

Whereas on July 21, 1930, President Herbert Hoover issued an executive order creating a new agency, the Veterans Administration, to "consolidate and coordinate Government activities affecting war veterans";

Whereas on October 25, 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed into law the Department of Veterans Affairs Act (Public Law 100-527) under which, effective as of March 15, 1989, the Veterans Administration was established as an executive department and redesignated as the Department of Veterans Affairs, with the mission of providing Federal benefits to veterans and their families; and

Whereas in 2005, the 230,000 employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs continue the tradition of their predecessors, caring for the Nation's veterans with dedication and compassion and upholding the high standards required of them as stewards of the public's gratitude to those veterans: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Veterans' Administration; and

(2) acknowledges the achievements of the employees of the Veterans Administration and the Department of Veterans Affairs and commends them for their contributions to the Nation's veterans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN).

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

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 361 recognizes the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Veterans Administration, the forerunner of today's Department of Veterans Affairs, that will be observed on Thursday of this week.

Throughout the history of the United States, more than 48 million men and women have served America well and faithfully in military uniform. More than 1 million made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom, and 25 million veterans are living among us today. These men and women selflessly set aside their civilian lives to put on the uniform and serve us.

The Nation's obligation to its defenders is as old as the Nation itself. Thomas Jefferson noted in 1809 that "the care of human life is the first and only legitimate object of good government." And in his second inaugural address in 1865, President Abraham Lincoln clearly expressed the obligation "to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan."

On July 21, 1930, pursuant to a congressional authorization, President Hoover issued an executive order to "consolidate and coordinate Government activities affecting war veterans," creating the Veterans Administration. The new agency was charged with ensuring that America's veterans received the benefits and services they had earned from their military service.

The Department of Veterans Affairs was subsequently created from the Veterans Administration on March 15, 1989, when President Ronald Reagan signed P.L. 100-527, the Department of Veterans Affairs Act. Today, the 230,000 public servants of the Department of Veterans Affairs continue in the noble tradition of their predecessors to carry out the words of Jefferson and Lincoln by serving veterans and their families.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution would not only recognize the anniversary of the VA as an organization, but it would also acknowledge and commend the achievements and contributions of the men and women who have dedicated themselves to the mission of the VA. In war and in peace, they have always been there for our veterans to provide them the benefits, the care, and the support of a grateful country.

These are the men and women who man the phones at the call centers, work the claims, provide high-quality medical care, and keep the cemeteries looking like national shrines. They are the real VA, and too often we forget to thank them for their dedicated work.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) for his remarks, and I rise also in support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, 3 days from now the Department of Veterans Affairs, formerly called the Veterans Administration, will mark 7½ decades as a government agency. But the measure before us is not just to acknowledge a mere milestone of existence. On July 21, we will recognize 75 years of a consolidated, organized and formal national effort to carry out what I and many others believe is our most noble mission, to care for those, as Lincoln said, who have borne the battle and for their dependents and survivors. That is why we strongly support H. Res. 361.

More than half of the citizen soldiers who have ever served in uniform in the Nation's lifetime are living today. That is 25 million living veterans to whom we owe the greatest debt, our freedom for their sacrifices. This measure

serves to recognize the significance of this debt while acknowledging the agency that is responsible for administering the benefits and services intended to help repay it.

Many Americans might not realize that the Department of Veterans Affairs, its health care system and other programs, are in fact a national resource for all Americans, veterans and nonveterans alike. It is in fact a national treasure. Nationally, VA's health care system has become what one prestigious medical journal called "a bright star" within the U.S. health care industry.

With more than 1,300 sites of care, VA operates the largest integrated health care system in the country. VA facilities provide a broad spectrum of medical, surgical, and rehabilitative care. It manages the largest medical education and health professions training program in our country. Each year, about 83,000 health professionals are trained in our VA medical centers. More than half of the physicians practicing in the United States had some of their professional education in the VA health care system. In fact, three recipients of the Nobel Prize in medicine were VA doctors.

While providing high-quality health care to the Nation's veterans, VA also conducts an array of research on some of the most difficult challenges facing medical science today. They have become a world leader in such research areas as aging, women's health, AIDS, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other mental health issues.

VA researchers played key roles in developing the cardiac pacemaker, the CT scan, and improvements in artificial limbs. The first liver transplant in the world was performed by a VA surgeon researcher. VA clinical trials established the effectiveness of new treatments for tuberculosis, schizophrenia, and high blood pressure. In fact, my brother, an anesthesiologist, participated in one of the first open heart surgeries in the world at the VA Medical Center in LaJolla, CA.

We know that VA research has improved medical care for veterans and the Nation. It also has a fourth critical mission: it serves as a backup to the Department of Defense during national emergencies and is a Federal support organization during major disasters.

The VA also helps repay the debt to our veterans by administering disability compensation to those disabled by injury or disease incurred or aggravated during their active military service, and pension benefits to veterans with low incomes who are permanently and totally disabled. Spouses, children, and parents of deceased veterans also receive these benefits.

There is one group, however, that does not receive these benefits: those who fought for us during World War II who were Filipinos and drafted into our armed services. They fought a great battle. They had to surrender after the Battle of Bataan and Corregidor, but

they slowed up the Japanese advance for many months and allowed America to prepare. When General MacArthur returned to the Philippines, it was the actions of the Filipino guerillas that had weakened the Japanese forces there and allowed us to regain the Pacific and finally win World War II. We are still struggling to give those veterans, whom we promised benefits when they were drafted in the 1940s, their benefits today. Sixty years later, they have still not achieved equity. We will continue to try to do so.

Since 1944 when the first GI bill began, more than 21 million veterans, servicemembers and family members, have received \$72 billion in GI benefits for education and training. That number includes 7.5 million veterans from World War II, including my father. We bought the first home we could afford to live in in 1950 because of the GI bill that my father was entitled to after his service in World War II. We had the American Dream. For the first time after living with relatives, we had our own home, and we were able to move on with education and achieve what we all call the American Dream.

Not only veterans from World War II, but 2½ million veterans from the Korean War and over 8 million post-Korean and Vietnam era veterans, plus active duty personnel. The VA has also assisted in the education of more than 700,000 dependents of veterans whose deaths or total disabilities were service connected.

The GI bill has helped veterans purchase homes. With a total of \$866 billion for loan guarantees, many people have called the GI bill the most important piece of legislation ever passed due to its impact on the economic, cultural, industrial, educational, and moral framework of our society.

Mr. Speaker, the VA is a strategic, vital national resource in responding to the needs of veterans and also in responding to the needs of the Nation.

Established in 1930 by President Hoover, the Veterans Administration officially became a member of the President's cabinet on March 16, 1989. It was at that precise moment, as our renowned and beloved former chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, Sonny Montgomery from Mississippi remarked, that veterans were allowed to enter the front door of the White House rather than being relegated to standing hat in hand at the back door.

Mr. Speaker, it is right that we honor the institution, its purpose, and its staff members who provide so much care to our veterans on this day.

However, I would have preferred the cash rather than the proclamation. It is regretful that as we commemorate the establishment of the VA, we should be in the midst of a battle to restore adequate funding. Veterans were given the opportunity to approach the front door of the White House. Today, the Office of Management Budget and that same White House have chosen to turn off the lights, draw the curtains, and

pretend no one is ringing the bell. Begrudgingly, in the last 3 weeks after the revelation that VA health care had been severely underfunded, it has sent two requests to Capitol Hill for supplemental funding which still shows that the OBM and this administration cannot or do not want to comprehend the severity of the shortfall that is denying thousands upon thousands the timely health care that they deserve. This is a strain on the VA system, and it must be fixed quickly.

Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would agree to a unanimous consent request, I would move that we add \$3 billion of supplemental funding right here to his resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair is constrained not to entertain such a unanimous consent request.

Mr. FILNER. Why is that, we cannot help our veterans on this day we are agreeing to a resolution honoring them?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The power to modify the motion rests with the proponent of the motion.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, once again it is out of order to help the veterans of our Nation.

While this resolution, H. Res. 361, is the right thing to do, a more appropriate action would have been for this body, this Congress and this administration, to provide the resources necessary for the 230,000 dedicated employees of the department to do their jobs right and keep this bright star shining without having to struggle to meet the needs of all veterans who seek to enter VA's doors.

Hopefully, that day will come soon with passage of full funding for veterans programs, budget reforms that prevent a recurrence of the current emergencies, and what we would call "guaranteed funding" for veterans rather than have them depend on a discretionary battle every year in this Congress.

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS).

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, and am delighted to be here to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the modern-day Department of Veterans Affairs, and I am here to speak in a positive way on this matter.

I think it has been brought out earlier that it was President Hoover who created the VA by signing executive order 5398. This implemented the legislation. But when we look at this, it did not just begin there. This Nation has always provided the most comprehensive package of benefits and care to our men and women who have served, better, I believe, than any other nation when we look at all of the details.

Reflecting on our Nation's priorities, we have been caring for and compensating our veterans since before we were even the United States. A lot of people do not realize this. Our veterans

benefits began as early as our budding Nation did. In 1636, when the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony were at war with the Pequot Indians, the Pilgrims simply passed a law that members of the colony would provide support for disabled soldiers. We were helping our disabled veterans even back in 1636.

Then the Continental Congress of 1776 offered pensions for soldiers who would become disabled fighting British Redcoats in the Revolutionary War. Lacking both authority and funding, the Continental Congress left it to the different colonies to make good on the promise, and colonies in place offered grants of public land to supplement the promised pensions.

After the U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1789, the very first Congress assumed the responsibility of paying veterans benefits even way back then. However, we still had no Federal benefits program for veterans. Individual States and communities were doing the job rather than the Federal Government. They provided medical and hospital care to veterans in the Republic's early stages. The Civil War ended in 1865 and resulted in almost 2 million veterans on the rolls. Of course being a Federal program, only veterans who had fought for the Union forces were eligible at that time.

□ 1515

In 1958 Congress pardoned and extended federal benefits to the sole remaining Confederate veteran. That is a little known fact that I think we should be reminded about.

Mr. Speaker, as our Nation fought for freedom and defense in more wars, so grew our obligations of course to meet more needs for our growing veteran population, resulting in institutional care for disabled and indigent veterans of the Civil War, Indian War, Spanish-American War, and Mexican border wars.

Of course, by the 1920s various benefits were administered by three separate government agencies: the Veterans Bureau, the Bureau of Pensions of the Interior Department, and the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. Therefore, in 1930 Congress authorized the President to "consolidate and coordinate government activities affecting war veterans." And that, of course, brings us to the resolution of today.

But it still does not end in 1930: In 1973 we added a National Cemetery system. And on March 15, 1989, President Bush One, George H.W. Bush, was the individual who elevated the Veterans Administration to Cabinet status. No one before him had thought about it. He was the one who initiated it. And it was renamed, of course, the Department of Veterans Affairs. It is third largest and, of course, the most important of the President's Cabinet departments, in my opinion.

For myself I am honored to serve on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs throughout my tenure here in

Congress, almost 16½ years. I have had the opportunity to serve our Nation's veterans as Chair of the Health Subcommittee in the 105th and 106th Congress, and, of course, I am proud to be a veteran myself and the son of a World War II veteran who fought in Iwo Jima. But, above all, I am here today to register gratitude for the 48 million citizen-soldiers who have served this Nation in uniform, 1 million of whom have given the ultimate sacrifice of their lives. So I want to show my admiration for the 230,000 employees who work diligently at the Department of Veterans Affairs. In my congressional district and in the surrounding area, I am proud of the VA employees at the Malcom Randall VA Medical Center; the Community Outpatient Clinics in Leesburg, Ocala, and soon, Summerfield; those who assist our veterans with processing disabilities and education and survivor benefits; and four, last but not least, the National Cemetery employees at Bushnell and soon in Jacksonville, Florida. Each and every one embodies the commitment and compassion that President Abraham Lincoln called "him that shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan."

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

I appreciate the glowing words of the gentlemen from Florida and from Arkansas. We heard glowing words on Memorial Day; on the July 4 holiday; and I guarantee that we will hear them on Veterans Day, November 11. But as I said earlier, I think the veterans and the employees whom we honor today with this resolution would much prefer the cash; that is, adequate funding for the mission in which they are embarked upon. We simply have not done that.

This Congress over the last 3 or 4 years has vastly increased the amount of money to be given to the Veterans Administration. But the demands have increased at an even faster rate: the aging of our veterans, the new diseases that we find like hepatitis C, the new approaches that we have to such disorders as post-traumatic stress disorder, the increasing number of people affected, and inflation, of course, running at 13 to 14 percent a year. The demands have far outpaced the appropriations, even though we have done better over the past decade.

When OMB Director Joshua Bolten testified just last week at the House Committee on the Budget, he actually said that the VA had more money appropriated than was actually needed. Can you imagine that, Mr. Speaker? With waiting lists for months and months and months for services are common, with vacancies that are not being filled, with maintenance and construction efforts delayed for years and years, with adjudication claims taking several years, he says that we had more money in the VA than was actually needed. Let me quote him directly: "The appropriations have exceeded the

VA medical care needs in the preceding 3 years by over half a billion dollars in each of the preceding 3 years." That is a completely irresponsible statement, and if the head of OMB is saying that, we know why this administration is not adequately funding our VA system. To say that we have half a billion more than we need over the last 3 years in each of those last 3 years is irresponsible and not consonant with the facts that we know. How can we say we have as much money as we need when we turn people away from the VA system? We have people now not being encouraged to register because we have no place for them. In my City of San Diego, the VA Medical Center has almost 1,000 people on the waiting list. People wait for a year for a dental appointment; 3, 4, 5, 6 months for other kinds of appointments. We cannot get the nursing care that we need. We cannot do the construction efforts that are needed and the rehabilitation of our aging hospitals and other clinics. To say that we have more money than we need is completely ridiculous, and I would hope that the administration would apologize to the veterans of this Nation for that statement.

We have been engaged in the Congress on the floor, in the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, on the Committee on Appropriations, on the Committee on the Budget for many weeks trying to find what the chairman of our Committee on Veterans' Affairs calls "the right number." The right number. How do we fund the VA health care system? And we had the Secretary of the VA system testify to our committee just a couple weeks ago that it was because they had a bad mathematical model. They are using an outdated mathematical model. It did not account for the war that was going on. I asked for the gentleman's resignation because of that. We do not know a war is going on; so we have a bad mathematical model. That is the second most irresponsible statement I have heard this week, Mr. Bolten's being the most.

In fact, we know how to define the needs of our veterans. We know how to get a right number. Every year all of the veterans groups in America come together to come up with what is called the Independent Budget, a budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs that is arrived at through a very professional, technical, mathematical way to say here is what we need for our veterans. We have underfunded our veterans' care, not overfunded it, as Mr. Bolten says, every year that I have been in this Congress. We have tried to add over time literally billions of dollars that we have short-changed the VA. This year Democrats have tried at every level, whether it was on the Committee on Appropriations, the authorizing committee which I sit on, the floor of this House, the Committee on the Budget, we have tried to bring up motions to adequately fund this year's and last and next year's budget. Every time we were rebuffed by the majority

party. When I tried to bring up the Independent Budget on the authorizing committee, they said we cannot have a vote on that. When they tried to bring it up on the Committee on Appropriations, they were voted down. When they tried to bring it up in the Senate, it was voted down. When I tried to add 3 billion dollars to the health care budget, as I just did earlier today with a unanimous consent request, I was ruled out of order, and when I challenged the ruling of the Chair, on a straight party-line vote we were defeated. I was ruled out of order because I tried to give adequate funding to our health care budget in the VA, adequate funding to the veterans whom we are praising so profusely in today's resolution.

That is wrong, Mr. Speaker, and now the administration has been found out. The Secretary had to announce that they were first \$1 billion short, now \$1.3 billion. They are still searching for the right number. And yet when the Senate actually voted to put \$1.5 billion additional funds in this year's budget, fiscal year 2005, we could have given the veterans that money immediately and had that resolution signed by the President several weeks ago. But what did the chairman of our committee do? He said no, we only can put in \$975 million. That is the right number. So this House passed one number, the Senate passed another number, and we still do not have adequate funding for the veterans today. Veterans are still being turned away. Vacancies are still not being filled. Waiting lists are still being added to. Maintenance needs are still being inadequately addressed. Nursing stations still go unfilled, while we fight because we do not have a "right" number.

Democrats tried to get in fiscal year 2006 the right number. We were denied. Now it appears that the Senate will add a couple billion dollars to their fiscal 2006 budget, and I hope that we follow.

But we are fighting over numbers that should not have to be fought over. We know what the right number is, and we would not have to fight at all if we passed the bill offered by the gentleman from Illinois' (Mr. EVANS), our ranking member, to institute guaranteed medical funding for the VA. That is, take it out of the discretionary budget, and make it a guaranteed part of our budget so we don't have to fight over the "right" number. There would be guaranteed funding for the health care needs of our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, as we look at the brave young men and women whom we honor so much in Iraq and Afghanistan, the President says support our troops, support our troops, support our troops, and yet when they come home the proper support is not there. I know of veterans who have come home probably with post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, lacking the ability to get services or lacking the outreach that is necessary to convince our Marines and

soldiers that they may actually have some mental disorder. We have seen an increase in domestic violence. We have seen an increase in the kinds of societal problems that come from returning veterans with mental disorders, and yet we are not taking the action that we should to meet the needs of these brave young men and women. They may not even get an appointment for months and months and months.

Mr. Speaker, this is wrong. We saw after Vietnam tens of thousands of soldiers returning did not get the proper treatment either physically or mentally. Half of the homeless on the street tonight are Vietnam vets because we did not take care of them the way we should have. We are repeating the same mistake as we look at our brave young men and women returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. They are not getting the care they need. They are not getting the support from our Nation that everybody pays lip service to. We pass resolutions like we do today rather than giving them adequate funding, and we will have the same problems in the coming decade if we do not do it now. This is not the way, Mr. Speaker, to deal with our veterans. Let us pass this resolution today, but let us get adequate funding to the health care budget for both fiscal 2005 and 2006.

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

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

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

I have no further requests for time. I would just again ask all the good gentlemen on the other side, led by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), my friend, let us get this out of the political rhetoric of who has the right number. Let us get these veterans the adequate support they need. Let us pass this resolution but go back to work and provide the cash.

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

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

I would like to thank the gentleman from Indiana (Chairman BUYER) for cosponsoring this resolution and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), ranking member, for his cosponsorship. I also would like to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) for his hard work on this also.

Recently I was in Landstuhl, Germany, and we were there on a NATO parliamentary trip, and I had the opportunity to see a young soldier who had been wounded in Iraq only literally the evening before. I was there at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon; this young man had been injured at about 4 o'clock. They cleaned him up, sent him to Landstuhl, gave him extra good care, as we are demanding of these types of situations. But I got to visit with him right after he came out of recovery. And this young man, literally

he wanted to tell his story. His speech was slurred. He was apologizing to us because he could not speak clearly, but he wanted to tell his story. He told us all about what had happened. And then he said two things: He asked about his wife. He had not been married very long, and he lost both his legs. And we assured him that he would be with his family the next day at Walter Reed or Bethesda. The other thing he asked, he looked up and said, I saw this happen to my buddies. I saw it happen to my friends, other guys in the unit, and I never thought it would happen to me.

□ 1530

Then he looked and said, "You know, do you have the ability to help me walk again?"

I could look him in the face and say, "Absolutely. You are going to get the finest care that is provided anywhere in the world, and we will get you walking again."

Well, the reality is that those kind of things do take money, and we are putting lots of money in the system. The commitment is to put whatever money we need in the system.

Another thing that is happening is my favorite uncle passed away a few weeks ago. He was a World War II veteran, a great patriot, and probably in the last 6 months we have spent more on medical care for him than his entire previous life. Again, he was not injured in battle. He was a guy like one of the guys fighting alongside this injured young man.

So our commitment is to support everybody; the guys that are severely injured in this case, but also the rank and file veteran. I think we are doing a good job of that, and I know in a very bipartisan way we are committed to getting whatever funding it takes.

Right now, health care is in such a state that if you look at Medicare, we have got significant problems there in shoring that up. Medicaid, the same situation, as with private insurance. Our employers cannot absorb 15, 20 percent increases in health care costs each year. We have to do something about the underlying inflation costs in health care. I think again as a Congress we are working in a bipartisan way to do that.

Mr. Speaker, again, I look forward to working with the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and the rest of the committee in a very bipartisan way to put whatever funding that we need to in the health care system for our veterans, and very much so to get back to the business at hand.

I want to thank our Veterans Administration, all of its employees, all of the workers that volunteer on a daily basis that are so important, thank them for their service, and thank them in this very important recognition.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to unanimously support H.R. 361.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina). The question is on the motion offered by the

gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 361.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOOZMAN. 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. Res. 361.

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

There was no objection.

#### CALLING FOR FREE AND FAIR PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 326) calling for free and fair parliamentary elections in the Republic of Azerbaijan, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

##### H. RES. 326

Whereas the Republic of Azerbaijan is scheduled to hold elections for its parliament, the Milli Majlis, in November 2005;

Whereas Azerbaijan has enjoyed a strong relationship with the United States since its independence from the former Soviet Union in 1991;

Whereas international observers monitoring Azerbaijan's October 2003 presidential election found that the pre-election, election day, and post-election environments fell short of international standards;

Whereas the International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) in Baku, Azerbaijan, deployed by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe, found that there were numerous instances of violence by both members of the opposition and government forces;

Whereas the international election observers also found inequality and irregularities in campaign and election conditions, including intimidation of opposition supporters, restrictions on political rallies by opposition candidates, and voting fraud;

Whereas Azerbaijan freely accepted a series of commitments on democracy, human rights, and the rule of law when that country joined the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe as a participating State in 1992;

Whereas, following the 2003 presidential election, the Council of Europe adopted Resolution 1358 (2004) demanding that the Government of Azerbaijan immediately implement a series of steps that included the release of political prisoners, investigation of election fraud, and the creation of public service television to allow all political parties to better communicate with the people of Azerbaijan;

Whereas, since the 2003 presidential election, the Government of Azerbaijan has taken a number of positive steps by releasing some political prisoners and working toward

the establishment of public service television;

Whereas a genuinely free and fair election requires that citizens be guaranteed the right and opportunity to exercise their civil and political rights free from intimidation, undue influence, threats of political retribution, or other forms of coercion by national or local authorities or others;

Whereas a genuinely free and fair election requires government and public authorities to ensure that candidates and political parties enjoy equal treatment before the law and that government resources are not employed to the advantage of individual candidates or political parties; and

Whereas the establishment of a transparent, free and fair election process for the 2005 parliamentary elections would be an important step in Azerbaijan's progress toward full integration into the democratic community of nations: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) calls upon the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan to hold orderly, peaceful, and free and fair parliamentary elections in November 2005 in order to ensure the long-term growth and stability of the country;

(2) calls upon the Government of Azerbaijan to guarantee the full participation of opposition parties in the upcoming elections, including members of opposition parties arrested in the months leading up to the November 2005 parliamentary elections;

(3) calls upon the opposition parties to fully and peacefully participate in the November 2005 parliamentary elections, and calls upon the Government of Azerbaijan to create the conditions for the participation on equal grounds of all viable candidates;

(4) believes it is critical that the November 2005 parliamentary elections be viewed by the people of Azerbaijan as free and fair, and that all sides refrain from violence during the campaign, on election day, and following the election;

(5) calls upon the Government of Azerbaijan to guarantee election monitors from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Azeri political parties, candidates' representatives, nongovernmental organizations, and other private institutions and organizations, both foreign and domestic, unimpeded access to all aspects of the election process;

(6) supports recommendations made by the Council of Europe on amendments to the Unified Election Code of Azerbaijan, specifically to ensure equitable representation of opposition and pro-government forces in all election commissions;

(7) urges the international community and domestic nongovernmental organizations to provide a sufficient number of election observers to ensure credible monitoring and reporting of the November 2005 parliamentary elections;

(8) recognizes the need for the establishment of an independent media and assurances by the Government of Azerbaijan that freedom of the press will be guaranteed; and

(9) calls upon the Government of Azerbaijan to guarantee freedom of speech and freedom of assembly.

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

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

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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. Res. 326, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 326 is a resolution calling on the government of Azerbaijan to ensure that their upcoming parliamentary elections in November are peaceful, free and fair.

In the most recent elections in Azerbaijan, the 2003 presidential elections, international election observers concluded that they fell well short of international standards. The observers found numerous instances of voting fraud, restrictions on political rallies and intimidation against political opponents.

Since that election, Azerbaijan has taken a number of positive steps, such as releasing some political prisoners, opening their airwaves to opposing viewpoints and allowing greater freedom of speech and assembly. However, much more needs to be done before the people of Azerbaijan and the international community can have confidence in the outcome of the November elections.

As stated in H. Res. 326, the government needs to take several steps to ensure fairness in the election process. First, it must permit the full participation of all opposition parties in the upcoming elections.

Second, and perhaps most importantly, the government of Azerbaijan must allow election monitors from the OSCE, Azeri political parties and other political organizations unimpeded access to all aspects of the election process. The government simply cannot pick and choose which organizations will be allowed to verify that the election is free and fair.

Finally, the resolution supports the international efforts to change the election code of Azerbaijan to provide all political forces with equitable representation in the country's election commissions.

Azerbaijan and the United States have enjoyed a strong, bilateral relationship since Azerbaijan gained its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. We look forward to this friendship growing even closer in the coming years. In the long term, however, the strength of the relationship between our two nations, as well as the stability of government in Azerbaijan, will largely depend on Azerbaijan becoming a more free and more democratic nation.

I therefore urge the government of Azerbaijan to hold free and fair elections, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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, the Republic of Azerbaijan will hold parliamentary elections this coming November. Our legislation calls on Azerbaijan's government to hold orderly, peaceful, free and fair elections in the interests of ensuring the long-term growth and stability of the country. Our resolution calls for full and peaceful participation in the process by all opposition parties and urges the ample presence of election observers with unfettered access to ensure the credibility of the elections.

Our measure is necessary, Mr. Speaker, after Azerbaijan disenfranchised its citizens and made mockery of its promises to the international community to hold a free and fair presidential election in October 2003. After a campaign troubled by intimidation and countless irregularities and violent incidents on election day, election observers concluded that the vote in 2003 was one which was fraudulent and it resulted in an illegal government.

Since then, Mr. Speaker, the people of Azerbaijan have faced an increasing crackdown on what should be their rights in a civilized society. The government has continued to pursue opposition figures, to break up peaceful opposition rallies, and has failed to prosecute police who have attacked journalists documenting these events.

Mr. Speaker, we all recognize that Azerbaijan enjoys a good relationship with the United States. It is an important producer of oil and has a strategic position between Europe and Central Asia that has been valuable for our Armed Forces as they have conducted operations in Afghanistan. But we must ensure that Azerbaijan and other former Soviet States do not use their strategic assets to prevent democratic openings such as the ones we have seen in Ukraine, Georgia, and even in Kyrgyzstan.

Mr. Speaker, we all recognize that the countries of the former Soviet Union represent a spectrum in the transition from totalitarianism to pluralism. No one election is expected to guarantee that a country will shed a half a century of oppression, and every society that has faced such circumstances must build toward a new social compact that allows for freedom and liberty.

The resolution before us today recognizes that the Azeri government has released some political prisoners and recently taken some steps to allow for a greater degree of openness in advance of the upcoming elections. More still needs to be done to ensure that election laws in Azerbaijan are in consonance with international standards.

The Azeri people will soon have another chance to fulfill their aspirations and to move their country towards a full democracy. Our resolution ex-

presses the support of the United States for the Azeri people, and I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield 3 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN).

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for yielding me this time and thank the committee for bringing out this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I am the ranking Democrat on the U.S. Helsinki Commission, and I very much appreciate this resolution, because I think it carries out the commitment of our Nation to make sure that Azerbaijan carries out its commitments it has made as a member state of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Ever since gaining its independence in 1991 from the former Soviet Union, Azerbaijan has been a country in which we have a great deal of interest in making sure that it develops its institutions for democracy. In 1992, it became a participating state in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Now, as Azerbaijan plans parliamentary elections for November, Congress must strongly encourage them to fulfill their commitments. The elections must be free and fair, opposition parties must be encouraged, freedom of speech and press must be protected and democratic ideals must be upheld. Azerbaijan's last elections held in 2003 failed to meet these international standards.

Since the 2003 presidential elections, the government of Azerbaijan has taken some positive steps by releasing some political prisoners and working towards the establishment of public service television. However, there remains much concern hindering democracy in Azerbaijan.

Let me just raise one example, the events of May 21, 2005. Azerbaijan officials arrested and incarcerated a group of peaceful protesters in the capital city of Baku. I join my colleagues on the Helsinki Commission in condemning this horrific event and calling on Baku to establish a safe forum for oppositional discourse and to curtail all political harassment.

We must encourage Azerbaijan's government to reform campaign election procedures to ensure their integration into the democratic community of nations. The Rose Revolution in Georgia, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine and the recent Democratic Revolution in Kyrgyzstan are widely symbolic of events that accelerate the future democratization of the former Soviet Republics.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution speaks to the priorities of this Nation, but also speaks to the priorities of all the nations that have made commitments within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the resolution introduced by

my colleague Representative ELTON GALLEGLY calling for free and fair elections in Azerbaijan this November.

Azerbaijan has been an ally of the United States since they gained their independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 and has played in integral roll, not only with issues involving Central Asian countries, but also on the war on terrorism.

However, Azerbaijan has yet to meet its full potential and its poor human rights record constantly overshadows any positive steps that the government has taken.

The 2003 election was won by Ilkham Aliyev by 77 percent, but the election results remain contentious. After the 2003 election the International Election Observation Mission in Baku, under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, OSCE, found numerous instances of violence by both members of the opposition and the government.

The election observers also found irregularities in campaign and election conditions, including intimidation, restrictions on political rallies by opposition candidates, and voting fraud.

Many people protested the election claiming it had been rigged. As a result these protests led to numerous arrests of the "investigators." After threats by international organization that Azerbaijan's membership in the Council of Europe would be re-evaluated, President Aliyev released 114 of the political prisoners.

I applaud my colleague for introducing H. Res. 326. While calling for a free and fair election in November, this bill would also work to guarantee opposition party participation, and freedom of speech—something that this country has lacked for many years.

I call upon my colleagues to pass this common sense bill and send a message to Azerbaijan to hold and free and fair elections, respecting the rights of all individuals as some of their neighbors have already done.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 326, of which I am an original co-sponsor, along with my colleagues Mr. GALLEGLY and Mr. WEXLER. I thank them for their initiative in crafting this resolution which calls on the Government of Azerbaijan to hold free and fair elections this fall.

Azerbaijan is an important country. It is located in a strategic region, is energy-rich and is a moderate Muslim state that enjoys good relations with the United States. We have a major stake in Azerbaijan's successful democratization and integration into Western institutions.

Unfortunately, however, OSCE monitors have not been able to certify an election held in Azerbaijan in the last 10 years as meeting international standards. During the October 2003 presidential election, clashes broke out between government forces and supporters of opposition parties who claimed election fraud. Afterwards, the authorities launched a country-wide crackdown on the opposition; only recently have Azerbaijan authorities begun to allow demonstrations again.

The upcoming parliamentary election—the first under the country's new, young leadership—is critical to Azerbaijan's progress towards the Western community of nations. It is a key indicator of President Ilham Aliyev's intentions: does he want to reform the system or to continue with same old, tired business as usual?

The stakes are higher than which parties and candidates get in Azerbaijan's parliament. Over the last 18 months, multi-colored" revolutions took place in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. All were sparked by elections perceived by many voters in those countries as unfair, a view shared by OSCE observer missions. If Azerbaijan's election this November does not make major improvements over October 2003, there is a real chance of confrontation again, with unpredictable consequences.

I am deeply convinced that the stability we all seek in Azerbaijan is only possible through democracy. For that reason, the November election must be free and fair. Whoever wins, it is essential that Azerbaijan's citizens and the international community see the outcome as legitimate.

A key ingredient of fair elections is impartial election commissions. At this point, there are no such bodies in Azerbaijan. Since 2003, the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, along with the OSCE's Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, have consistently urged that Azerbaijan's election commissions, which are reliably pro-government, be reconfigured so as to "enjoy public confidence."

In fact, this issue goes back even farther—the Helsinki Commission, which I co-chair, held a hearing in May 2000 on the November 2000 parliamentary election, at which representatives of Azerbaijan's government and opposition testified. At that time as well, the composition of election commissions was one of the most heated points of contention between government and opposition.

Unfortunately, these differences have not been bridged. Azerbaijan's authorities have rejected the recommendations of the OSCE and the Venice Commission. I am extremely disappointed that Azerbaijan's parliament passed an election law on June 29 without incorporating key suggestions by the Venice Commission on election commissions and domestic monitoring.

With the law as it now stands, and with election commissions unchanged, the election will not be able to meet OSCE standards. It is already clear that the OSCE and the Council of Europe will not be able to give a passing grade to the election. Nor will the law enjoy public confidence in Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijani officials occasionally protest that there is not enough time between now and November to change the law. But lack of time is not the problem. They have had years to implement these recommendations—the problem is that they refuse to do so.

Nevertheless, I believe there is still time for Baku to do what is right. That is why I cosponsored this resolution. I call on my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 326, which will convey to Baku that the U.S. Congress is closely watching and will draw the appropriate conclusions.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend

the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 326, 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.

□ 1545

#### RECOGNIZING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT IN POLAND

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 328) recognizing the 25th anniversary of the workers' strikes in Poland in 1980 that led to the establishment of the Solidarity Trade Union, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 328

Whereas, although Victory in Europe on May 8, 1945, resulted in liberty and democracy in many nations, Poland and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe fell behind the repressive Iron Curtain of the Soviet Union;

Whereas for more than four decades Poland and the nations of the Soviet Bloc struggled under authoritarian rule;

Whereas in June 1979, Pope John Paul II, the former Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, returned to his homeland for the first time and exhorted his countrymen to "be not afraid" of the Communist regime;

Whereas in July and August of 1980, Polish workers in the shipyards of Gdansk and Szczecin went on strike to demand greater political freedom;

Whereas workers' committees, led by electrician Lech Walesa, coordinated these strikes and ensured that the strikes were peaceful and orderly;

Whereas in August 1980, the Communist government of Poland yielded to the 21 demands of the striking workers, including the release of all political prisoners, the broadcasting of religious services on television and radio, and the right to establish independent trade unions;

Whereas the Communist government of Poland introduced martial law in December 1981 in an attempt to block the growing influence of the Solidarity movement;

Whereas the Solidarity Trade Union and its 10,000,000 members became a great social movement committed to promoting fundamental human rights, democracy, and Polish independence from the Soviet Union;

Whereas in February 1989, the Communist government of Poland agreed to conduct talks with the Solidarity Trade Union that led to elections to the National Assembly in June of that year, in which nearly all open seats were won by candidates supported by the Solidarity Trade Union, and led soon after to the election of Poland's first non-Communist Prime Minister in the post-war era, Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki;

Whereas the Solidarity movement ended communism in Poland without bloodshed, inspiring other nations under Soviet control to do the same and playing an important role in the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe;

Whereas on November 15, 1989, Lech Walesa gave an historic speech before a joint meeting of the United States Congress with the opening remarks "We the People. . .", which stirred a standing ovation from the Members of Congress;

Whereas on December 9, 1990, Lech Walesa was elected President of Poland;

Whereas the support of the United States and the Polish-American community was essential to the survival and success of the Solidarity movement; and

Whereas a bond of friendship exists between the United States and Poland, which is among the strongest allies of the United States, a contributing partner in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a reliable partner in the Global War on Terrorism, and a key contributor in Iraq and Afghanistan: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the 25th anniversary of the workers' strikes in Poland that led to establishment of the Solidarity Trade Union;

(2) honors the struggle and sacrifice of the citizens of Poland who risked their lives to restore democracy to their country and to return Poland to the democratic community of nations; and

(3) offers Poland as a model for other nations struggling to emerge from authoritarian rule and establish a flourishing representative government.

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

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

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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 resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 328 recognizes the 25th-year anniversary of the Solidarity movement in Poland and conveys our recognition of Solidarity's important role in setting in motion the liberation of the Eastern and Central European nations and the fall of the Soviet Union. It also honors the struggle and the sacrifice of the people of Poland who risked their lives to restore democracy to their country.

Solidarity began in the shipyards, with Polish workers refusing to submit to the tyranny of the Communist regime in Poland, even after 40 years of oppression. A local electrician, Lech Walesa, coordinated the Solidarity strikes and ensured that the strikes were peaceful and orderly.

After months of strikes, the Communist government yielded to the striking workers' demands, including the release of all political prisoners, the broadcasting of religious services

on television and radio, and the right to establish independent trade unions.

Throughout the 1980s, Solidarity grew to become a national movement, with 10 million members. Lech Walesa went on to become Poland's first President after the fall of the Berlin wall. Solidarity was also critical in establishing the democratic institutions that flourish in Poland today and in creating a catalyst for the spread of freedom in the former Soviet bloc.

I strongly support House Resolution 328, which passed by voice vote during a subcommittee markup and by unanimous consent before the full Committee on International Relations.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution has strong bipartisan support, including the distinguished ranking member of the House Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), my good friend. I urge the passage of House Resolution 328.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), my distinguished colleague, for her work on this resolution and all human rights issues and issues relating to the advancement of democracy globally.

Mr. Speaker, the single most important event in the second half of the 20th century was the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and the end of Soviet hegemony over Central and Eastern Europe.

Many organizations played important roles in this political tectonic shift. Today, we are marking the 25th anniversary of the founding of one of those most important organizations, the Solidarity trade union movement of Poland, and we are paying tribute to the founder of Solidarity, one of the key players in bringing an end to Communism in Poland, the electrician from Gdansk, Lech Walesa.

Mr. Speaker, the worker strikes in Poland in 1980 and the almost spontaneous springing up of the Solidarity union movement was a critical event in the demise of Communism. As union members made their demands for reform known, and as the popularity of Solidarity's leader Lech Walesa soared in Poland and beyond, both Warsaw and Moscow became increasingly apprehensive. Solidarity was seen as a real political alternative to the Communist government. So the Soviet military conducted maneuvers on Poland's borders. The Warsaw government arrested Walesa and other Solidarity leaders. It banned the movement and imposed martial law throughout Poland.

As my colleagues know, Mr. Speaker, Lech Walesa received the Nobel Peace Prize, but he could not leave Poland to accept it. Solidarity continued its ac-

tivities underground. In 1988, a new wave of strikes broke out in Poland, and chief among the strikers' demands was that Solidarity be recognized. Finally, in April of 1989, Solidarity was recognized by the Polish Government. In relatively free elections in June of that year, Solidarity candidates won 99 out of 100 seats in the Senate of the Polish parliament and every single seat for which Solidarity candidates were permitted to run in the lower House. That election represented such a powerful repudiation of the Polish Communist Government that it no longer had the political credibility to govern that country.

Lech Walesa, my friend, went on to become Poland's first democratically elected President since the Second World War.

As we pay tribute to the 25th anniversary of the founding of Solidarity, it is critical that we remember the assistance that was given to Solidarity by our own American labor movement. Then AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland and the American labor movement provided absolutely critical moral, material, and political support to the workers of Poland during their struggle in the 1980s.

I had the privilege of traveling to Warsaw to meet with Lech Walesa with Lane Kirkland, and to be in the presence of those two great labor leaders was a truly memorable experience.

At a memorial service for Lane Kirkland, Henry Kissinger recalled a dinner he had arranged for Kirkland with two top officials of the administration who were shocked to receive the "Kirkland treatment," a scathing attack on their failure to do enough for the freedom movements in Poland and around the world. At the memorial service, Solidarity Leader Lech Walesa said, "I never had enough opportunity to thank Lane Kirkland for his enormous contribution for our struggle."

Mr. Speaker, the 25th anniversary of the founding of Solidarity is an appropriate time for us to reflect upon the historic changes that convulsed the Soviet Union and Central Europe 15 years ago. Solidarity was an important catalyst in that transformation. We honor the struggle and sacrifice of the workers of Poland and the leaders of Solidarity who risked their lives to restore democracy to their homeland.

Poland has been a member of NATO for 8 years and recently became a full member of the European Union. These actions would not have taken place without the leadership of Lech Walesa and his colleagues in the Solidarity movement. I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support H. Res. 328, recognizing the 25th anniversary of the workers' strikes in Poland that led to the founding of Solidarity.

Mr. Speaker, Stalin once said that trying to impose communism on Poland was like trying to put a saddle on a cow. As history showed, that was one time the Soviet Union's dictator was right. From the end of World War II, when

the Soviet Union spread its suffocating net across a Central Europe devastated by war, Poles struggled to be free. Time and again, from the 1956 riots in Poznan, when workers took to the streets "For Bread and For Freedom," through the intellectual upheavals of the 1960s, Poles struggled to stretch the boundaries of freedom. Each time, they came closer, but each time they were pulled back into the Soviet fold.

The year 1976 marked an historic turning point. In that year, Polish intellectuals stood outside the court room door while workers stood inside, waiting for verdicts to be meted out against them for their strikes at the Ursus tractor factory. At those trials, only family members were allowed to be present. And, as one onerous prison sentence after another was handed down, the intellectuals standing outside the courtroom would hear only the sobs of family members. The harshness of the regime only served to galvanize opposition to it.

By 1980, when the workers struck in Gdansk, they were no longer alone; they were joined by intellectuals who had been pursuing a parallel path. The newly elected, Polish-born Pope, John Paul II, had countenanced his countrymen and women to "be not afraid." And an extraordinary individual, Lech Walesa, scaled the walls at the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk to lead his country to a place in history. The Gdansk shipyard workers had 31 demands, one of which was a call for the Polish Government to fulfill its obligations it had under the in the 1976 Helsinki Final Act.

By December 13, 1981, the Soviet Union had seen enough of this Polish experiment and martial law was imposed. But, it seems, the power of the people could not be truly repressed. The joining of workers and intellectuals in Poland produced the only mass dissident movement in all of Eastern Europe. In spite of mass arrests and other forms of repression during the 1980s, Solidarity remained a force with which to be reckoned and, by 1988, the tide was inexorably turning. In that year, Janusz Onyszkiewicz [YAN-oosh oh-nish-KAL-a-vich], a Solidarity activist who—in a few years time—would be Minister of Defense, came to Washington and testified before the Helsinki Commission about the human rights situation in his country. It was the first time a dissident from an East European Communist country had testified before Congress and then actually returned to his country. Although authorities briefly considered bringing criminal charges against him for his daring appearance before the Helsinki Commission, those plans were quickly abandoned.

By 1989, Solidarity's disciplined strikes had forced Communist officials to the negotiating table. These so-called "Round-Table Talks" produced an agreement to allow a fraction of the seats in parliament to be openly contested in June elections—the proverbial camel's nose under the tent. In July, when Tadeusz Mazowiecki [tah-DAY-oosh maz-oh-VIET-ski] was elected Poland's first non-Communist Prime Minister in the post-War era, a delegation from the Helsinki Commission, led by Senator DeConcini, sat in the gallery of the parliament and watched this extraordinary moment unfold.

Mr. Speaker, there are many factors that led to the collapse of communism, and many heroes—some tragically fallen—who deserve credit for restoring freedom to Eastern Europe.

The Solidarity Trade Union played a singular role in achieving that great goal, and I give my wholehearted support to this resolution which honors the men and women of that movement.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 328, 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.

#### ACKNOWLEDGING AFRICAN DESCENDANTS OF THE TRANS-ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE IN ALL OF THE AMERICAS

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 175) acknowledging African descendants of the transatlantic slave trade in all of the Americas with an emphasis on descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean, recognizing the injustices suffered by these African descendants, and recommending that the United States and the international community work to improve the situation of Afro-descendant communities in Latin America and the Caribbean, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

#### H. CON. RES. 175

Whereas during Black History Month it is important that we not forget that African-Americans are not the only survivors of the transatlantic slave trade;

Whereas like the United States, many European nations benefited greatly from the colonization of Latin America and the Caribbean and their participation in the slave trade;

Whereas the story of African descendants in all of the Americas remains untold, leading them to be forgotten, made invisible, and allowed to suffer unjustly;

Whereas it is important to acknowledge that as a result of the slave trade and immigration, approximately 80,000,000 to 150,000,000 persons of African descent live in Latin America and the Caribbean, making them the largest population of persons of African descent outside of Africa;

Whereas Afro-descendants are present in most all Latin American countries, including Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela;

Whereas the size of Afro-descendant populations vary in range from less than 1 percent in some countries to as much as 30 per-

cent in Colombia and 46 percent in Brazil and make up the majority in some Spanish speaking Caribbean nations, such as Cuba and the Dominican Republic;

Whereas Afro-descendant populations have made significant economic, social, and cultural contributions to their countries and the Western Hemisphere from their unfortunate involvement in the transatlantic slave trade to their recent contributions to trade, tourism, and other industries;

Whereas although persons of African descent have made significant achievements in education, employment, economic, political, and social spheres in some countries, the vast majority are marginalized—living in impoverished communities where they are excluded from centers of education, government, and basic human rights based upon the color of their skin and ancestry;

Whereas Afro-descendants have shorter life expectancies, higher rates of infant mortality, higher incidences of HIV/AIDS, higher rates of illiteracy, and lower incomes than do other populations;

Whereas Afro-descendants encounter problems of access to healthcare, basic education, potable water, housing, land titles, credit, equal justice and representation under the law, political representation, and other economic, political, health, and basic human rights; and

Whereas skin color and ancestry have led African-Americans in the United States and African descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean to share similar injustices, leading to economic, social, health, and political inequalities: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) recognizes and honors African descendants in the Americas for their contributions to the economic, social, and cultural fabric of the countries in the Americas, particularly in Latin American and Caribbean societies;

(2) recognizes that as a result of their skin color and ancestry, African descendants in the Americas have wrongfully experienced economic, social, and political injustices;

(3) urges the President to take appropriate measures to encourage the celebration and remembrance of the achievements of African descendants in the Americas and a resolution of injustices suffered by African descendants in the Americas;

(4) encourages the United States and the international community to work to ensure that extreme poverty is eradicated, universal education is achieved, quality healthcare is made available, and equal access to justice and representation under the law is granted in Afro-descendant communities in Latin America and the Caribbean; and

(5) encourages the United States and the international community to achieve these goals in Latin America and the Caribbean by—

(A) promoting research that focuses on identifying and eradicating racial disparities in economic, political, and social spheres;

(B) promoting programs that focus on Afro-descendant communities;

(C) providing technical support and training to Afro-descendant advocacy groups that work to uphold basic human rights in the region;

(D) promoting the creation of an international working group that focuses on problems of communities of Afro-descendants in the Americas; and

(E) promoting trade and other bilateral and multilateral agreements that take into account the needs of Afro-descendant communities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from

Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

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

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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 gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, progress for some of the Afro-Latino communities in the Western Hemisphere has been disturbingly low. Estimates show that almost one-third of the population in Latin America is made up of descendants of West African slaves brought to the Americas by European slave traders during the colonial period.

Afro-Latinos comprise either a majority or a large minority in a number of Latin American nations, including the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Colombia, Panama, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Nicaragua. Yet reports indicate that most Afro-Latinos are among the poorest, most marginalized groups in that region.

Thus, as we press for democratic progress, for prosperity, and for security in our hemisphere, and we focus to maximize our efforts to reduce poverty, part of a comprehensive strategy must also include efforts to address the needs and provide for the rights of the Afro-Latino community in the region.

The resolution before us urges us to take a thoughtful, proactive approach to achieve such goals.

I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for bringing this issue to our attention and for introducing this important measure. I also wish to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE); the gentleman from California (Ranking Member LANTOS); the gentleman from Indiana (Chairman BURTON), the chairman of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere; and the gentleman from New Jersey (Ranking Member MENENDEZ) for their efforts to expeditiously bring this resolution before the House today.

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.

Mr. Speaker, I want to applaud my colleagues for bringing this resolution to the House for consideration. I deeply appreciate the efforts of my dear friend and esteemed colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), for offering this resolution, and my colleagues,

the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), and the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), for their tireless efforts on behalf of African descendants throughout the globe.

People of African descent in this country have benefited from longstanding efforts to raise public awareness of their history and their circumstances. But we must not forget, Mr. Speaker, that there is an equally complex history for African descendants throughout the Americas, and their current situation demands our attention and our action as well.

The resolution of the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) seeks to remove the cloak of invisibility that has hidden the faces of so many of our neighbors in the Western Hemisphere from their own countrymen and from the rest of the world.

□ 1600

African descendants are present in great numbers in the Caribbean and in a few Latin American countries such as Brazil where they comprise approximately 45 percent of the population. But many African descendants also reside in Latin American nations where their presence is less well known, such as Ecuador, Nicaragua, Panama and Mexico.

The history of Afro descendants in these countries stretches back centuries. In Mexico, for example, individuals in the Costa Chica area are believed to be descendants of slaves who were brought there in the 17th century to work on the area's extensive cattle ranches. Today some of the names of Mexican towns in the Veracruz region reflect this history: Congo, Angola, Mozambique, Mandinga and Mocambo.

While African descendants no longer are enslaved in Latin America and the Caribbean, they tend to be marginalized in many societies. This leaves them vulnerable to economic hardship and to upheaval such as civil conflict.

In Colombia, just 2 months ago, intense fighting between leftist guerillas and their right wing paramilitary foes forced more than 2,000 mainly Afro-Colombian villagers from their homes. The United Nations Commission for Refugees has said that the situation for these communities is worsening, and it has warned that these communities are at high risk of severe hardship and insecurity as a result of these illegal armed groups occupying their land.

Mr. Speaker, the plight of African descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean has been ignored for far too long. The gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL's) resolution before us begins to address the injustices and inequities that they have suffered, first by recognizing the situation and then by seeking to address it through raising awareness. The measure also encourages the United States and the international community to work to ensure that extreme poverty is eradicated,

universal education is achieved, quality health care is made available and equal access to justice and representation under the law is granted to Afro-descendant communities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield such time as he may consume to the author of the resolution, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means, one of our leaders in the Congress and my dear friend.

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

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, this is indeed a very emotional and historic day to see that the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), who is such a great American and yet she has this pride and that Cuban blood which emphasizes that when you have that, you can become even a better American.

And then on this side of the aisle to find my friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), an international personality that came from Hungary, but his people were not satisfied just to come from all over the world. They needed someplace that they could feel that was theirs. They needed a homeland. And out of that came the birth and the greatness of Jewish people all over the world, because they knew that they had a place that they could be so proud of. And it is that pride, or lack of pride that determines what we can do.

And here, me in the aisle, coming from a family that comes from families of slaves, what a trio we are to be in this House of Representatives in this great country enjoying who we are and where we came from and not being satisfied with that, but reaching out and saying that those that come from Africa, no matter where they are, we want them, if not to have a traditional homeland, at least to have that culture, that pride, that self-esteem that makes a difference.

Mr. Speaker, not too long ago I was in Germany with the Chancellor, and even though there was no one of the Jewish faith in the CODEL, he went out of his way during this NATO meeting to show how friendly and supportive the German government was to Israel. When it occurred at every meeting, I said, "Mr. Chancellor, is there a particular reason why you are emphasizing the friendship and support that you give to Israel?" And he said, "Yes, Congressman. The people of Germany committed acts, atrocities on these people, and it is not enough to say that you are sorry. You have to show in some way that the conscience of Germans should not have to carry this burden," because they recognize not just an apology but they had to do something.

We are not asking Americans or white people to be ashamed for what

happened, but it does help when you say an act of injustice has been committed by certain people of this world, to take human beings who God has made and to treat them like machines, to treat them like chattel, to tear them away from their families, to use them to build economies, whether we are talking about cotton, sugar or rum or mining, and then just to walk away and say I did not do it.

Well, no one is saying who did it. But what makes a person great is to be able to say what you did about it.

It seems difficult that for me, as a child, the word "African" was used as an insulting adjective as to who was then Colored or Negro or whatever they were called.

But how did all of this happen? It happened because it was a planned strategy, not only to control the body of people, but to control their minds to such an extent that even among those of African descent they discriminated against each other.

I had hoped one day when I get to heaven and have a chance to talk with God directly, that I would ask her, what did people of color ever do to make you so angry? As we go to the different countries in the Caribbean and Central and South America, how can you determine poverty and misery and disease by one's color? Well, you do it.

And she would say, when racism and evil people come in and make you do this to yourself, very much like the terrorists who God has made, it is an evil that comes in that causes them to want to destroy; and when you destroy one's self-esteem, you destroy their confidence, you tear away their culture, their music, their education and deny them who they are and where they came from, then you get someone that cannot effectively compete.

We in the Congressional Black Caucus recognize what we have had to go through in our own country. We have seen the tremendous advancements that have been made. But we are not satisfied with that. We want to help those in Brazil, those in Colombia, those in Central and South America, and especially those in Mexico, to understand that when God made all these beautiful colors He made it for all of us to feel a sense of pride. And this is what we hope that we are able to do, to make some type of commitment, no apologies, but to be able to say that terrorism and dictatorships and these type of things seem to fester when you find areas of poverty where injustices have taken place. If we can have a stronger people in this world to make contributions as to who they are, to make them better, but indeed to make us better too, I think it would be a better country.

I would say to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), when we were having the crisis in Haiti, and just as the Jewish people were denied in 1939 the ability to land here to escape the Germans and were sent back, you may

recall that we were sending back Haitians to go into a crisis where their lives could be lost.

I was on Lenox Avenue going home, and a constituent came to me and thanked me for the work I was doing on behalf of the Haitian refugees. I thanked him, but hearing no Haitian accent, I stopped him and I asked, where are you from? He said, North Carolina. I said, what is your interest in Haiti? He said, my brother, we all came from Africa. I really thought you understood that.

What a beautiful feeling where all of us can say that no matter where we came from, that we can help each other because in this republic, no matter how much pride we have for that flag, there is a sense of dignity and pride when we join with our own people, tell our own jokes and in the case of some groups of people, even enlarge among who they were and who their families were. That is what makes this country so great.

I would say to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), I am so glad that both of you are on the floor today, and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) as well who expedited this. It does not cost a lot of money, but it is one heck of a powerful and rich statement that we are able to say that in our country, with all of the problems that we have had and all the problems that we have overcome, that we are still concerned about individuals who have not reached that. And so no longer can kids have to dream of working in sugar fields, dancing and playing and singing. They can become outside of the domestic market. They can become doctors, lawyers, politicians and represent their countries and be able to go to the floors of the international communities and, without getting involved in dialogue, just a smile would say that God made us all in different colors, with different attributes, but we are so proud to be Americans that we want to help others, whether it is in Central America, whether it is in South America, but in this hemisphere. We do not have to apologize for what we have done, but we can make this a better world.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and those people that served as cosponsors to make this a resolution. Now we have to work to make certain it comes into being.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), my dear friend and distinguished colleague, for his powerful and moving and eloquent statement.

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

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

I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for his kind words, and this generation of Ameri-

cans has a wonderful role model to look up to and model themselves after in the gentleman from New York.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 175, which was introduced by my colleague, Mr. RANGEL. This legislation acknowledges African descendants of the transatlantic slave trade in all of the Americas with an emphasis on descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean, recognizing the injustices suffered by these African descendants, and recommends that the United States and the international community work to improve the circumstances of Afro-descendant communities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

While there have been considerable steps in addressing the many humanitarian issues facing these populations in Latin America and the Caribbean, more still needs to be done. The Resolution urges the U.S. to pursue policies and strategies directly targeted at addressing these problems. The Resolution promotes inclusion of Afro-Latino communities in the private and public sector.

In the 108th Congress, my colleagues and I concluded that, for too long, this country and other nations had ignored the struggle and challenges faced by Afro-descendant populations in the Americas. While the U.S. has been compelled to take steps to address our race problem in this country, we have often unintentionally forgotten or deemphasized the impact of that struggle throughout the Western Hemisphere.

The U.S. State Department reports that a disproportionate number of internally displaced people, IDP, in Colombia are of African descent. The Colombian non-profit CODHES estimates that Afro-Colombians accounted for at least 33 percent of total internally displaced people in 2002. Displaced Afro-Colombians from the coastal regions swell urban slums such as the Nelson Mandela Barrio on the edge of Cartagena.

Many Afro-Colombians reside in the most neglected regions of the country, where they are caught between state, paramilitary and guerrilla forces. The absence of meaningful Colombian state presence provides a vacuum in which illegal actors function with impunity. In spite of the influential role Afro-Colombians have played in national development, they have been marginalized in Colombian culture, economy and politics.

Afro-Colombians have made meaningful contributions to Colombia through the richness and diversity of their cultures. They are characterized by their ability to coexist peacefully, their sense of community and solidarity, their vast knowledge of the country's natural resources, and their love and concern for the environment. Even so, Afro-Latinos account for about 30 percent of the Latin American population and make up over 60 percent of its poor. Afro-Latinos also have extreme high rates of suicide, homicide, infant mortality, and illiteracy.

The displaced not only face violence and perilous living conditions, but they often have lost their traditional lands to armed actors, drug traffickers, ranchers, and the logging industry, realities that threaten the survival of their culture.

Brazil has the largest population of Afro-descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean. Shockingly, only one in three Afro-Brazilians attends secondary schools. Columbia

with the second largest Afro-descendant population has a shorter life expectancy for this population, limited access to medical and health care facilities, and the highest rates of illiteracy.

I also want to thank the other members of the Afro-Latino Working Group: The Honorable CHARLES RANGEL, Mr. DONALD PAYNE, Ms. BARBARA LEE, Mr. WILLIAM JEFFERSON, and Mr. GREGORY MEEKS. Their counsel, advocacy, and commitment to these issues have been instrumental in raising the importance and awareness of this cause to me and this Congress, I appreciate their support.

As a freedom-loving people, we in the United States have a role to play in the fulfillment of Colombia's democratic experiment to include aid for Afro-Colombians, while future disbursements of U.S. aid should factor in the needs of Afro-Colombian populations. Increased foreign assistance of Colombia must also be devoted to the development of marginalized peoples. Historically, Afro-Colombians have looked to the United States as a progressive society. America's struggle to end racism at home and to dismantle Apartheid in Africa gives Afro-descendants in Latin America hope that they will one day see that the mission towards a humanitarian freedom and democracy is not yet finished. America's voice in Latin America cannot be ignored.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of the legislation to honor and recognize the African descendants of the transatlantic slave trade throughout the Americas, including descendants in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as recognizing the injustices suffered by these African descendants, and recommending that the United States and the international community work to improve the situation of Afro-descendant communities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

I also rise to acknowledge the hard work of Congressman RANGEL, the dean of the New York delegation, and the author of this important resolution.

H. Con. Res. 175, of which I am a proud cosponsor, highlights the priceless contributions and indubitable needs of African descendants of the transatlantic slave trade in Latin America and the Caribbean.

This resolution of recognition is a very important and solid step forward that we need to take in order to resolve this international issue.

This resolution will address the social, economic and political affects as a result of the slave trade and colonialism era within the international community.

These communities are made up of over 150 million people in the Americas and the Caribbean.

Despite their large presence, the majority of Afro-descendants have been marginalized by racial discrimination, social exclusion, and innumerable political and economic acts of injustice.

Although protected by their country's constitutions, individuals of African descent in this region constantly struggle to maintain full protection of their rights.

Despite the large African populations Latin America, specifically Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba, these communities lack equal opportunities, strong political representation, and have yet to be recognized for their outstanding achievements abroad.

Colombia is the only country that has Afro-Colombia representatives and has been the

only country to approve legislation for the betterment of the African community, despite having only 2 of 166 seats in their House reserved for Colombians of African descent.

H. Con. Res. 175 will mark the beginning of progressive change in these communities.

Poverty levels, lack of education funding, and exploitation of human rights within these regions will be challenged as result of the passing of this bill.

This bill supports the creation of organizations to combat racial tensions, such as Brazil's Ministry for the Promotion of Racial Equality, and the National Institute against Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Racism in Argentina.

The United States and the International community will work in coalition to improve social conditions and encourage more participation of Afro-descendant populations to exercise their rights and not be oppressed as a result of their ancestry.

The creation of more education assistance programs, racial equality initiatives, housing policies, and healthcare programs will no longer be far from reach in this population as a result of this bill's passing.

This resolution will allow Afro-descendants to enjoy the prosperity of their culture and heritage, contribute to their communities without being ostracized, and be recognized publicly for their efforts.

These groups lack an organized process by which they can exercise their rights and opinions efficiently. With one in three Afro-Brazilians attending middle school, this is a population that desperately needs visibility and international aid.

As a representative of a large Colombian population within my district, this is an issue that has directly affected my constituents.

I am extremely hopeful that this bill will create more opportunities for all Latin Americans of African descent in their home country, allowing them to play an equal role to that of the entire population in the affairs of their society.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEARNS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 175, 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.

#### COMMENDING THE CONTINUING IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 364) com-

mending the continuing improvement in relations between the United States and the Republic of India.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 364

Whereas the Republic of India achieved its independence from the British Empire on August 15, 1947, and has since that time maintained a democratic system of government;

Whereas India has in recent years opened its economy to a considerable extent to trade and investment and has liberalized its internal economic system;

Whereas India's relationship with the United States has deepened in past years and encompasses cooperation on matters relating to international security, political stability, world trade, technology, science, and health;

Whereas India and Pakistan, neighbors who have fought bitter wars in past decades, have increased their efforts to settle their differences by peaceful means;

Whereas Americans of Indian origin have made critical contributions to the culture and economy of the United States;

Whereas the Prime Minister of India, His Excellency Dr. Manmohan Singh, has, in his previous capacity as Finance Minister, helped shape India's economic policies to permit the growth of free markets, which has led to much greater economic prosperity for many people in India and the creation of a large middle class; and

Whereas Prime Minister Singh has accepted an invitation by the United States to make an official visit to Washington, D.C.: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the continuing improvement in relations between the United States and the Republic of India, exemplified by the current official visit of the Prime Minister of India, His Excellency Dr. Manmohan Singh, is to be commended, supported, and expanded in the interest of the people of India and the people of the United States.

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

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

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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. Res. 364, the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

When the House considers resolutions at a time coinciding with visits of foreign leaders about the relations between their countries and the United States, it is because of the immense value that the Congress places on that relationship and the critical nature of the issues and policies that bind our nations.

Taking this into consideration, Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my

deepest gratitude to the House leadership for having authored and brought forward this particular resolution for our consideration. The visit of the Prime Minister of India is anything but routine, and the expansion and the strengthening of our relations with India is anything but routine.

I have the honor of co-chairing the India Caucus in the House of Representatives and have had the opportunity to witness this ever growing bond between our nations, a bond based on our shared democratic values and our common goals of safeguarding liberty of combating oppression and of confronting terrorism. His Excellency, Dr. Singh, the Prime Minister of India, will address a joint session tomorrow morning, where we shall have the opportunity to hear directly from him his vision of our relationship.

□ 1615

From the U.S. standpoint, we will always honor Dr. Singh for his pioneering efforts to liberalize the Indian economy internally and to open that economy to the world. His work became the basis of a consensus that was carried on by Indian governments of other parties. It contributed to the economic development of India and to the improvement of conditions for those who are poverty stricken in that nation; and although that effort is not yet complete, it has contributed to the building of a greater middle class.

The trade that was fostered by India's opening to the world has benefited American and Indian consumers and producers. America needs trade partners who, once an agreement is made, will honor that agreement. We can count on India in this respect because those agreements are made under democratic procedures.

Mr. Speaker, we are also coming to recognize the contribution that India can make to the achievement of peace and security in this region and in the world and the potential that it has to make an even greater contribution over time. It would be wrong to fail to mention the enormous contributions that Americans born in India or of Indian descent have made to the moral, economic, and scientific welfare of this Nation as a whole.

Indian-Americans have shared with Americans of other origins their love of their ancestral homeland and have made it clear how the Indus Valley civilization's ancient insights can speak to this hemisphere in contemporary times.

It is my pleasure to welcome Dr. Singh to the Halls of Congress, and I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

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, it is my honor to be one of the four co-sponsors of this resolution along with the distinguished majority leader, the distinguished Democratic leader, and my good friend, the chairman of the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), our resolution commending the continuing improvement in relations between the United States and the Republic of India.

We do so in the midst of an official visit by the distinguished Prime Minister of India, Dr. Singh, who will address us in a joint session of Congress tomorrow morning to be followed by a private meeting with members of the Committee on International Relations.

In the 5 years since President Clinton traveled to India and opened a new chapter in the bilateral relationship between that country and the United States, we have ushered in new and unprecedented forms of cooperation between our two great democratic nations in areas ranging from global trade to technology.

Security cooperation between the United States and India has dramatically increased with Washington providing funds for military assistance, counternarcotics aid, and other forms of military training.

Mr. Speaker, we all remember well India's eager offer of cooperation in the war on terrorism after the September 11 tragedy and its willingness to allow the use of Indian bases for counterterrorism operations. Both of our countries have been democracies since our inception, and we are natural allies.

In recent years, India has opened its economy to a great extent to trade and investment. India has liberalized its internal economic system, steps that have served, and will continue to serve, to accelerate India's growth. Our distinguished guest, Dr. Singh, played a key role in getting these reforms under way in his earlier capacity as the Finance Minister of India. They have created a vastly enlarged middle class enjoying the benefits of a well-run economic system. And Indians have Dr. Singh to thank for that.

India of late has been a model partner in the ongoing rapprochement with its neighbor, Pakistan, despite memories of bitter wars and nuclear oneupsmanship. Both countries have shown good will in an ongoing attempt to settle their differences by peaceful and diplomatic means.

Mr. Speaker, during a recent visit to New Dehli, Secretary of State Dr. Condoleezza Rice praised the positive recent development in relations between our countries, and the administration put out the word that one of its goals is to help India become a major world power in the 21st century. To that end, Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this opportunity to press again for strong U.S. support for India to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, in long overdue recognition by the international community of India's rightful place as a great democracy.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the contributions of Americans of Indian origin for whom the visit of Prime Minister Singh this week has special resonance.

The United States is a Nation of immigrants, and we are the world's preeminent power due in large part to the diversity of our people. It is hard to think of an ethnic group, Mr. Speaker, that has made such enormous contributions to the strength of our Nation in such a compressed period of time as America's 1.5 million citizens of Indian decent. In business, science, academia, medicine and culture, Indian-Americans have assumed leadership roles, and they have given back to the communities in which they live.

Indian-Americans have made enormous contributions to the economy of my congressional district in the San Francisco Bay area, particularly to the technology firms of our Silicon Valley. Over 300,000 Indian-Americans work in the cutting-edge technology firms in my area, and they play a critical role in generating new start-up high-tech companies.

So, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my constituents and all of our colleagues in the Congress, I extend our congratulations to Prime Minister Singh on the achievement his country has made and on the great relations between India and the United States. I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the gentleman from Texas resolution commending the increase in bilateral relations between the United States and the Republic of India.

As the former co-chair of the House of Representatives Caucus on India and Indian Americans I have been working hard to increase the engagement by our two governments.

It is an honor for me to represent one of the largest populations of Indian Americans in the United States.

At my constituents urging I have worked to create a stronger relationship between the United States and India.

I had the opportunity to travel to India three times and led the largest Congressional delegation to India and for many of my colleagues who traveled with me it was their first time to India.

Seeing a nation that you deal with on a regular basis first hand is an incredibly important tool for making policy.

In fact two years ago in India I sat next to a quiet economist and member of the opposition Congress Party at the time and now this gentleman will be speaking before a joint session of Congress tomorrow.

I look forward to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's remarks on the state of relations between our two nations.

As architect of the Indian economic reforms in the 1990's, he cut India's deficit and opened the economy, leading to India's status as a primary figure in the global economy.

I would like to thank the gentleman for introducing this resolution and I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEARNS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 364.

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.

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#### 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 4 o'clock and 25 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

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□ 1832

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. KLINE) at 6 o'clock and 32 minutes p.m.

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#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H. Res. 328, by the yeas and nays,

H. Con. Res. 175, by the yeas and nays; and

H. Res. 364, by the yeas and nays.

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.

Further proceedings on H. Res. 326 will be resumed tomorrow.

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#### RECOGNIZING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT IN POLAND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 328, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 328, as amended, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 385, nays 0, not voting 48, as follows:

[Roll No. 380]  
YEAS—385

Abercrombie Delahunt Kennedy (RI)  
Ackerman DeLauro Kildee  
Aderholt Dent Kilpatrick (MI)  
Akin Diaz-Balart, L. Kind  
Alexander Diaz-Balart, M. King (IA)  
Allen Dicks King (NY)  
Andrews Dingell Kingston  
Baca Doggett Kirk  
Bachus Doolittle Kline  
Baird Drake Knollenberg  
Baker Dreier Kolbe  
Baldwin Duncan Kucinich  
Barrett (SC) Edwards Kuhl (NY)  
Barrow Ehlers LaHood  
Bartlett (MD) Emanuel Langevin  
Barton (TX) Emerson Lantos  
Bass Engel Larson (CT)  
Bean English (PA) Latham  
Beauprez Eshoo LaTourette  
Becerra Everett Lee  
Berkley Farr Levin  
Berman Feeney Lewis (CA)  
Berry Ferguson Lewis (GA)  
Biggert Filner Lewis (KY)  
Bilirakis Fitzpatrick (PA) Linder  
Bishop (GA) Flake Lipinski  
Bishop (NY) Foley LoBiondo  
Bishop (UT) Forbes Loggren, Zoe  
Blackburn Fortenberry Lowey  
Blumenauer Fossella Lucas  
Blunt Foxx Lungren, Daniel  
Boehlert Frank (MA) E.  
Boehner Franks (AZ) Lynch  
Bonilla Gallegly Mack  
Bonner Garrett (NJ) Maloney  
Bono Gerlach Manzullo  
Boozman Gilchrest Marchant  
Boren Gillmor Markey  
Boucher Gingrey Marshall  
Boustany Gohmert Matheson  
Bradley (NH) Gonzalez Matsui  
Brady (TX) Goode McCarthy  
Brown (OH) Goodlatte McCaul (TX)  
Brown (SC) Gordon McCollum (MN)  
Brown-Waite, Granger McCotter  
Ginny Graves McCreery  
Burgess Green (WI) McDermott  
Burton (IN) Green, Al McGovern  
Butterfield Green, Gene McHenry  
Calvert Grijalva McHugh  
Camp Gutknecht McIntyre  
Cannon Hall McKeon  
Cantor Harman McMorris  
Capito Harris McNulty  
Capps Hart Meehan  
Cardin Hastings (FL) Meek (FL)  
Cardoza Hastings (WA) Meeks (NY)  
Carnahan Hayes Melancon  
Carson Hayworth Menendez  
Carter Hefley Mica  
Case Hensarling Michaud  
Castle Herger Millender-  
Chabot Herseth McDonald  
Chandler Hinchey Miller (FL)  
Chocola Hobson Miller (MI)  
Clay Hoekstra Miller (NC)  
Cleave Holden Miller, Gary  
Clyburn Holt Miller, George  
Coble Honda Mollohan  
Cole (OK) Hooley Moore (KS)  
Conaway Hostettler Moore (WI)  
Conyers Hoyer Moran (KS)  
Cooper Hulshof Moran (VA)  
Costello Hyde Murphy  
Cox Inglis (SC) Murtha  
Cramer Inslee Myrick  
Crenshaw Israel Nadler  
Cubin Issa Napolitano  
Cuellar Istook Neugebauer  
Culberson Jackson (IL) Ney  
Cummings Jackson-Lee Northup  
Cunningham (TX) Norwood  
Davis (AL) Jefferson Nunes  
Davis (CA) Johnson (CT) Oberstar  
Davis (FL) Johnson, E. B. Obey  
Davis (KY) Johnson, Sam Olver  
Davis (TN) Jones (NC) Ortiz  
Davis, Jo Ann Jones (OH) Osborne  
Davis, Tom Kanjorski Otter  
Deal (GA) Keller Owens  
DeFazio Kelly Oxley  
DeGette Kennedy (MN) Pallone

Pastor Sabo Taylor (NC)  
Paul Salazar Terry  
Payne Sanchez, Linda Thomas  
Pearce T. Thompson (CA)  
Pelosi Sanchez, Loretta Thompson (MS)  
Pence Sanders Thornberry  
Peterson (MN) Saxton Tiaht  
Peterson (PA) Schiff Tiberi  
Petri Schwartz (PA) Tierney  
Pickering Schwarz (MI) Turner  
Pitts Scott (GA) Udall (NM)  
Platts Scott (VA) Upton  
Poe Sensenbrenner Van Hollen  
Pombo Serrano Velázquez  
Pomeroy Shaw Visclosky  
Porter Shays Walden (OR)  
Price (GA) Sherman Walsh  
Price (NC) Sherwood Wamp  
Putnam Shimkus Wasserman  
Radanovich Shuster Schultz  
Rahall Simmons Waters  
Ramstad Simpson Watt  
Rangel Skelton Waxman  
Regula Slaughter Weldon (FL)  
Rehberg Smith (NJ) Weldon (PA)  
Reichert Smith (TX) Westmoreland  
Renzi Smith (WA) Wexler  
Reynolds Snyder Berry  
Rogers (AL) Soder Whitfield  
Rogers (KY) Solis Wicker  
Rogers (MI) Souder Wilson (NM)  
Rohrabacher Spratt Wilson (SC)  
Ros-Lehtinen Stearns Wolf  
Ross Stupak Woolsey  
Rothman Sullivan Wu  
Roybal-Allard Tancred Wynn  
Royce Tanner Young (AK)  
Ruppersberger Tauscher Young (FL)  
Ryan (WI) Taylor (MS)

NOT VOTING—48

Boswell Gibbons Pryce (OH)  
Boyd Gutierrez Reyes  
Brady (PA) Higgins Rush  
Brown, Corrine Hinojosa Ryan (OH)  
Buyer Hunter Ryun (KS)  
Capuano Jenkins Schakowsky  
Costa Jindal Sessions  
Crowley Johnson (IL) Shadegg  
Davis (IL) Kaptur Stark  
DeLay Larsen (WA) Strickland  
Doyle Leach Sweeney  
Etheridge McKinney Towns  
Evans Musgrave Udall (CO)  
Fattah Neal (MA) Watson  
Ford Nussle Weiner  
Frelinghuysen Pascrell Weller

□ 1853

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.

ACKNOWLEDGING AFRICAN DESCENDANTS OF THE TRANS-ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE IN ALL OF THE AMERICAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLINE). The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 175, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LETHINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 175, as amended, 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 382, nays 6,

answered “present” 2, not voting 43, as follows:

[Roll No. 381]  
YEAS—382

Abercrombie Dent Kind  
Ackerman Diaz-Balart, L. King (NY)  
Aderholt Diaz-Balart, M. Kingston  
Akin Dicks Kirk  
Alexander Dingell Kline  
Allen Doggett Knollenberg  
Andrews Doolittle Kolbe  
Baca Doyle Kucinich  
Bachus Drake Kuhl (NY)  
Baird Dreier LaHood  
Baker Duncan Langevin  
Baldwin Edwards Lantos  
Barrett (SC) Ehlers Larson (CT)  
Barrow Barrow Emanuel Latham  
Bartlett (MD) Barton (TX) Emerson LaTourette  
Bass Engel Lee  
Bean English (PA) Levin  
Beauprez Eshoo Lewis (CA)  
Becerra Everett Lewis (GA)  
Berkley Farr Lewis (KY)  
Berman Beran Linder  
Berry Ferguson Lipinski  
Biggert Filner LoBiondo  
Bilirakis Fitzpatrick (PA) Loggren, Zoe  
Bishop (GA) Foley Lowey  
Bishop (NY) Forbes Lucas  
Bishop (UT) Fortenberry Lungren, Daniel  
Blackburn Fossella E.  
Blumenauer Blumenthauer Lynch  
Blunt Frank (MA) Mack  
Boehlert Boehlert Franks (AZ) Maloney  
Boehner Bonilla Gallegly Manzullo  
Bonner Bonner Garrett (NJ) Marchant  
Bono Gerlach Marchant  
Boozman Gilchrest Marchant  
Boren Gillmor Markey  
Boucher Gingrey Marshall  
Boustany Gohmert Matheson  
Bradley (NH) Gonzalez Matsui  
Brady (TX) Goode McCarthy  
Brown (OH) Goodlatte McCaul (TX)  
Brown (SC) Gordon McCollum (MN)  
Brown-Waite, Granger McCotter  
Ginny Graves McCreery  
Burgess Green (WI) McDermott  
Burton (IN) Green, Al McGovern  
Butterfield Green, Gene McHenry  
Calvert Grijalva McHugh  
Camp Gutknecht McIntyre  
Cannon Hall McKeon  
Cantor Harman McMorris  
Capito Harris McNulty  
Capps Hart Meehan  
Cardin Hastings (FL) Meek (FL)  
Cardoza Hastings (WA) Meeks (NY)  
Carnahan Hayes Melancon  
Carson Hayworth Menendez  
Carter Hefley Mica  
Case Hensarling Michaud  
Castle Herger Millender-  
Chabot Herseth McDonald  
Chandler Hinchey Miller (FL)  
Chocola Hobson Miller (MI)  
Clay Hoekstra Miller (NC)  
Cleave Holden Miller, Gary  
Clyburn Holt Miller, George  
Coble Honda Mollohan  
Cole (OK) Hooley Moore (KS)  
Conaway Hostettler Moore (WI)  
Conyers Hoyer Moran (KS)  
Cooper Hulshof Moran (VA)  
Costello Hyde Murphy  
Cox Inglis (SC) Murtha  
Cramer Inslee Myrick  
Crenshaw Israel Nadler  
Cubin Issa Napolitano  
Cuellar Istook Neugebauer  
Culberson Jackson (IL) Ney  
Cummings Jackson-Lee Northup  
Cunningham (TX) Norwood  
Davis (AL) Jefferson Nunes  
Davis (CA) Johnson (CT) Oberstar  
Davis (FL) Johnson, E. B. Obey  
Davis (KY) Johnson, Sam Olver  
Davis (TN) Jones (NC) Ortiz  
Davis, Jo Ann Jones (OH) Osborne  
Davis, Tom Kanjorski Otter  
Deal (GA) Keller Owens  
DeFazio Kelly Oxley  
DeGette Kennedy (MN) Pallone

Peterson (MN) Sanchez, Loretta Thomas  
 Peterson (PA) Sanders Thompson (CA)  
 Petri Saxton Thompson (MS)  
 Pickering Schiff Thornberry  
 Pitts Schwartz (PA) Tiahrt  
 Platts Schwarz (MI) Tiberi  
 Poe Scott (GA) Tierney  
 Pombo Scott (VA) Turner  
 Pomeroy Sensenbrenner Udall (CO)  
 Porter Serrano Udall (NM)  
 Price (NC) Shaw Upton  
 Putnam Shays Van Hollen  
 Radanovich Sherman Abercrombie  
 Rahall Sherwood Deal (GA)  
 Ramstad Shimkus Ackerman  
 Rangel Shuster DeFazio  
 Regula Simmons Walden (OR)  
 Rehberg Simpson Walsh Alexander  
 Reichert Skelton Wamp Allen  
 Renzi Slaughter Wasserman  
 Reynolds Smith (NJ) Schultz  
 Rogers (AL) Smith (TX) Waters  
 Rogers (KY) Smith (WA) Watt  
 Rogers (MI) Snyder Waxman  
 Rohrabacher Sodrel Weldon (FL)  
 Ros-Lehtinen Solis Weldon (PA)  
 Ross Souder Wexler  
 Rothman Spratt Whitfield  
 Roybal-Allard Stearns Wicker  
 Royce Stupak Wilson (NM)  
 Ruppertsberger Sullivan Wilson (SC)  
 Ryan (OH) Tancredo Wolf  
 Ryan (WI) Tanner Woolsey  
 Sabo Tauscher Wu  
 Salazar Taylor (MS) Wynn  
 Sánchez, Linda Taylor (NC) Young (AK)  
 T. Terry Young (FL)

NAYS—6

Deal (GA) King (IA) Paul  
 Flake Norwood Westmoreland

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—2

Bartlett (MD) Price (GA)

NOT VOTING—43

Boswell Gutierrez Reyes  
 Brady (PA) Higgins Rush  
 Brown, Corrine Hinojosa Ryan (KS)  
 Buyer Hunter Schakowsky  
 Capuano Jenkins Sessions  
 Costa Jindal Shadegg  
 Crowley Johnson (IL) Stark  
 Davis (IL) Kaptur Strickland  
 DeLay Larsen (WA) Sweeney  
 Etheridge Leach Towns  
 Evans McKinney Watson  
 Fattah Neal (MA) Weiner  
 Ford Nussle Weller  
 Frelinghuysen Pascrell  
 Gibbons Pryce (OH)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLINE) (during the vote). Members are advised 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1903

So (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent 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.

COMMENDING THE CONTINUING IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 364.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend

the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 364, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 388, nays 0, not voting 45, as follows:

[Roll No. 382]

YEAS—388

Abercrombie Davis, Tom Jefferson  
 Ackerman Deal (GA) Johnson (CT)  
 Aderholt DeFazio Johnson, E. B.  
 Akin DeGette Johnson, Sam  
 Alexander Delahunt Jones (NC)  
 Allen DeLauro Jones (OH)  
 Andrews Dent Kanjorski  
 Baca Diaz-Balart, L. Keller  
 Bachus Diaz-Balart, M. Kelly  
 Baird Dicks Kennedy (MN)  
 Baker Dingell Kennedy (RI)  
 Baldwin Doggett Kildee  
 Barrett (SC) Doolittle Kilpatrick (MI)  
 Barrow Doyle Kind  
 Bartlett (MD) Drake King (IA)  
 Bass Dreier King (NY)  
 Bean Duncan Kingston  
 Beauprez Edwards Kirk  
 Becerra Ehlers Kline  
 Berkley Emanuel Knollenberg  
 Berman Emerson Kolbe  
 Berry Engel Kucinich  
 Biggart English (PA) LaHood  
 Bilirakis Eshoo Langevin  
 Bishop (GA) Everett Lantos  
 Bishop (NY) Farr Larson (CT)  
 Bishop (UT) Feeney Latham  
 Blackburn Ferguson LaTourette  
 Blumenauer Filner Lee  
 Blunt Fitzpatrick (PA) Levin  
 Boehlert Flake Lewis (CA)  
 Boehner Foley Lewis (GA)  
 Bonilla Forbes Lewis (KY)  
 Bonner Fortenberry Linder  
 Bono Fossella Lipinski  
 Boozman Foyx LoBiondo  
 Boren Franks (MA) Lofgren, Zoe  
 Boucher Franks (AZ) Lowey  
 Boustany Gallegly Lucas  
 Boyd Garrett (NJ) Lungren, Daniel  
 Bradley (NH) Gerlach E.  
 Brady (TX) Gilchrest Lynch  
 Brown (OH) Gillmor Mack  
 Brown (SC) Gingrey Maloney  
 Brown-Waite, Gohmert Manzullo  
 Ginny Goode Marchant  
 Burgess Goodlatte Markey  
 Burton (IN) Gordon Marshall  
 Butterfield Granger Matheson  
 Calvert Graves Matsui  
 Camp Green (WI) McCarthy  
 Cannon Green, Al McCaul (TX)  
 Cantor Green, Gene McCollum (MN)  
 Capito Grijalva McCotter  
 Capps Gutknecht McDermott  
 Cardin Hall McGovern  
 Cardoza Harman McHenry  
 Carnahan Harris McHugh  
 Carson Hart McIntyre  
 Carter Hastings (FL) McMorris  
 Case Hastings (WA) McNulty  
 Castle Hayes Meek (FL)  
 Chabot Hayworth Meeks (NY)  
 Chandler Hefley Melancon  
 Chocola Hensarling Menendez  
 Clay Herger Mica  
 Cleaver Herseth Michaud  
 Clyburn Hinchee Millender  
 Coble Hobson McDonald  
 Cole (OK) Hoekstra Miller (FL)  
 Conaway Holden Miller (MI)  
 Conyers Holt Miller (NC)  
 Cooper Honda Miller, Gary  
 Costello Hooley Miller, George  
 Cox Hostettler Mollohan  
 Cramer Hoyer Moore (KS)  
 Crenshaw Hulshof Moore (WI)  
 Cuellar Hunter Moran (KS)  
 Culberson Hyde Moran (VA)  
 Cummings Inglis (SC) Murphy  
 Cunningham Inslee Murtha  
 Davis (AL) Israel Musgrave  
 Davis (CA) Issa Myrick  
 Davis (FL) Istook Nadler  
 Davis (KY) Jackson (IL) Napolitano  
 Davis (TN) Jackson-Lee Neal (MA)  
 Davis, Jo Ann (TX) Neugebauer

Ney Rohrabacher Tancredo  
 Northup Ros-Lehtinen Tanner  
 Norwood Ross Tauscher  
 Nunes Rothman Taylor (MS)  
 Oberstar Roybal-Allard Taylor (NC)  
 Obey Royce Terry  
 Olver Ruppertsberger Thomas  
 Ortiz Ryan (OH) Thompson (CA)  
 Osborne Ryan (WI) Thompson (MS)  
 Otter Sabo Thornberry  
 Owens Salazar  
 Oxley Sánchez, Linda  
 Pallone T.  
 Pastor Sanchez, Loretta  
 Paul Sanders Turner  
 Payne Saxton Udall (CO)  
 Pearce Schiff Udall (NM)  
 Pelosi Schwartz (PA) Upton  
 Pence Schwarz (MI) Van Hollen  
 Peterson (MN) Scott (GA) Velázquez  
 Peterson (PA) Scott (VA) Vislosky  
 Petri Sensenbrenner Walden (OR)  
 Pickering Serrano Walsh  
 Pitts Shaw Wamp  
 Platts Shays Wasserman  
 Poe Sherman Schultz  
 Pombo Sherwood Waters  
 Pomeroy Shimkus Watt  
 Porter Shuster Waxman  
 Price (GA) Simmons Weldon (FL)  
 Price (NC) Simpson Weldon (PA)  
 Putnam Skelton Westmoreland  
 Radanovich Slaughter  
 Rahall Smith (NJ) Wexler  
 Ramstad Smith (TX) Whitfield  
 Rangel Smith (WA) Wicker  
 Regula Snyder Wilson (NM)  
 Rehberg Sodrel Wilson (SC)  
 Reichert Solis Wolf  
 Renzi Souder Woolsey  
 Reynolds Spratt Wu  
 Rogers (AL) Stearns Wynn  
 Rogers (KY) Stupak Young (AK)  
 Rogers (MI) Sullivan Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—45

Boswell Gibbons Pascrell  
 Brady (PA) Gutierrez Pryce (OH)  
 Brown, Corrine Higgins Reyes  
 Buyer Hinojosa Rush  
 Capuano Jenkins Ryan (KS)  
 Costa Jindal Schakowsky  
 Crowley Johnson (IL) Sessions  
 Cubin Kaptur Shadegg  
 Davis (IL) Kuhl (NY) Stark  
 DeLay Larsen (WA) Strickland  
 Etheridge Leach Sweeney  
 Evans McCreary Towns  
 Fattah McKeon Watson  
 Ford McKinney Weiner  
 Frelinghuysen Nussle Weller

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLINE) (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1920

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.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 3154

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 3154.

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

There was no objection.

SUPPORTING CAFTA

(Mr. CONAWAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor tonight to rise in support of the CAFTA agreement, DR-CAFTA. It is important in three broad areas. One is trade. It is important to American manufacturers that the tariffs that they currently pay with goods and services built and made in the United States are sold into these countries.

It is also important for the agricultural interests in this country that we continue to send American goods and products into these countries for use under the Caribbean Basin Initiative.

It is also important from a national security standpoint. These are fledgling democracies in Central America. America is a safer place if we have democracies in place than if we have other forms of government. This trade agreement will help undergird these democracies and help them stand against influences like Hugo Chavez of Venezuela who does not have America's interests in his plans.

It is also important from an immigration standpoint. The Caribbean Basin Initiative will expire on its own terms in 2008. If those jobs created under that initiative go to other parts of the world like Thailand or the Philippines, then the people currently holding those jobs will feel pressured, percolating up from Mexico and entering this country illegally, to find work.

So, given the importance the impact of CAFTA will have on these broad areas, I stand in support of it and urge my colleagues to support it also.

#### ENCOURAGING ROVE TO LEAK

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, a lot has been made lately about leaks coming from the White House. The outing of Valerie Wilson was admittedly an egregious act.

But I, for one, would like more leaks, not less. I am not looking for the kind of leaks that tripped up Karl Rove and Scooter Libby.

Mr. Speaker, it would have been useful if someone had leaked the true cost of the Medicare prescription drug program. They told us it would cost only \$400 billion when they knew all along that the real cost was much higher. The American people would be asked to pay \$800 billion.

It certainly would have been nice if some brave soul in the White House had told the American people that the President's tax cuts would raid the Social Security Trust Fund. We are still waiting for someone to leak the President's plan on Social Security.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say, do not stop here, Mr. Rove. Dishing the names of our own national security agents may be your idea of political "fair game," but turn up that leaky faucet and tell us what we really need to know, and start with the truth.

#### AID FOR HURRICANE VICTIMS

(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, I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for very informative debate on H. Con. Res. 175 to focus on the African Americans of Latino descent in the Caribbean and places surrounding the United States.

I rise today to remind my colleagues that our neighbors to the south, from Jamaica to the coast of Mexico, certainly Haiti and certainly Cuba, over the last 7 days have faced very difficult times with the number of hurricanes that have hit their shore. I know that we faced enormous impacts last year to the State of Florida, but the resources that are utilized in those countries are so unequal.

As we debate the Foreign Relations Authorization bill, I hope we will be reminded of the enormous need. In Cuba, for example, 600,000 people were displaced. We come to find out that the offer from the United States was only \$50,000. I think that America can do better, and I would hope that humanitarian aid can really come from the people of the United States, somewhat similar to the tsunami relief. These are our neighbors. This is the third border of security.

So Jamaica and Haiti that are in crisis with the hurricane and other devastating aspects, I would hope that we would respect the idea that we are our brothers and sisters' keeper, and aid these individuals who are now suffering because of natural disasters.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

#### WORKING TO IMPROVE NICS SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk again about the National Instant Criminal Background Check. We know that the States are the weak link as far as getting background checks into our NICS system. We have seen so many times that thousands of people are slipping through the system because the States do not have the money to bring up their computer systems to be able to give the information to the NICS system here in Washington.

We know that the NICS system works. We know that over 700,000 people have been denied guns, those that

should not be able to buy them but, again, a system is only as good as the database that it has.

The NICS system did pass here in the House on a voice vote going back to 1999. Unfortunately, the Senate ran out of time, so I have reintroduced it, and I am hoping that we might be able to get it through here again on a suspension bill.

Some facts: Twenty-five States have automated less than 60 percent of their felony convictions. We know that people that are felons or who have been mentally institutionalized should not be able to buy a gun. Unfortunately, a tragedy that was in my own State of New York on the island in Nassau County where I live, a person was able to buy a gun legally because the States did not give the NICS system the information that he should have never been able to buy a gun.

□ 1930

Unfortunately a shooting happened in a local church, Our Lady of Lourdes, and two people were killed, a priest and a parishioner at a morning mass. We know that mental health problems and restraining orders did not come up on the NICS system and that is a shame. When you think about what can be done to certainly deter those people that should not be able to buy a gun, and especially today in today's world that we are looking at. I know the debate here in the House all the time is the suspicion that we are trying to take away the right of someone to own a gun. I happen to believe in the second amendment. I happen to believe that people if they want to own guns should be able to. But again, we must look at those that should not be able to buy guns.

When we talk about the health care system in this Nation, we know it costs this health care system, our health care system, our taxpayers' health care system over \$1 billion a year because of gun violence in this Nation. And unless we open up the dialog a little bit differently and start to trust each other that we can do a better job, we should be doing a better job, and that is only going to happen if we help the States.

We know that when a judgment comes down against a person in the courts or there is a restraining order, the majority of States do not report that to the NICS system. When someone does a crime in Texas and they come to New York and buy a gun it is not brought up through the system. So we have to do a better job. We can save lives. We can save money on the health care system.

And by the way, I happen to think it is very important that we also look at how we look at our terrorisms that we are trying to deal with in the next few days. You know, when we talk about the PATRIOT Act coming up, I think that the debate will be about some civil liberties being taken away.

But yet when we look at gun ownership we should be making sure that

those that are not supposed to have a gun, and this goes back to the 1968 Gun Control Act, the bill follows it, the NRA has supported this bill. We have good bipartisan support certainly in the other body and I am hoping that before the session ends that we can bring this bill up.

H.R. 1415, the NICS Improvement Act, will give grants to the States so they are able to be able to bring their systems up to par so here in Washington we will have the information that we need. You know, again, I hope that in time that we will be able to change the debate on gun violence in this country. We can save lives. We can save certainly on health care costs for this Nation if we can have a good honest debate on the health care system with the gun system.

#### YOU ONLY PASS THIS WAY ONCE

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

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise to pay tribute to a very, very special American, a very good friend of mine who died last week after battling a very cruel and mean disease, ALS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, better known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

Wayne Arnold was a friend of mine and he was a friend of many. In fact, I remember when I first got involved in politics Wayne Arnold was one of my first supporters, and I will always be grateful for that.

But Wayne was a very special American in so many ways. I would like to say that he was a believer. He was a doer and he was a giver. He was involved in so many things in the Rochester area. He was an accountant. By the time he retired he was a partner in one of the largest firms in Minnesota. He was active in the Chamber of Commerce. He was active in his church. He was active in education issues. But he was not just active. He got things done.

I think perhaps one of the greatest tributes to Wayne Arnold in the Rochester area is what he did in helping to really spearhead the building of a memorial there to all of the soldiers and all of those who have contributed so much, and we have this marvelous memorial which is largely because of people like Wayne Arnold. When he heard about this, that we were going to build this special memorial at Soldiers Field in Rochester, Minnesota he not only got behind it, he became the treasurer. He helped raise the money. He did so much on that and so many other fronts.

I also want to submit for the RECORD and I want to thank Greg Sellnow of the Rochester Post Bulletin, and I would like to submit for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a copy of a piece that he wrote last week about Wayne Arnold, and the title of which was the

philosophy that Wayne Arnold lived by. The title is "You Only Pass This Way Once." And he sort of branded that philosophy on all of his children and many of the people that he knew and worked with. And in it I think he meant that you only get an opportunity to do the right thing every so often, and you have got to take advantage of those opportunities to do the right thing.

I talked to Wayne shortly after he learned that he had ALS and he was not sad. He was not morbid. He was not angry. He saw it as a challenge. In fact, in the article that Greg Sellnow has written about him, he said that he had sent him an e-mail a couple of years ago. And in that e-mail Wayne Arnold said to Greg, I look at this disease as a gift, he wrote in an e-mail about 2 years ago, not many people have the luxury to be able to prepare like this.

Wayne Arnold was a very special person. He did so much for our community. He did so much for us. He did so much for me.

I would like to close by just saying that I have no doubt that Wayne was greeted at the gate with those words, "Well done, oh, good and noble servant."

[From the Post Bulletin, Jul. 16, 2005]

#### YOU ONLY PASS THIS WAY ONCE

(By Greg Sellnow)

Wayne Arnold had a motto. "You only pass this way once," he told his five children and 12 grandchildren over and over again.

It was a didactic, life-guiding philosophy that had so much resonance in Wayne's family that one of his grandsons had it tattooed on his back.

"What he meant was that you'll only be in a certain situation or a place in your life once," Wayne's son Mike told me the other day. "And you should try to leave it a better place or a better person. It was the same way he felt about his community."

Wayne, who died Tuesday at the age of 70, lived that motto. His family, his community and many of the hundreds of lives he touched have all been bettered by his presence among us.

I first met Wayne in August 2003 after he sent me an e-mail about the upcoming Walk to Defeat ALS. On the day I talked to him at his northwest Rochester home, he'd had a busy morning. He'd sent out 44 e-mails to friends, relatives, former customers and acquaintances asking them to participate or donate to the annual fundraiser.

Wayne had been diagnosed with ALS, commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease, about six months earlier, and he'd made fundraising for the Minnesota Chapter of the ALS Association the newest beneficiary of his seemingly unending energy and passion.

At the time, I remember trying to put myself in Wayne's place. I tried to imagine what I'd do if I'd been diagnosed with a fatal illness that usually claims its victims within three years of diagnosis. I figured that maybe I'd travel, visit some of the places I'd wanted to see, spend time with my family and enjoy the rest of my life as best I could.

But I couldn't really imagine myself doing what Wayne was doing—sitting in front of a computer or at the phone for hours and hours raising money for a cause—a cure for ALS—he knew couldn't help him.

It all made sense for Wayne, though. It fit perfectly with his life's philosophy.

"I look at this disease as a gift," he wrote me in an e-mail two years ago. "Not many

people have the luxury to be able to prepare like this."

Wayne helped raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for the state ALS group, and he recruited others to get involved. They include his son Mike, who is the organization's treasurer.

I don't pretend to know what it means to be an ideal citizen. But I have to think Wayne came pretty close. He was one of the most committed, involved people I've met during my time in Rochester. He met his wife, Donna, when both were students at Lourdes High School, and after they married the couple decided to stay in their hometown. They remained deeply committed to Lourdes and Rochester for the next half century.

After serving a stint in the U.S. Coast Guard, Wayne became an accountant, retiring as a partner in the firm of McGladrey & Pullen in 1996. By then, he'd served on the boards of more than a dozen community, business and church organizations. He was recognized by the Jaycees as one of the 10 Outstanding Young Men of Minnesota. He served as president of the Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce. He was a founding committee member and secretary treasurer of the Soldiers Field Veterans Memorial. The list goes on and on.

"I can't get enough of it," Wayne told me the last time we talked, in September 2004. "I've got to be doing something."

Through it all, though, Wayne set aside plenty of time for his family. Just three weeks ago, he traveled to Montana to attend the wedding of his godson.

"You only pass this way once." What a powerful motto around which to base one's life.

And death. Wayne donated his brain and spinal cord for research into a cure for ALS.

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

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

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my special order at this time.

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

There was no objection.

#### APOLOGIES FOR IRAQ AND KARL ROVE

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, a few weeks ago I gave a speech about the importance of apologizing for doing something wrong, one of the first lessons that we are taught as children actually. Our capacity for saying I am sorry is part of what makes us a functioning and civilized society.

Here in Washington, every time a Democrat uses strong rhetoric to condemn the politics or the policies of the Bush administration there is a relentless pressure from the Republicans for

an apology, and it continues. It continues as a repeated pattern that is repeating itself right now with the Karl Rove affair.

Democrats are right to be incensed that the President's chief adviser is alleged to have revealed Valerie Plame as a CIA operative, purportedly publicizing this information to get back at Plame's husband, Joe Wilson, for disagreeing with the Bush administration's assessment that Saddam Hussein was, to quote Vice President CHENEY's flawed analysis, reconstituting his nuclear weapons program.

Maybe my memory is failing me, but I do not recall any Republicans calling on Karl Rove to apologize for cold-heartedly revealing the identity of a CIA operative as part of a political vendetta to get back at her husband. Nor has the Vice President apologized for his mistake about Iraq's nonexistent nuclear weapons program which led us into war.

The personally destructive behavior that Republicans have engaged in to protect Karl Rove and another high ranking Bush administration official, Vice President CHENEY's chief of staff, Scooter Libby, actually might be their way to change the subject to avoid any question about the merits of the Iraq war and how it has been so poorly managed.

Why do they want to avoid that discussion? Because the American people have completely lost confidence in the administration's Iraq policy. Where, for example, is the apology for the deaths of more than 1,700 Americans? Not only is there no apology, Secretary Rumsfeld could not be bothered to personally sign condolence letters to their families.

Where is the apology for sending young men and women to war without the proper protective armor on their bodies and on their vehicles?

Where is the apology for pinching pennies on veterans health benefits when these brave soldiers return home?

Where is the apology for the immoral doctrine of this preemptive war?

And where is the apology for the gross deceptions used to justify it, for the missing weapons of mass destruction, for the cooked intelligence, for the phony al Qaeda-Saddam link?

Where is the apology for wasting more than \$200 billion for taxpayer money on this mistake, and for the poor leadership that led to torture of prisoners and prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib in Guantanamo?

Where is the apology for committing our troops and our Nation to this mission without a postwar plan to secure the peace?

Where is the apology for the arrogance that squandered America's international goodwill and damaged our relationships with our closest allies?

And finally, where is the apology for revealing the identity of a good man's wife just because he disagreed with the administration on policy grounds?

There is something wrong with our moral compass if we have to apologize

for speaking bluntly, while our leaders can commit the biggest foreign policy blunder since Vietnam and get away without apology or accountability. To tell the truth, an apology would not be enough for everything they have done. An apology, after all, is just more words.

It is time for action. It is time for accountability and it is time for Karl Rove's security clearance to be revoked. It is time for a tangible admission that the Iraq war was immorally conceived and has been incompetently managed. It is time for an end of the politics of personal destruction and an end of destructive national policies.

If the President wants to earn back the Nation's trust he needs to end this shameful, shameful chapter in our Nation's history, and without apology he needs to bring our troops home.

#### CENTRAL AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

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

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am back on the floor tonight to talk about CAFTA, the Central American Free Trade Agreement, that I think is the wrong agreement for the American people and particularly the workers of this great Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to start with a quote by Ross Perot. This was during the presidential elections of 1992, at least the debates. And Mr. Perot said, you implement that NAFTA, the Mexican trade agreement where they pay people a dollar an hour, have no health care, no retirement, no pollution controls, and you are going to hear a giant sucking noise of jobs being pulled out of this country right at a time when we need the tax base to pay the debt.

Well, I would like to say to Mr. Perot that times have not changed. We need that tax base right now.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you a little bit about NAFTA. I was not here in the Congress when that was debated and when it was passed and became the law of the land. Before NAFTA we ran a trade surplus with Mexico. Now the U.S. runs a \$45 billion annual trade deficit with Mexico. My State of North Carolina has lost over 200,000 manufacturing jobs since 1993. The United States of America has lost over 2.5 million manufacturing jobs.

The number of Mexican illegal aliens in the United States has grown from 1.3 million, and that was in 1992, the year before NAFTA was signed into law, to over 5.9 million in the year 2004. That is a 350 percent increase. 350 percent increase. CAFTA will continue these trends. 85 percent of the language in CAFTA is identical to the language in NAFTA.

Let us talk about Trade Promotion Authority, which I did not vote for by the way. America's, since August of 2002, annual trade deficit grew by \$195

billion to \$217 billion, and of that \$150 billion with China.

North Carolina has lost over 52,000 manufacturing jobs since TPA, Trade Promotion Authority, became the law of the land, and the United States of America has lost over 600,000 million manufacturing jobs.

Mr. Speaker, CAFTA is not the answer. It is not that we are opposed to a CAFTA agreement, but this CAFTA agreement is not good for the American people.

And let me give you just a little bit of an example of CAFTA and how it will impact those in Central America. It will not help to raise their income levels at all. It will not help them with health care, it will not help them with improving their livelihood, if you will. The average in Nicaragua is \$0.95 an hour. Guatemala is \$1 an hour. El Salvador is \$1.25 an hour. These countries have few labor laws, environmental standards, and CAFTA does nothing if at all to improve those.

CAFTA allows China to backdoor fabric into Central America where it can be assembled and shipped into the United States duty free. The last thing we need is to help China. We have outsourced 1.5 million jobs since 1989 to China.

Mr. Speaker, in the little bit of time I have left I want to give you from the Washington Post today an article. There were many here on the floor of the House that wanted to give permanent normal trade status to China. I was opposed to that, by the way.

Let me just read from the Washington Post and then I will close, Mr. Speaker. The trouble at Futai began the last day of May when workers received their monthly salary at about 4 p.m. For many the computer generated pay slip contained intolerable news.

□ 1945

“From \$60 to \$100 a month for weaving sweaters, their piecework pay had slumped to \$50 and \$40 and even lower, they said. That, the workers complained, was not enough compensation for 11-hour shifts and one day's rest a month, the day after payday.”

Mr. Speaker, this is the problem with these trade agreements. They are not good for the American people, and they are not good usually for the country that we reach these agreements with. And I hope that this House will continue to stand strong in a bipartisan way, Democrat and Republican, and stand in opposition to CAFTA; and if it is brought to the floor of the House in the next 10 days, I hope we will defeat it on behalf of the American worker who needs help from the United States Congress.

#### REASONS AGAINST CAFTA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, tonight I wish to suggest eight more reasons to vote “no” on CAFTA.

First of all, CAFTA continues the failed neo-liberal trade regimen that puts freedom last rather than first. CAFTA assumes, like NAFTA before it, that trade will bring freedom. But where contingent liberties do not really exist, such flawed trade approaches bring not freedom but exploitation and hardship on the majority of the people struggling to get into the middle class.

A “no” vote on CAFTA will result in its renegotiation to expand liberty, opportunity, and hope. Respect and dignity for workers, fresh water, clean air, treated sewage are rights that should belong to every human being. Surely our continent, our hemisphere deserves better than CAFTA.

Another reason to vote “no” on CAFTA is that it will outsource more U.S. jobs and worsen our burgeoning trade deficit. NAFTA’s supporters promised us millions of jobs, as the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) has stated, as well as a trade surplus for our country. Exactly the opposite has happened.

The U.S. has lost over 1 million jobs to Mexico and Canada resulting from NAFTA, and each year we have fallen into deeper and deeper trade deficit with those nations.

Another reason to vote “no” on CAFTA is it will fuel more illegal immigration. Just like NAFTA, millions of people will be uprooted from the rural countryside with no hope, no continental labor rights, and become an exploitable class of people used by the most unscrupulous traffickers on the continent.

Another reason to vote “no” on CAFTA is that Central American workers will continue to be subjected to sweatshop conditions because the enforcement provisions that exist in the Caribbean Basin Initiative, CBI, will not apply. Right now CAFTA countries are not robust democracies. But what the CBI does in the Caribbean is assures that trade rights are linked to access to the U.S. market and enforcement of labor provisions.

CAFTA backslides on this lock-tight trigger. It basically has some encouraging language to nations to enforce their labor laws which may be poor or non-existent, and no matter how weak, gives them a go-ahead and then sets aside money in the agreement to give to the very governments that are not enforcing those laws anyway.

Another reason to vote “no” on CAFTA is it hurts U.S. agriculture. In fact, CAFTA nations already are saturated with U.S. agricultural products which consume about 94 percent of their market, so there is not much room to grow there. And, more importantly, CAFTA provides that Brazilian ethanol and other imports, if processed inside of these Central American countries, and 35 percent of the processing occurs there, can be back-doored into the United States. So it will be the

same kind of back-dooring into the United States of products from these other countries that has happened with NAFTA, Mexico and Canada.

Another reason to vote “no” on CAFTA is it will regress democratic reform in CAFTA countries. CAFTA does nothing to advance democracy in the six nations that are a part of it. In fact, the civil societies in those countries are broadly opposed to CAFTA. Huge demonstrations against CAFTA have occurred in every one of those nations, and the manner in which this is being voted on in those countries is truly troublesome. Three countries have used emergency procedures, bringing up late at night, the public does not know what is happening. And in the other three countries it has not even been voted on. Not exactly a way to carry forward the idea of democratic liberties across the hemisphere.

Another reason to vote “no” on CAFTA is its lack of real environmental enforcement and our knowledge that with NAFTA drug trafficking has snubbed up right against the U.S. border at Juarez. When you have these trade agreements that do not have other contingent policies attached to them, what you end up doing is empowering some of the worst forces in the hemisphere.

Finally, CAFTA will hurt women workers disproportionately in societies where women’s rights are already marginalized. How would you like to be a woman in a textile plant in one of those countries? Or how about in a banana-packing shed? What do you think your future would look like? Sixty percent of those working in these sweatshop conditions are women workers with absolutely no labor protections. CAFTA is doing nothing to improve their standing in our hemisphere, and it will do nothing to obliterate the sweatshops that are so very much a part of their lives.

The combined purchasing powers of all of these Central American countries is the same as Columbus, Ohio or New Haven, Connecticut. They really do not have the kind wherewithal to purchase value-added products from our country.

So what is CAFTA really about? CAFTA is merely about expanding the NAFTA model to six other countries, providing more export platforms to the United States of goods, both agricultural and manufactured are back-doored into this country, and providing none of the advances in freedom, liberty, opportunity and hope that should be the hallmark of this country at home and abroad.

#### EGYPTIAN FOREIGN RELATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the House is poised to consider House Resolution 2601, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for

Fiscal Years 2006 and 2007. Among the many critical provisions in this bill is one relating to Egypt that I would like to discuss tonight.

Despite large amounts of bilateral U.S. assistance, Egypt has failed to modernize its economy, it has failed to end the influence of Islamic influence in the schools and in the media, and it has failed to improve the human rights situation in its homeland.

While Mr. Mubarak continues to pay lip service to holding participatory, multi-party elections, dissidents and those who voice their opposition to the government’s policies continue to be arrested, to be beaten, and otherwise punished for attempting to exercise their most basic fundamental human rights as human beings and Egyptian citizens.

In response, the underlying provisions in the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, also known as the State Department Authorization Bill, shifts funds from military aid to economic assistance for the purpose of supporting Egyptian civil society and improving the quality of life of the Egyptian people.

The underlying provision transfers \$40 million in military aid for each of the next 3 years, a mere 3 percent of Egypt’s overall \$1.3 billion to economic assistance. Egypt faces no military threat. However, Egypt continues to procure jet fighters, tanks, armored personnel carriers, Apache helicopters, anti-aircraft missile batteries, surveillance aircraft, and other equipment under our Foreign Military Sales program, in addition to unconfirmed reports of Egyptian attempts to procure North Korean medium-range missiles, and these are serious questions regarding the purpose and rationale of an ongoing military build-up by the Egyptian Government.

In addition, after decades of promises and unfulfilled commitments to the United States, Egypt’s economic conditions remain dire. The underlying provision in the bill is hardly a major price to pay in order to send the message that Egypt needs to pay more attention to human rights and economic and social development. Not one penny is cut from the overall aid package. It is merely a shift in priorities.

The Hyde/Lantos/Ros-Lehtinen provision is in keeping with U.S. public diplomacy efforts by sending a clear message about U.S. priorities for Egypt’s future and the future for the Egyptian people. It builds good will with the people of the region by supporting educational, economic, and biological development, goals which contribute most effectively to Egypt’s internal stability.

This provision also supports the priorities of President Bush to bring freedom, democracy, and sound economies to the Middle East. He articulated here in this Chamber in the State of the Union earlier this year that the great and proud nation of Egypt, which showed the way toward peace in the

Middle East, can now show the way toward democracy in the Middle East.

Finally, the underlying provisions further supports congressional views articulated in the 9/11 Implementation Act regarding the need to reevaluate our previous policies of supporting dictatorships and, in turn, support civil society and reforms as a means of addressing the precursor conditions which breed terrorism.

In Egypt, we see a nation of great potential; and to fully realize that potential, Egypt must reform itself, economically and politically. The language already in the bill seeks to empower Egyptian civil society rather than the entrenched Egyptian military.

In this context, I ask my colleagues to oppose any amendments that seek to strike this provision. Any amendment to weaken or to strike the Egyptian language in the authorization bill would send the wrong message to Egypt and to other dictatorial regimes in the broader Middle East, that they can proceed with virtual impunity and it is business as usual. In a post-9/11 world, this is the wrong message to send.

#### RENEGOTIATE CAFTA

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, last year this Congress was promised a vote on the Central American Free Trade Agreement by the end of 2004. December 31 came and went. Then at a White House news conference in May, President Bush called on Congress to pass the Central American Free Trade Agreement by Memorial Day. Memorial Day came and went. In June, Congress was once again promised a vote which was supposed to have been before the July 4 recess. The July 4 recess came and went.

Now we understand a vote on the Central American Free Trade Agreement could come in front of the House next week.

The many of us who have been speaking out against CAFTA have a message for this Congress: renegotiate CAFTA.

Those of us opposed to this CAFTA do want a trade agreement with Central America, do want to trade with the five Central American countries and the Dominican Republic; but we want an agree that benefits the many, not the few.

This agreement was negotiated and written by a select few. This agreement benefits those same select few. As the President travels the Nation trying to sell this CAFTA to the American public, he is hearing firsthand from U.S. workers, from family farmers, from small business owners, especially small manufacturers, from ranchers, from religious leaders that they do not want this CAFTA either. Their message is loud and clear: renegotiate CAFTA.

In response to the President's trip this past Friday to North Carolina, a New York Times headline reads, "Bush Sells Trade Pact in Hostile Territory." That is what the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) spoke about earlier, a Republican from North Carolina. A Huntsville, Alabama Times editorial in Sunday's paper reads, "Say No to the Central American Free Trade Agreement." Again, a newspaper understanding that the free trade agreement is not good for Alabama. It is not good for the South. It is not good for Tennessee. It is not good for this country.

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A Wall Street Journal headline today reads, and this is a newspaper that is always supportive of trade agreements, "CAFTA Is No Cure-all For Central America."

This CAFTA represents more than a decade of failed U.S. trade policies. Look what has happened with our trade policies in the last dozen years. In 1992, the year I was elected to Congress, the U.S. had a \$38 billion trade deficit. That means we exported \$38 billion less than we imported. Twelve years later, in 2004, that trade deficit went from \$28 billion in a dozen years to \$618 billion. That translates directly into lost jobs; more than 200,000 lost jobs in the district of the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP), more than 220,000 lost jobs in the district of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) and the district of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL). It is clear our trade policy is simply not working.

CAFTA languished in Congress for more than a year, then passed the Senate last month by the narrowest margin ever of any trade agreement because this wrong-headed trade agreement does not work for Republicans or Democrats. It offends Republicans, dozens of Republicans in this body, and it offends dozens of Democrats in this body.

We know this agreement is a continuation of its dysfunctional cousin, NAFTA, another failed trade policy of the last dozen years. It is the same old story. Every time there is a trade agreement, the President says it will mean more manufacturing products that we will export overseas. Every time there is a trade agreement the President says it will mean more jobs for Americans. And every time there is a trade agreement the President says it will raise the standard of living in the developing countries. Yet with every trade agreement their promises fall by the wayside in favor of large corporate interests that send U.S. jobs overseas and exploit cheap labor abroad.

This CAFTA is simply, as the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) pointed out, about exploiting cheap labor abroad. This CAFTA will not enable the Central American or Nicaraguan, or Honduras, or Guatemala workers to buy cars made in Ohio. It will not

allow those workers to buy software developed in Seattle. It will not mean more prime beef exports from Nebraska, because those workers simply cannot afford to buy those products. This CAFTA, instead, is about U.S. companies moving plants to Honduras, outsourcing jobs to Nicaragua, and exploiting cheap labor in Guatemala.

Desperate after failing to gin up support for the agreement based on its merits, CAFTA supporters are now attempting to buy votes with fantastic promises. And if that fails, they will twist arms. Count on this; this is a prediction: They will call the vote in the middle of the night, hold the rollcall open for hours to pass a bad agreement that will benefit only a select few.

Instead, Mr. Speaker, we should throw out this failed agreement and negotiate a better CAFTA. When the world's poorest people can buy American products and not just make them, we will know then that our trade policies are working.

#### THE ECONOMY/CARL ROVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, 3 years ago, our Democrat colleagues said Republicans should not lower taxes because we needed those tax dollars for more programs and more spending. Republicans knew that more new programs and additional spending was the last thing we needed to be doing. We fought to reduce taxes, and we said that lower taxes would bring this economy out of a recession.

Today, our policies have been proven to be correct. Our tax relief has spurred economic growth and created jobs. We have a near historically low unemployment rate of about 5 percent. Home ownership is at historic highs. We have helped millions of Americans achieve the dream of home ownership. We have a 69 percent home ownership rate.

Mr. Speaker, 146,000 new jobs were created in June, adding to the millions of jobs created in the past 3 years, giving us 25 months of sustained consecutive economic growth. We lowered taxes and this year we are seeing unexpectedly high tax revenues. Our deficit is going to be \$100 billion less because of tremendous economic growth.

And what about this is confusing to Democrats? Well, they say, okay, that is good economic news, but we have a deficit. And to that we say, well, why not join us and cut spending. Let us reduce and eliminate unneeded programs. Let us not raise taxes.

When we lowered taxes, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the minority leader, led the Democrats in predicting that this relief would do nothing at all for our Nation's economy. I think it is fair to say that she and her party are pretty much out of touch on that issue. And I know that

the newspapers, many of which opposed our tax relief, are hesitant to admit that they were wrong, but they should be out there reporting this data, showing the American people that this economy is growing and that jobs are being created.

Mr. Speaker, our philosophy on this side of the aisle is that when you get government out of the way and let the American people in this wonderful free enterprise system go to work, they do it quite well. This great economic news shows that Republicans are on the right side of this argument.

Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of other things I want to say this evening. Last year, former Clinton Security Adviser Sandy Berger stole, that is right, stole classified materials from the National Archives. This is not an accusation. It is fact. He pled guilty. He stole classified material. In the "Sloppy Socks Scandal," Berger stuffed classified materials in his clothing in order to sneak them out of the National Archives building. Democrats, however, never considered this a big deal. In fact, most barely seemed to notice or say anything at all about what had happened.

Today, those same Democrats, who did not blink at Berger's actions, are calling for Karl Rove's head. Now, let us put this in perspective. Sandy Berger devised a plan, got into the archives to view the documents, then he stuffed classified documents in his pants to smuggle them out of the National Archives so that he could destroy the material, and Democrats did not so much as call for an inquiry. Today, the minority leader is calling for President Bush to fire Karl Rove for telling a reporter that they were "barking up the wrong tree."

I hope Americans see this for what it is, a partisan attack launched by a minority leader who cannot get her party to unite around a policy.

#### H.R. 3268, EMINENT DOMAIN TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2005

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the proud author of H.R. 3268, the Eminent Domain Tax Relief Act of 2005. I also rise to continue the discussion on eminent domain in light of the recent *Kelo v. The City of New London, Connecticut*, decision by the United States Supreme Court.

Within 1 week of the *Kelo* decision, this House demonstrated its commitment to the American people and their property rights through passage of House Resolution 340 by an overwhelming and bipartisan vote. Mr. Speaker, through H. Res. 340, this House condemned the *Kelo* decision and issued a warning that abusive eminent domain will not be tolerated by this Congress.

However, Mr. Speaker, there is more work to be done, and I look forward to

the House's consideration of H.R. 3135, the Private Property Rights Protection Act, introduced by the distinguished chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER). I have proudly joined the chairman in cosponsoring this bill that will codify into statute the principles and concerns that we expressed by House Resolution 340.

Today, though, I would like to press forward in the fight to protect the American people's property rights and to discuss H.R. 3268, the Eminent Domain Tax Relief Act. This bill will ensure tax fairness for all who lose property through eminent domain. The Eminent Domain Tax Relief Act will exempt individuals who lose their homes or businesses by eminent domain from paying capital gains tax on the revenue generated from the forced sale.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that eminent domain must remain a tool of last resort for the government and a tool employed only for public use. However, while most Americans accept traditional and proper execution of eminent domain for schools, roads, and other expressly public uses, no individual should ever have to pick up the tab with IRS when the government decides to sell his or her own home or business. Mr. Speaker, these individuals did not make the decision to sell their property, and they should not be penalized by the Tax Code for a decision that they did not make.

In the wake of the *Kelo* decision, this Congress, the media, and the collective discussions around American dinner tables across this country have focused upon questions of acceptable uses of eminent domain. Well, the Constitution speaks loud and clear. Eminent domain should only be for public use.

Additionally, the Constitution also requires the government to give just compensation for any taking of private property. Is it just compensation, Mr. Speaker, to send the government wrecking ball and an IRS agent to the same door at the same time? I think not. It is simply unconscionable for the government to add insult to injury by taxing those people who are losing their homes and businesses by no choice of their own.

Often, these individuals have to pay many additional costs when the government condemns their properties. Individuals assume the cost of relocating to somewhere else, and condemned businesses have merchandise that would not only have to be moved but, in many cases, would have to be stored in the interim. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the government must redouble its efforts to ensure these individuals receive just compensation and are not additionally burdened by the Tax Code.

I encourage all my colleagues to take a good hard look at this legislation. I believe that they will see that it is the right thing to do. There should be no taxation on government condemnation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to stand firm against this injustice.

Sign on to H.R. 3268, supporting tax relief for all those who pay the price when the government wrecking ball comes.

#### HONORING THE FALLEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. Emanuel) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, there are now 1,979 American military personnel who have given their lives in the service of our Nation in both Iraq and Afghanistan. We owe these brave individuals and their families a debt of gratitude that can never be fully repaid.

It is our responsibility to honor the ultimate sacrifice that our men and women in uniform have made while serving our country. We often invoke their sacrifices in general but seldom take the time to thank them individually. In the previous weeks my colleagues and I, from both sides of the aisle, have recognized these individual servicemen and women on the floor of the people's House by reading their names and rank, the names and rank of each servicemember who has fallen in the Iraqi and Afghanistan theatres of war.

Today, approximately 1,700 names have been read. Tonight, we will continue and complete this tribute with the names of our most recent fallen fellow Americans. In the words of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, each of these heroes stands in the unbroken line of patriots who have dared to die that freedom might live and grow and increase in its blessings.

God bless and keep each of the brave Americans whose memory we honor tonight:

Specialist Francisco G. Martinez  
Lance Corporal Kevin S. Smith  
Specialist Travis R. Bruce  
Corporal Bryan J. Richardson  
Sergeant Isiah J. Sinclair  
Sergeant Lee M. Gumbolt  
Private 1st Class Samuel S. Lee  
Specialist Eric L. Toth  
Sergeant Kenneth L. Ridgley  
Sergeant Kelly S. Morris  
Warrant Officer Charles Wells Jr.  
Sgt. 1st Class Robbie D. McNary  
Corporal Garrywesley Tan Rimes  
Staff Sergeant Ioasa F. Tavae Jr.  
Lance Corporal Tenzin Dengkhim  
Corporal William D. Richardson  
Sgt. James Alexander Sherrill  
Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Kennedy  
Staff Sergeant Christopher W. Dill  
Lance Cpl. Jeremiah Kinchen

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Mr. EMANUEL. The gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Sergeant Javier J. Garcia  
Specialist Glenn J. Watkins  
Specialist Sascha Struble  
Specialist Daniel J. Freeman

Staff Sgt. Romanes L. Woodard  
 Major Edward J. Murphy  
 PFC Pendelton L. Sykes II  
 Specialist Michael K. Spivey  
 Staff Sgt. Charles R. Sanders Jr.  
 Lance Corporal Juan C. Venegas  
 Staff Sgt. Kevin Dewayne Davis  
 PFC Casey M. LaWare  
 Specialist Manuel Lopez III  
 Specialist John W. Miller  
 Corporal Tyler J. Dickens  
 Corporal Michael B. Lindemuth  
 Captain James C. Edge  
 Specialist Aleina Ramirezgonzalez  
 Specialist Randy Lee Stevens  
 Sergeant Tromaine K. Toy Sr.  
 Sergeant Angelo L. Lozada Jr.  
 Private Aaron M. Hudson  
 Private Joseph L. Knott  
 Private 1st Class Steven F. Sirko  
 Major Steven W. Thornton  
 Private 1st Class Sam W. Huff  
 PFC Kevin S. K. Wessel  
 Specialist Jacob M. Pfister  
 Lance Cpl. Marty G. Mortenson  
 Corporal Kelly M. Cannan  
 PFC Robert A. "Bobby" Guy  
 PFC Gavin J. Colburn  
 Private Robert C. White III  
 Sergeant Anthony J. Davis Jr.  
 Seaman Aaron A. Kent  
 Corporal Kevin William Prince  
 Specialist Robert W. Defazio  
 Specialist Gary W. Walters Jr.  
 1st Sergeant Timmy J. Millsap  
 Sgt. 1st Class Allen C. Johnson  
 Mr. EMANUEL. The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS).  
 Mr. SHIMKUS. Specialist David L. Rice  
 Corporal Joseph S. Tremblay  
 PFC Robert W. Murray Jr.  
 Specialist Ricky W. Rockholt Jr.  
 1st Lieutenant William A. Edens  
 Sergeant Eric Wayne Morris  
 Sergeant Timothy Craig Kiser  
 Private Charles S. Cooper Jr.  
 PFC Darren A. Deblanc  
 Captain Ralph J. "Jay" Harting III  
 Captain Stephen W. Frank  
 2nd Lt. Clifford V. Gadsden  
 Sergeant Kenya A. Parker  
 S. Sgt. Juan de Dios Garcia-Arana  
 Specialist Derrick Joseph Lutters  
 Captain Kelly C. Hinz  
 Major John C. Spahr  
 Staff Sergeant Tommy S. Little  
 Sergeant John E. McGee  
 Staff Sergeant William J. Brooks  
 Sergeant Stephen P. Saxton  
 Sergeant Michael A. Marzano  
 Sergeant Aaron N. Cepeda Sr.  
 Lance Cpl. Lance Tanner Graham  
 PO 3rd Class Jeffery L. Wiener  
 Lance Corporal Michael V. Postal  
 Lance Corporal Nicholas C. Kirven  
 Corporal Richard P. Schoener  
 Lance Cpl. Lawrence R. Philippon  
 Corporal Dustin A. Derga  
 Specialist Steven Ray Givens  
 Staff Sergeant Thor H. Ingraham  
 PFC Nicolas E. Messmer  
 Sgt. Gary A. "Andy" Eckert Jr.  
 Lance Corporal Marcus Mahdee  
 Lance Cpl. Taylor B. Prazynski  
 PFC Stephen P. Baldwyn  
 Staff Sgt. Anthony L. Goodwin  
 1st Sergeant Michael J. Bordelon

Staff Sgt. Samuel Tyrone Castle  
 Mr. EMANUEL. The gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP).  
 Mr. BISHOP of New York. 1st Lt. Michael J. Fasnacht  
 Captain Phillip T. Esposito  
 1st Lieutenant Louis E. Allen  
 Sergeant David Joseph Murray  
 Corporal Brad D. Squires  
 Lance Cpl. Devon Paul Seymour  
 Lance Cpl. Thomas O. Keeling  
 Lance Corporal Daniel Chavez  
 Lance Corporal Dustin V. Birch  
 Staff Sergeant Mark O. Edwards  
 Sgt. 1st Class Victor H. Cervantes  
 Lance Cpl. Mario Alberto Castillo  
 Lance Corporal Andrew J. Kilpela  
 Specialist Casey Byers  
 Sergeant 1st Class Neil A. Prince  
 Sergeant Larry R. Arnold Sr.  
 Specialist Terrance D. Lee Sr.  
 Corporal Stanley J. Lapinski  
 Specialist Anthony D. Kinslow  
 Sergeant Larry R. Kuhns Jr.  
 Lance Corporal John J. Mattek, Jr.  
 Sergeant Anthony G. Jones  
 PFC Nathan B. Clemons  
 PFC Joshua P. Klinger  
 PFC Michael Ray Hayes  
 PO 2nd Class Cesar O. Baez  
 Lance Corporal Chad B. Maynard  
 Lance Corporal Dion M. Whitley  
 Corporal Tyler S. Trovillion  
 Corporal Jesse Jaime  
 Lance Cpl. Jonathan R. Flores  
 Staff Sgt. Christopher N. Piper  
 Captain John W. Maloney  
 Lance Corporal Erik R. Heldt  
 Specialist Anthony S. Cometa  
 Sgt. 1st Class Michael McNulty  
 Lance Corporal Adam J. Crumpler  
 Corporal William A. Long  
 1st Lieutenant Noah Harris  
 Sergeant 1st Class Victor H. Cervantes  
 Lieutenant Michael P. Murphy, a constituent of mine.  
 Mr. EMANUEL. The gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. McCARTHY).  
 Mrs. McCARTHY. Lance Cpl. John T. Schmidt III  
 Lance Corporal Jourdan L. Grez  
 Lance Cpl. Jonathan Walter Grant  
 Lance Corporal Nicholas B. Erdy  
 PFC Christopher R. Dixon  
 Lance Corporal Wesley G. Davids  
 Staff Sergeant Kendall H. Ivy II  
 PFC Kenneth E. Zeigler II  
 Sergeant Andrew R. Jodon  
 Sergeant John M. Smith  
 PFC Travis W. Anderson  
 Sergeant Charles C. Gillican III  
 Sergeant Jacob M. Simpson  
 Private 1st Class Wesley R. Riggs  
 Sgt. Antwan L. "Twan" Walker  
 Sergeant Robin V. Fell  
 Specialist Bernard L. Sembly  
 PFC Wyatt D. Eisenhauer  
 Sergeant Brad A. Wentz  
 Sergeant Kurt D. Schamberg  
 Corporal Steven Charles Tucker  
 Sergeant Charles T. Wilkerson  
 Sergeant Kenneth J. Schall  
 1st Lieutenant Aaron N. Seesan  
 Specialist Tyler L. Creamean  
 Sergeant Benjamin C. Morton  
 Sergeant John B. Ogburn III  
 Sergeant Carl J. Morgain

Private 1st Class Kyle M. Hemauer  
 Staff Sergeant Russell J. Verdugo  
 Specialist Joshua T. Brazee  
 Sergeant Christopher S. Perez  
 Sergeant Daniel Ryan Varnado  
 Specialist Bryan Edward Barron  
 Specialist Audrey Daron Lunsford  
 Staff Sergeant Saburant Parker  
 Sgt. 1st Class Randy D. Collins  
 Sergeant 1st Class Peter J. Hahn  
 PFC Jeffrey R. Wallace  
 Specialist Dustin C. Fisher  
 Mr. EMANUEL. The gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS).  
 Mr. SHAYS. Sergeant Charles A. "Chuck" Drier  
 Sergeant David Neil Wimberg  
 Sergeant Alfred Barton Siler  
 Major Ricardo A. Crocker  
 Sergeant Mark A. Maida  
 CWO 2 Joshua Michael Scott  
 CWO 4 Matthew Scott Lourey  
 Lt. Colonel Albert E. Smart  
 Specialist Phillip N. Sayles  
 1st Sergeant Michael S. Barnhill  
 Staff Sergeant Victor M. Cortes III  
 Corporal Jeffrey B. Starr  
 Staff Sergeant Casey Crate  
 Captain Derek Argel  
 Captain Jeremy Fresques  
 Major William Downs  
 Sergeant Miguel A. Ramos  
 SFC Steven M. Langmack  
 PFC Class Louis E. Niedermeier  
 Staff Sergeant Virgil R. Case  
 Specialist Phillip C. Edmundson  
 Captain Charles D. Robinson  
 Staff Sergeant Leroy E. Alexander  
 Civilian—Linda J. Villar  
 Corporal Antonio Mendoza  
 PFC Brian Scott "Scotty" Ulbrich  
 Specialist Eric J. Poelman  
 Staff Sergeant Justin L. Vasquez  
 Colonel Theodore S. Westhusing  
 Specialist Carrie L. French  
 Specialist Brian M. Romines  
 Lance Corporal Jonathan L. Smith  
 Lance Corporal Robert T. Mininger  
 Lt. Colonel Terrence K. Crowe  
 Specialist Eric T. Burri  
 PFC Emmanuel Hernandez  
 Sergeant Michael J. Kelley  
 PFC Douglas E. Kashmer  
 Sergeant Roberto Arizola Jr.  
 Lance Cpl. Marc Lucas Tucker  
 Mr. EMANUEL. The gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. CHANDLER).  
 Mr. CHANDLER. Staff Sergeant Christopher N. Piper  
 Lance Corporal Adam J. Crumpler  
 Private 1st Class Christopher R. Kilpatrick  
 Specialist Brian A. Vaughn  
 Specialist Christopher L. Hoskins  
 Specialist Nicholas R. Idalski  
 Sergeant James D. Stewart  
 Major Duane W. Dively  
 Sergeant Arnold Duplantier II  
 Petty Officer 1st Class Regina R. Clark  
 Corporal Ramona M. Valdez  
 Lance Corporal Veashna Muy  
 Lance Corporal Holly A. Charette  
 Corporal Chad W. Powell  
 Sergeant 1st Class Christopher W. Phelps  
 Sergeant Joseph M. Tackett  
 Corporal Carlos Pineda

Specialist Charles A. Kaufman  
 Chief Warrant Officer Keith R. Mariotti  
 Chief Warrant Officer Steven E. Shepard  
 2nd Lieutenant Matthew S. Coutu  
 Petty Officer 2nd Class Danny P. Dietz  
 Petty Officer 1st Class Jeffrey S. Taylor  
 Petty Officer 2nd Class James Suh  
 Petty Officer 2nd Class Eric Shane Patton  
 Lieutenant Michael M. McGreevy Jr.  
 Petty Officer 1st Class Jeffery A. Lucas  
 Lieutenant Commander Erik S. Kristensen  
 Senior Chief Petty Officer Daniel R. Healy  
 Chief Petty Officer Jacques J. Fontan  
 Chief Warrant Officer Chris J. Scherkenbach  
 Sergeant 1st Class Michael L. Russell  
 Major Stephen C. Reich  
 Master Sergeant James W. "Tre" Ponder III  
 Sergeant 1st Class Marcus V. Muralles  
 Sergeant Kip A. Jacoby  
 Chief Warrant Officer Corey J. Goodnature.

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Staff Sergeant Shamus O. Goare  
 Specialist Rafael A. Carrillo, Jr.  
 Mr. EMANUEL. Sergeant Manny Hornedo  
 Specialist Robert E. Hall Jr.  
 Signaller Paul William Didsbury  
 Sergeant Chad M. Mercer  
 Staff Sergeant Jeremy A. Brown  
 Specialist Ryan J. Montgomery  
 Private Anthony M. Mazzarella  
 Corporal Lyle J. Cambridge  
 Staff Sergeant Scottie L. Bright  
 Specialist Christopher W. Dickison  
 Sergeant Deyson K. Cariaga  
 Specialist Hoby F. Bradfield Jr.  
 Private 1st Class Eric Paul Woods  
 Staff Sergeant Joseph P. Goodrich  
 Lance Corporal Ryan J. Kovacicek  
 Sergeant Timothy J. Sutton  
 Specialist Benyahmin B. Yahudah  
 Corporal Christopher D. Winchester  
 Corporal Clifton Blake Mounce  
 Staff Sergeant Tricia L. Jameson  
 Private First Class Timothy J. Hines, Jr.

Specialist Jared D. Hartley  
 Staff Sergeant Ronald T. Wood  
 Sergeant Travis S. Cooper  
 Specialist Ronnie D. Williams  
 Staff Sgt. Frank Tiai.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the distinguished Members from both sides of the aisle who have participated in this tribute and honor, which took 3 nights over the last 2 weeks to read into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and to the people's House.

I would also like to take this opportunity, on behalf of my colleagues, to thank the brave men and women who continue to serve our Nation in Iraq, Afghanistan, and throughout the world and serve with distinction. Our

thoughts and prayers are with them and their families at this time until they come together.

In the words of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, I again would like to cite: Each of these heroes "stands in the unbroken line of patriots who have dared to die that freedom might live, and grow and increase its blessings."

A number of our colleagues have stumbled over names. I hope those families understand that, although we struggled with their names, we honor their service. These pictures are outside my office and outside other Members' offices, all 1,900, and with the names that we see here, we will add, as the pictures are made available, to always remember that their sons and daughters, their husbands and wives, their brothers and sisters and their aunts and uncles, when called to serve, they served, and they gave their ultimate sacrifice.

May we always remember them, their names, and their faces. God bless them and God bless America.

#### OUR SOLDIERS IN THE WAR ON TERROR

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor and a great privilege to be here this evening. In the hour before I began to speak, we heard the names of young men and women who have shed their blood in the defense of this country. It is a sober business that we are about, a serious business and a critical business.

As I have talked to hundreds of soldiers serving in Afghanistan, in Iraq, those coming back, those that I have spoken to in theater, they share one clear message, and that is that we have got to stay the course and finish a mission that they believe that we are winning and the only thing between ultimate victory and ultimate defeat is the will and the resolve of the American people.

I believe that it is critically important that we hear their story and their perspective. Every soldier, every marine that I have talked to, every airman that I have spoken to in the last 6 months, many whom I brought into this Chamber, have shared with me their dismay, their disappointment, and, yes, even their disgust, Mr. Speaker, over the way the liberal media has misportrayed the actions of our men and women in the Middle East, have misportrayed the successes, have not reported those successes and have gone for tabloid spectacular attacks of what all the folks on the ground believe is a strategically irrelevant, though still dangerous, insurgency.

Our military is winning. The Afghan people and the Iraqi people are beginning to taste freedom and are standing up.

And I think it is important in this time tonight to bring to perspective some of the units in the words of some of the people who are participating in the actions right now. It is easy to stand in this Chamber and take a position for or against the war because we are living 10,000 miles away. For those of us who have carried a rucksack and lived in the mud or lived the desert, it brings back many memories. I have seen classmates of mine from the military academy who died in service to this Nation, buried. I know many friends who have been lost. In fact, 3 weeks ago I stood at a grave site in the Arlington National Cemetery as a member of America's premier counterterrorism force was buried. All around us, as we were going through these sober and grievous moments of remembering a man's life and country to this country, as his casket was lowered into the ground, as the mournful wail of Taps played over the cemetery, people went to and fro. There were cars on the expressway as I came back to Capitol Hill, and what did I see? People going throughout their lives oblivious to the tremendous sacrifices that are being made by our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines on the other side of the world so that we would be safe at home.

I had a great privilege with several of my colleagues to lead a delegation into Southwest Asia over the July 4 recess. In many senses it was a reunion, seeing friends that I had known from the army, in some cases people I had been acquainted with on active duty 29 years ago.

I would like to begin tonight by sharing a poignant e-mail. I traveled with the delegation to Kuwait. We will talk about that in a few moments. We moved to Baghdad in Iraq, visiting with units there and the command there, on to Kyrgyzstan with our men and women of the Air Force, maintaining the logistics in the transit center in Bishkek and Manas Air Base, finally down to Kabul, and then we flew 150 miles low level by helicopter to what I believe is a wonderful and stellar example of America's soldiers doing what they do best, advancing the cause of freedom, protecting us here at home and representing the values of this great Nation.

So often the press nationally wants to point to the negative, to the ½ of 1 percent that underperform or do not necessarily live up to the good name of this country. They totally neglect the carnage, the terror, the inhumanity, the kleptocracies that rob people of hope and opportunity and freedom. They do not tell the soldiers' stories. And one of the things I would like to begin with tonight is from that visit. We flew into Forward Operating Base Sharona and Paktika Province, where one of the great unsung stories of the War on Terror, really the war on Islamic extremists, is taking place.

I want one thing to be clear for the record and for those who are watching

overseas, we understand perfectly what this is about. This is not simply a War on Terror. This is a war by Islamic extremism against the rest of the world. It is a war that seeks to prevent people from pursuing individual opportunity and freedom. It is a war of suppression for those who simply do not want us out of the Middle East but want the Middle East out of the world.

And one of the things that was most enjoyable for me was visiting a unit that I was affiliated with many years ago, the 1st of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment. The 1st Battalion of the 508th has a long and faithful history in serving this Nation in virtually every conflict since the Second World War. Having served in the Middle East with them myself, it was a great honor to travel back and see them in Afghanistan, see the young men and women who are carrying on a great tradition, a great tradition of advancing the values of this country and protecting citizens of this Nation.

I would like to open this evening by sharing with the Members an e-mail, a message that was tremendously powerful. One thing I love about infantry NCOs and infantry enlisted soldiers is they will always shoot straight with us. They will share the truth. They will not hold anything back, and they will tell us what is on their heart. The one thing that was missing were the statements that I see on the evening news here in the United States, and what I would like to do is, rather than share with what the command said, share what might come from the Pentagon, although it is a consistent story with what is shared on the front lines, I want the Members to hear the e-mail that was sent from Command Sergeant Major Jeff Hof of Task Force Fury, 1st of the 508th Parachute Infantry. He is a great, professional noncommissioned officer, served 22 years in the army, not his first time into that region of the world. He served in Operation Desert Storm. He served in the mountains of northern Iraq. And now he sent me this message, and I would like to share with the American people, I would like to share with every citizen in the world who values hope, values freedom, values opportunity for future generations, and I also want to share a message to the enemies of this Nation, to the enemies of all free people to hear this as they watch this broadcast tonight. This is quoting Sergeant Major Hof, who is out at the tip of the spear, making a tremendous difference tonight as we speak. His NCOs, his enlisted soldiers are serving on the front lines of freedom, bringing reality that the rest of the world experiences, what we in America take for granted tonight to people who have never known it. He sent this to me. Mr. Speaker, this is an NCO speaking. This is the infantry sergeant major speaking, not the Secretary of Defense, not the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, not the commander of combined forces in Afghanistan, but a battalion sergeant major

whose principal purpose in life after carrying out his mission is caring for the welfare of the men and women under his command and under his leadership.

“Our national media has never expounded upon our success . . .,” Sergeant Major Hof begins. “The soldiers of this task force understand that this fight we found ourselves in since the war on terrorism began is important, and they understand the nuances required to win.”

Sergeant Major Hof tells his soldiers that they have two hammers in their tool box. The first one that the sergeant major points out is a Texas-size sledgehammer for their number one mission, which is to intercept terrorists, and I want to tell the Members something: They do that very well. There is a reason that the anti-government forces in Afghanistan and, for that matter, the anti-government forces in Iraq do not want direct confrontation with the American military. It is simple. They cannot win, and they have never won any sustained engagement at force of arms.

Mr. Speaker, this is about the will of the American people to stand firm, to stand by our allies, to show resolve and accept simply the call to duty that every generation in the history of this Nation has accepted. Why should we shirk from that? This Nation has not been called upon to sacrifice in the way of the Second World War or in the First World War or in the Civil War, where our losses were measured in the hundreds of thousands of lives. Every loss is a tragedy, but these young men and women who are serving on the front lines understand the nature of this struggle, understand firsthand because they have seen it through their eyes. Our national media has done a disservice to our servicemembers by not reporting the truth.

Sergeant Major Hof talks about a Texas-size sledgehammer to do what my friends in the military like to call the kinetic end of the business, but he also emphasizes the importance of the other tool in the toolbox, a New England-size carpenter’s hammer to help the Afghans build their country so they will succeed in the long term.

He goes on: “Soldiers take this on with a sincere passion in the training of the local and the national police force, the border police, and our biggest mission is training and fighting alongside the Afghanistan national army.” He continues: “There is no apprehension in fighting alongside the security forces of Afghanistan, and the members truly appreciate everything we are doing for them in building skill sets to eventually defend themselves. All of our soldiers understand the training and fighting with the Afghan security forces is critical to long-term success, which is why we have all embraced the Afghans as one of our own in combating the terrorists.”

When I was in Sharona Forward Operating Base, there were not simply

Americans there. There were Afghans there. When our soldiers go out on patrol, they go out on patrol jointly with the Afghans, and we will talk some more about that later this evening.

Sergeant Major Hof goes on and said: “My junior NCOs work with local leaders . . .,” and I will tell the Members something that is shared not in the evening news again or in the New York Times or in the Washington Post, which seem to forget the fact that this is a war involving American soldiers and American leadership and fundamentally depends on American resolve. “My junior NCOs work with local leaders building schools, mosques, distributing school supplies to some of the poorest in Afghanistan, explaining the intricacies of how democracy works, and educating hardened former mujahedin fighters on how to resolve simple tribal conflicts without the sound of a rifle fired in anger.”

□ 2045

This is all done to embolden local leaders and build long-term capacity to fight and secure these communities.”

My friends, my fellow Americans, this is a professional infantry non-commissioned officer who is sharing these words, not written by a politician, certainly not written by a reporter in the national media, to tell you the heart of the American soldiers serving in the Middle East today.

The Sergeant Major goes on. “We have a program that school children from our home base sent school supplies and toys that ranged from stuffed animals and little dolls and even a few Frisbees to be distributed if we are out on patrol.”

I had one soldier ask me to send soccer balls to Afghanistan so the kids could taste a side of life they had never experienced.

Sergeant Major Hobbs said, “I personally helped in passing out these gifts to the children, and if a mother in America who protests a military recruiting drive,” and how I regret personally to see that, “if a mother in America who protests a military recruiting drive could only see the warm smile of joy that these little ones share when they are handed a little stuffed animal or a coloring book, they would truly understand we are winning, and their sons and daughters are making a difference, and it is well worth the sacrifice, if nothing more than to see the smile on these children’s faces, if only for fleeting moment.”

Our young men and women understand that sacrifice of freedom in defending our Nation against those that would do our country harm, and they relish in the face of that that they are part of history, the history that we are making as we work to secure peace.”

He continues, “No reporter from the national media will do a story on the numbers of soldiers who have reenlisted to stay in and fight this Global War on Terror. We recently had a CNN reporter visit us, and we wanted for her

to be part of a reenlistment ceremony that would show her firsthand the dedication our young men have in fighting. This reporter from CNN, I might add, who is an opinion influencer in the world media on national security affairs, refused to cover this."

This is what the Sergeant Major shares with my old unit the First of the 508th. "She chose not to take part or even entertain the fact that we had over 45 soldiers reenlist to stay here and fight."

I ask the liberal pendants who refuse to go in theater to see the way this is actually being fought, to see the conduct of this, to live with our soldiers, who choose to use our soldiers as human shields to attack the administration, why they won't talk about the fact that in the active military unit serving in Iraq, the active military unit serving in Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan and Kuwait why they are reenlisting at rates of over 100 percent.

When I was a young man growing up at the end of the Vietnam conflict, that was not the case. The reason, Mr. Speaker, is simple: These young people believe in the mission. They have accepted a profound call to duty, a profound call to duty that is as important, if frankly not more important, than that that was accepted by the so-called greatest generation during the Second World War, and I say that to honor these young men, to honor these young women, to honor the chain of command that is putting their lives on the line while we sit here in comfort in the United States.

The Sergeant Major continues. "Here is a story that will never reach the national media. One of my forward operating bases took a direct rocket attack and they sustained several severe casualties in which three young men made the ultimate sacrifice. After the Medivac lifted off carrying away their platoon sergeant, who almost lost his life to rocket shrapnel that caused a severe leg injury and another close friend of the platoon, they were later notified that the friend of the platoon died on the operating table. Those soldiers requested we continue on with the previously scheduled change of command and reenlistment ceremony."

Hear this. He writes, "Three soldiers reenlisted on the same forward operating base where just hours before they rendered first-aid to save the lives of some, but saw three mortally wounded die."

Each of these young men had different reasons for reenlisting, but to a man each said they wanted to rededicate their service and sacrifice in the names of their brothers who made the ultimate sacrifice whose names were read in this Chamber tonight.

That tells me, my friends, a very different perspective than the partisan rhetoric that is so troubling. More than that, the partisan rhetoric that does not encourage our soldiers, does not encourage the American people, does not give them a realistic perspec-

tive of what is happening, but discourages morale and emboldens the very people who are putting names on the list that was read in this Chamber in the last hour.

That is something the American people need to understand and they need to contemplate. There are very few members of this Chamber who have carried the rifle and carried the rucksack and lived in the mud and been far away from home to understand the camaraderie and the bonding that takes place in one of these units. First they take care of themselves, but they understand the purpose of their mission, and this generation, I have to tell you, from my time enlisting nearly 29 years ago, understands in a way very different than any veterans I have ever spoken with the importance and the relevance of the mission that they are on right now.

The Sergeant Major continues: "These soldiers who reenlisted wanted to complete the mission they all started together and did not want to let down one of their own who was no longer in their physical presence but is resolved in spirit still lived among them. That story did not make headlines," he writes.

And he finishes his message to me with this statement: "I could go on and on in speaking about the men and women in our Nation's military and the sacrifice we are willingly making despite the fact that we make up less than 1 percent of the population in this Nation in carrying the load of this fight for an entire Nation of 280 million people, according to the latest national census, and we get minimal credit. I am here to tell you that we are winning now, and in time we will win the peace all of us so desperately seek."

That, my friends, was spoken not by me, not by a media consultant, certainly not by a liberal pundit in the national media. That was spoken, Mr. Speaker, by the Sergeant Major of First Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, serving under the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Patika Province in Afghanistan.

It is a credit to the traditions of the United States military, of our citizen soldiers, and it is something that every citizen in this Nation should understand; this is the devotion, this is part of the story that needs to come out to the world. And, frankly, for our enemies who pay attention to our media, I want all of you to know on behalf of Task Force Fury they are there and you are never coming back into that territory again.

We enjoyed a powerful time of fellowship with these soldiers and encouragement. We saw the reality on the ground.

We will share during this hour some of the different perspectives that we had, but I would like to yield some time to my colleagues who are here tonight who had that opportunity to share. The first one whose perspective that I would like to give as he traveled

with us is the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND).

We traveled a long distance to get to these remote places and had an opportunity to go from the comfortable familiarity of the United States out to the tip of the spear, out to see countries that were raped by a kleptocracy, and now are there with American young people bringing hope, opportunity, stability and ultimately security to us here at home.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND).

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) for giving me that opportunity to travel with him and his delegation as we went to Kuwait, Afghanistan and Iraq, Kyrgyzstan and visited our troops.

Also I want to thank the American people and the U.S. Army and all of our armed services for giving us as Members of the People's House the ability to go over and visit with them and to see the things that are going on over there, the things that we are asked to fund and the fact we are asked to keep them in the battle for liberty and justice and freedom throughout this world.

It was quite a trip. Never having been outside the country except to go to a few islands on a cruise ship, it was quite an experience to travel the distances we did and then to meet with the young men and women of our Armed Forces as they serve us so greatly overseas.

We visited a base in Kuwait where we visited the men and women that drive convoy trucks up into Iraq every day, where there are about 2,500 trucks at any one day and probably 700 or 800 of those are American troops that put their lives on the line to take supplies to their comrades in Iraq. It was unbelievable when we went and saw the actual up-armor facility that we had funded through the supplemental budget and the thanks we got from the servicemen and women about the effect and benefits that this was bringing to our troops.

We saw firsthand an up-armored vehicle that had been hit by an IED and the damage that it suffered, but every soldier inside of it made it. These are the things that we have got to continue to do in this Congress, is to make sure that our men and women have the best possible equipment that they can use to fight terror all across this world.

We also had an opportunity to go to Iraq and to see the devastation of that country and what it is like to have 30 years of control by a dictator that was the sole justice. I am a simple thinking kind of guy, and I had thought a lot about this war before I was in Congress and since I have been in Congress, but there were a lot of things that I had never thought about. Some of those things is there is no judicial system over there. There are no prosecutors. There was no rule of law. They had a dictator that was the rule of law.

We went and met with the Third ID from Fort Stewart in what was known as the torture chamber for Saddam, and they talked about the things that they saw in the basement of that building, the horrific site that they saw that just turned their stomachs. But it also made them realize why they were there, what kind of demon they were fighting.

We also saw the building next door to it that was known as I guess the Iraqi CIA building and the devastation caused to it by a daisy cutter bomb that was dropped there, unbelievable devastation. But there again it was one of those signs that we have given our military the best tools known to man to fight this war.

We saw at that same base members of the Third ID playing soccer with Iraqi troops, having a great time of fun. It is an international game, as one of the soldiers told me, the game of soccer. They enjoyed that fellowship in heat of about 115 degrees, but they are building relationships and they are letting the Iraqi people understand what it is like to live in freedom.

It is a gift that is indescribable, when you give the people an opportunity to live in freedom. To see the electric grid, that it can only handle so much electricity, and we are producing that much electricity today. We have restored those generating plants to give an opportunity to the Iraqi people to enjoy electricity all day, every day; to have water, to be able to bathe their children, to be able to wash clothes. We are giving them that opportunity.

Then as we went to Afghanistan, and as the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) said, we went to Serrano, and we visited with those soldiers out there and we saw what they were going through and the patrols that they did in the country. This was 150 miles southeast of Kabul.

We were able to witness the conditions that these men live in every day, the heat and just the threat of terror and danger that they are under, but to see their spirit.

I met one soldier, I believe was Sergeant Lightly, and he needs to be a general because he spends 24/7 embedded with Afghani troops. He said, "Do you know what I see in these men and women? The desire to live in a free country, to celebrate liberty. They want that for their country. And if something happens, they are right up to the speed. If some of their comrades get killed, they have more people waiting to enlist. In fact, we can't train those people fast enough to be in the military."

One of the other things that the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) mentioned was the reenlistment. We were told that the reenlistment goals in Iraq and Afghanistan have surpassed what their goal was. The men and women that are over there fighting, seeing the good things we are doing, the schools we are building, the grid system, the electric, the oil refineries,

the colleges and the universities, they see the good that we are doing. And Sergeant Lightly told me, "I am over here doing this, this is my second tour, because I don't want my two sons to be over here doing this. We need to finish the job today."

It was such a great honor to be over there, to visit with our men and women and get to visit with some soldiers from Georgia, and just to get to share with them our thanks from me and my family and all the American people for what they are doing. But it was also nice to see their gratitude for us coming over to visit them.

One soldier commented to me, "It was a great morale devastation when we heard that we had been compared to the Soviet gulags and the Nazis." I said, "Well, they were talking about Guantanamo." He said, "No, they were talking about my brothers and sisters and they were talking about me when they were talking about them."

So we need to keep our tongues under control and understand that when we say things devastating to our troops it does hurt their morale. They hear that over there, and not only do they hear that, but the Iraqis and the Afghan soldiers that are putting their lives on the line every day hear that, too.

He said, "You know what? If we pull out of these countries, if we pull out without finishing what we started, we will lose our credibility to every freedom-loving, liberty-loving person in this world."

□ 2100

Again, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding this time to me and giving me an opportunity to share some of the experiences that I have had.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia; I thank him for his eloquent remarks and the perspective that he shared. One of my memories that will be lodged in my heart is you encouraging all of those Georgia soldiers who were so glad to see you, especially those who know you from Georgia politics to see a face from back home.

I would encourage some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle who refuse to travel, to visit the troops doing the work that they do so well, and perhaps they would have a slightly different perspective if they spent some time with them on the ground.

Before I yield to the gentleman from Indiana, I would like to take a moment and recognize some of the human side of this. We had an experience in our media at one point a few months ago where one soldier had some negative things to say that ironically flew in the face of 99 percent of his comrades and created a little bit of a challenge from back home with some of the soldiers from back home and their perspective on what was being done. I have a picture of two of them I would like to share. I am good friends with their fathers. They cast a very dif-

ferent perspective than what has been portrayed in some of the national media.

The first gentleman that I would like to point to here tonight is a great patriot. He is not a political man; he is a soldier. He is committed to defend the Constitution. He is committed to honor his brothers and sisters in arms. His name is Art Cawman, and he is from Boone County, Kentucky. Art is a great soldier. He served as a Ranger in the special forces and decided that he wanted to go to flight school. He flies in the Third Infantry Division in the Third Aviation Brigade, and he is a Blackhawk pilot. In Operation Iraqi Freedom in March of 2003, he flew one of the first Blackhawks over the line for the Third Infantry Division as they began the march to liberate Iraq.

I had the tremendous privilege to spend some time being flown by a hometown pilot from my district whose family I know who shared a perspective candidly and openly about the sober nature of this struggle. Art Cawman is the kind of soldier whose face we need to have on this war. Art Cawman is the kind of soldier who went out and made a difference. Art Cawman is somebody who adapted to the changes in circumstances, who understands the nature of this mission, who understands that Islamic extremism is a threat to every person in the world regardless of faith or ethnicity or nationality. He is willing to serve. He has had comrades that he has lost in this struggle, but he understands the nature of it. He does not do it, he does not do it in a somber way, but with a commitment and understanding and excitement of being part of a great unit, a great heritage, a great tradition and, frankly, a great country that values freedom.

One of my personal pleasures was being able to bring a taste of home to him and also to a soldier I will show my colleagues in just a moment. But we have a tradition back in the fourth district of Kentucky called Skyline chili or Cincinnati chili that is a unique regional taste, like many parts of the country have. My airfare for being flown by him and his fine crew that day on our flight of two, and also including the other aircraft, was a case of this chili. We wanted to pass that on to them, just a small way to say thank you.

What I was most impressed with Art was his clear understanding of the nature of the mission, his clear understanding, Mr. Speaker, of the nature of the struggle, and a clear understanding that all it takes to win is to continue the mission.

I heard from this young warrant officer, the same perspective, that this insurgency, though a threat to individuals, is strategically irrelevant. These elections are going to happen; this government is going to stand. It is going to be different than what we have here in the United States, but their work is bringing results. It is also bringing quality of life to people who have never

known freedom, they have never known government as a friend, they have never known that the police are not your enemy, but they are there to protect you. He is setting that example, a high standard of American values. He represents a great unit with a great tradition and a great chain of command.

There is another gentleman I would like to share with my colleagues as well. This young captain standing next to me on Forward Operating Base Sharana, I referenced our visit to Sharana before; this is as we came off the helicopters after flying 150 miles south of Kabul. This is Captain Joe Geraci. He is the class of 1997 from the United States Military Academy at West Point. His father, Joe Geraci, Sr., is an active member of our business community that I have known well for years. He has made a great contribution to our local community and his son is making a great contribution to our Nation. He is leading a tremendous operation in southeastern Afghanistan right now that is driving the Taliban out of eastern Paktika Province in Colonel Tim McGuire's 1st of the 508th.

We also brought the taste of home to him; you can see it obscured behind the photograph there. But we brought that case of chili, and he sent me an e-mail the other night as he was eating it with his troops and said the only thing that was missing was a vanilla Coke to make the taste of home complete.

They understand the seriousness of their business. Joe has a 5-year-old son whose birthday he missed. He has a wife and parents who are worrying about him every day. But as we all talked on the phone the other day, the one thing they understand is that Captain Joe Geraci, who is a professional infantry officer, who is walking in the finest heritage and traditions of every generation that has come before us, as our young soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines are, he is doing a tremendous job in winning a fight over there that is every bit as critical as the Greatest Generation's fight in the Second World War. It is every bit as critical to our national security now.

I would like to yield the floor for a few minutes to another of my colleagues, the gentleman from Indiana, who joined me in the journey to Congress some 4 years ago. The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SODREL) was a former noncommissioned officer in the Indiana National Guard who had a great opportunity to go in theater and visit some of his former comrades. I think he brings a unique perspective; and I would like him to share his views, his impressions, his experiences, and the story of his soldiers as they are experiencing this critical time and this call to duty for our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SODREL).

Mr. SODREL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS), my good friend.

Over the Memorial Day recess, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to

go to Afghanistan. The main reason I wanted to make the trip was to visit my former unit, the 151st Infantry Battalion of the Indiana National Guard. I do not know whether it was by accident or design, but about 15 percent of the total force in Afghanistan are Hoosiers. I follow the 151st, even though it has been almost 3 decades now since I was a member. They were deployed in Bosnia, and they have been deployed in Afghanistan.

But when I met with them over there, it was not just as a fellow Hoosier or a former Guardsman and neighbor, but as their Member of Congress. I decided if I am going to be voting to send these men and women to war, I should go to the front lines and see for myself the progress that they are making and the conditions under which they are doing their job. After spending time with them in Afghanistan both in Khandahar and Camp Phoenix, I can assure my colleagues that we owe them a debt of gratitude.

These men and women operate under harsh conditions. They are seldom able to leave the confines of the bases unless they are on an official mission of some kind. In fact, the 151st lived in tents when they first arrived in Afghanistan. The dust, we talk about sand, this is not beach sand, this is dust; it is the consistency of talcum powder. It is very difficult to keep vehicles and aircraft operational. The heat, when you are walking around in body armor and carrying all of your weapons and pack and everything with you, it is hard work.

I had an opportunity to meet with everybody from the commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Paul Grube, to his executive officer, Major Rick Graham, to Staff Sergeant Steve Springer from Brownstown, Indiana, to specialist Nick Geshwein from Corydon. They all told me they are proud of the work that they have done while they have been there. They took it upon themselves to start a humanitarian project.

What Colonel Grube told me is that 25 percent of the children die before they are 10 years old in Afghanistan. They had a lot of poverty around Camp Phoenix and they worked with Graceland Baptist Church, a church there in southern Indiana, to get supplies and blankets and shoes for a lot of them who did not have shoes. They have worked with all of the local people, and they all assured me, when I heard from our diplomats and Vice President Khalili and from our troops, that the vast majority of Afghans really want peace. After a generation of warfare, they are tired of warfare.

The attitude has changed a lot in the last year. When the 151st first arrived there, they said most of the locals just wanted to keep their heads on. Their attitude was the coalition was on one side and the terrorists were on the other side, and they just did not want to get involved. They are getting involved today. They tell our people

where the bad folks are hanging out. They point out where the IEDs, improvised explosive devices, are. The relationship with the Afghan people has changed considerably during the last year.

Mr. Speaker, it is a difficult mission. It is a very inhospitable place. I personally think that, although it has been hard on the National Guard and hard on their families, I think, well, for example, they had one soldier who was a part-time magician, and I have a picture of him riding a unicycle with all the Afghan kids around him. They are just one step removed from civilian life, and they can relate very well to the local people.

But I think the recent attacks in London underscore the fact that we must not let up. We have to keep prosecuting the war on terror.

While much of my trip focused on Afghanistan and the meeting with the troops there, I also took the opportunity to go to Pakistan, and I spent about an hour with President Musharraf. He has started what he called a concept of enlightened moderation. Simply put, he understands that there are two challenges here. One is to defeat the terrorists militarily, but the other challenge is to stop creating terrorists and change the conditions that create terrorists.

Part of that is the madrassa schools and their curriculum, which he is going through and causing all of the madrassas to register with the Pakistani government. He also understands that he has to grow his economy, that he has to change the socioeconomic conditions, and that the other countries there in Central Asia do as well.

But the long-term prospects for peace and prosperity depend on the ability of democracy to take hold, and it depends on the abilities of those leaders to improve the living conditions of the average person. That means creating jobs, building roads, and generally enhancing the infrastructure of these countries. It means fostering opportunities for higher education.

It is clear to me from spending time in Afghanistan that what began as a military mission to defeat the terrorists who attacked the United States on September 11 will not end as the majority of our military comes home. Afghanistan will require the assistance of U.S. Government agencies and NGOs until self-governance and the Afghan economy are well established. Winning the war on terror and improving the quality of life for the people of Central Asia are globally important objectives. We have to stay on course to ensure a lasting peace in Afghanistan. A peaceful, tolerant Afghanistan is important to the long-term elimination of terror as a weapon of intolerance, and I am confident our folks are up to the task. I thank the gentleman from Kentucky for yielding to me.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Indiana. I thank him for recounting those

experiences with his Hoosier soldiers and the great job that they are doing in winning this war that our liberal media simply refuses to report, they refuse to report the successes.

Before I introduce another distinguished Member of this body, a gentleman who has spent many hours on an airplane with me, I would like to comment on one personal friend. I have the photographs behind me of two of my constituents who are great American soldiers and, really, they represent great young Americans who are serving with them in many, many capacities in the war, a critical war, the most important fight this country has seen since the end of the Second World War.

□ 2115

My friend, Art Cawman, who is here on my right, flew us in the afternoon after we had had some meetings with some commanders and met with the embassy staff over to the Second Brigade Combat Team of the Third Infantry Division in east Baghdad. The Second Brigade Combat Team has their headquarters in the former Ministry of Intelligence office complex. The main building was destroyed in the opening days of the war. Second brigade's headquarters is in an outbuilding that years ago was used for despicable, a heinous act perpetrated upon the Iraqi people in the name of raw power. Now that headquarters is commanded by a colonel named Joe DiSalvo. That name means a lot to me because I have known Joe DiSalvo for 28 years. We stood on the plane in July of 1997 at the United States Military Academy when we were inducted into the Corps of Cadets. We attended classes together and we played intramural sports together. We socialized together. After graduation we attended our Officer Basic Course together, a maintenance course together, and even went to ranger school and became rangers together. We had some interesting memories, being snap linked on to the side of a hill in a rainstorm many, many years ago as we were out to earn that coveted designation and many shared experiences. After that time we went our different ways in service to the country and our service to the Nation took different forms and different paths.

One of the great humbling honors that I experienced on this trip was seeing my old friend who now commanded a 3,000-soldier brigade combat team that is doing great work. They are in a tough place. East Baghdad includes Sadr City, among other areas that are considered some of the great danger zones of Baghdad. When Joey drove his Humvees in the first day they took over he showed me these photographs of American vehicles that were axle deep in raw sewage running openly in the streets.

Mr. Speaker, this was the Iraq that the Iraqi people experienced. This was the Iraq of Saddam Hussein. The national media refuses to report on what

our soldiers have done since. Those streets are clear today and they are dry and there is a sewer system. There is running water that most of the citizens have never experienced before in their lives. Regular and predictable electric power, all the things that we take for granted in our comfortable familiarity here in the United States regardless virtually of our economic circumstances.

They have paid a price serving on the front lines. They are defeating this insurgency. They are going on patrols with an Iraqi security force that is motivated, Ministry of Interior police who are motivated as Iraqis, who understand their identity as Iraqis. They are getting intelligence working together, they are solving problems with criminal elements, with those who are government rejectionists and with the terrible Islamic extremists who are out to do one thing which is to kill people.

And I think the perfect contrast between Colonel DiSalvo's soldiers and those Islamic extremists that are a threat to every freedom loving person regardless of their background or ethnicity in the world was when our NCOs are out getting school supplies and our enlisted soldiers are getting school supplies for young people, giving candy to children, letting them know that they are there to protect them, not to be overlords like the prior regime was. They are seeing the opportunities to go back to school, receiving health care in many cases for the first time in their lives. They are seeing a side of life where the soldiers will play soccer with them. And you know what the insurgent response was last week, was to drive a car bomb into the midst of a group of children around some American soldiers. To take the life of one American they are willing to murder 24 little ones.

I think this is a clash of world views, Mr. Speaker, and I think I know who is on the right side. And the Second Brigade Combat team whose primary mission is to defend those people and to defeat those terrorists, really criminal thugs and murders with no courage, no will and a unwillingness to openly take their battle against soldiers. They only turn on the harmless to rule by fear and terror, and that only comes from one place. And that pit of darkness is not represented by this Nation and by its values.

I want to commend the soldiers of the Second Brigade Combat team. I want to commend those working in every area to keep those vehicles running, those who go out on patrols, those who invest in relationships locally, those who encourage one another. And also the same thing that I heard with the soldiers in the Second Brigade Combat team when they told me this: Tell our story to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, this is the thing that is not heard by the national media. I challenge CBS and NBC and CNN and ABC for their purported fairness to

broadcasting to actually report the truth. Talk to some soldiers who actually represent the overwhelming majority of those who are serving. I decry those producers of 60 Minutes who I personally believe do not represent the interests of the American people.

You at 60 minutes know this: This Congressman served this country and the Second Brigade Combat team soldiers and the First of 508 soldiers serve now to defend your right to put the awful things on the air that you do. And you do not understand the freedoms that you have. I am so disappointed and my heart is broken when you go out of your way to embarrass and defame those who are serving this Nation and those who are leading this Nation.

It is a travesty, Mr. Speaker. But I would rather have you have that freedom than to have the alternative of what Colonel DiSalvo and his soldiers had to clean up in East Baghdad because that really is the alternative when we think about it.

My friend from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) had so many unique perspectives and probably more than any other State of the Union of all of the soldiers that we saw in the four countries that we were in during this trip were soldiers from the great Republic of Texas. And I would like for him to take as much time as he would like to share his perspective on the trip, on this critical time in our Nation's history and just the great young men and women that we met. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Kentucky for yielding this time, giving me a chance to speak. True to his ranger training, the trip that we took was fast paced and there was precious little sleep involved. But the four of us who have spoken tonight are none the worse for wear. It was a wonderful experience that I will treasure as one of the highlights of my term here in Congress.

I have had the opportunity this pass weekend to go back to Texas and to have a couple of different audiences that I was speaking to, giving them a legislative update, also letting them know about my trip. And as someone who speaks quite often to an awful lot of folks, you get a sense of whether or not the audience is paying attention, a sense of whether or not they are actually listening to you. And as I spoke about our experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan and in Kuwait, the audience just hung on every word, not because of my eloquence, but more importantly because the message of what I was actually imparting to them.

There is a hunger among the folks in America to understand and to know the truth. And the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) and I and my good colleagues from Georgia and from Indiana went over there for two reasons. One principal reason was to tell the troops that we came in contact with thank you, thank you for doing a

job that you have been asked to do. You did not ask, you were not asked whether or not you agreed with the job. You were not asked whether or not it is a job you thought ought to be done. Your country simply asked you to go do a job in a tough, tough arena.

We stepped off the plane in Baghdad on Friday a week or so ago. I grew up in West Texas, in the high plains of West Texas. It is an arid desert region. We are used to in the summer some really hot dry weather, sandstorms, dust storms in which the dust and the sand is blowing so hard that the electronic photocells on the street lights trigger the lights to come on during the middle of the day. So I am no stranger to hot desert weather.

We stepped off the plane, the C-130 there in Baghdad at the airport and it is probably not appropriate to personify weather, but when I stepped off that airplane I stepped into what felt like just angry, mean weather. The horizon was obliterated. You could not see any distinguishing characteristics except this brown cloud all the way around us. It was hot.

About the best way that I think Americans who have not been there to help experience this, get a sense of what it was like is to go into your bathroom, pick up your hair dryer, turn it on, blow it straight into your face for about an hour, breathing that air, and it will give you a bit of a sense of what our young men and women who are serving this country so magnificently in the summers in Iraq. As the gentleman from Kentucky and I and others talked about going to Iraq this time of year, the aging veterans around, the folks who had been, said you guys could have picked a little better time of year to go than July because it is inhospitable.

What we found when we got to all three countries is troops with the morale that was incredibly high. And these were not cherry picked troops that the leadership put us in contact with. Every single person we came in contact with, their morale is high. They know they are doing a job that is important to this country.

The backdrop that our trip took was the bombings in London which happened on Thursday. We were there Thursday, Friday and Saturday. They understand the importance of what they are doing, that the work that they are doing in these three countries will help, not guarantee, but help keep those bombings from happening here in America. To a person they told us they would all rather fight whatever fight has to be fought in those countries rather than in the streets of America.

We had some great briefings not only from the military but also from the State Department in both countries, Iraq and Afghanistan. Let me quickly comment on the briefing there in Iraq with the State Department folks there are confident that the Constitution will be drafted on time and with all three ethnic groups represented at the

table, the Kurds, the Shiites and the Sunnis are drafting that Constitution. They are confident it will be done sometime near the 15th of August, which is the deadline that they set for themselves.

This is an Iraqi constitution, not an American constitution. It is one that they will live with. It is one that will meet their needs, will share power in an environment that, quite frankly, our Founding Fathers would have found pretty foreign to try to deal with the ethnic diversity that they are dealing with. But that is going to happen.

What happens next is a referendum will be held 60 days later, and then this December there will be general elections throughout the country. We are assured and coming from State Department guys who typically do not like to give a lot of assurances. We are assured that the insurgents and all of the violence that is going on right now will have no effect on the progress for creating a democracy in Iraq. This constitution, the referendum to adopt the constitution as well as the general elections in December, that is going to happen.

Now, what we do expect is that the level of violence, the intensity of violence, the high profile publicity value violence will continue during this time frame and will in fact and probably in all likelihood increase.

While we were there the Egyptian ambassador had been kidnapped and was killed. That was determined. My colleague from Kentucky has already spoken about the horrific incident this past week in which 24 young lives were snuffed out simply for being at the wrong spot at the wrong time. So this is going to continue. But the Iraqi people are going to see this through. What their main concern is, is that we will not see it through with them. Now they are out on a limb and we are giving great support to that limb and they are concerned that at the critical moment when democracy is in the breach that we will lose our resolve, that somehow public opinion will turn to the extent here in the United States that we will abandon them to the insurgents. And you know, as best as my colleagues and I could assure them or could convey some assurances to them, we said that was not going to happen.

Much the same effort is going on in Afghanistan. Again a State Department briefing there on, quite frankly, the struggles that they have with the drug traffic, the opium production as well as the drug trade, drug economy. But their elections in September are also going to come off on time, September the 18th. The elections last January in Iraq are going to serve as the model for elections in both countries in that they will police them themselves. They will secure them themselves, and we will stand ready to assist them wherever that assistance is needed. But the Iraqis and the Afghans are going to be responsible for the security at these elections during that important time frame.

A couple of events that happened. One was we landed there in Kabul and we drove several times down the same street going between the airport and the embassy. The first trip was early in the morning and we were driving it pretty fast in a relatively what appeared to be a reckless manner down a pretty narrow street. And there were hundreds of young Afghan children on the sides of the streets making their way to school. These children were clean, scrubbed up, had on what appeared to be Western clothes. Little girls were holding hands and skipping along. Little boys were roughhousing and wrestling as young children do all over the world. But they were on their way to school. And we were doing 40, 50 miles an hour through this school zone and I was very uncomfortable. I kept wanting to say, hey, wait a minute. Let us slow down. We are in a school zone. These are children. But the children were oblivious to the race going down the middle of the street. They were just headed to school. And that is because of the work that is being done by our fine men and women. It is because of the work that is being done by the Afghan people because they understand the advantages as well.

Another poignant moment, the most poignant moment for me occurred when we flew from Kyrgyzstan into Kabul. It was my turn to be on the flight deck of the C-130. If you are in a C-130 there are not a lot of places to look out. There are a few portholes but limited vision. So I had the chance to stay up on the flight deck with a headset on and I was talking to the pilots and the navigator, listening to what was going on. We got to Afghanistan and I began to hear the traffic, that radio traffic for the search and rescue mission that was going on to try to find our SEAL that at that point in time was on the run. In all likelihood he was already dead at that point in time. But we were probably 50 or so nautical miles from the area where the search was being conducted. It was an incredibly haunting, eerie feeling to be in the relative safety of a C-130 listening to that search. We had a full court press going to try to find this man and save him. And to hear that traffic and know that we had an American who was, we talk about being in harm's way, this man we thought was in a big time way in harm's way, and it was very haunting to hear that traffic and be that close to him and not really be able to do anything about it.

□ 2130

I came away from the overall trip, one, just incredibly proud of the young men and women we have serving this country, from the leadership, the generals we met all the way down to the E-2 who just got there. These are some of America's finest men and women. Are they perfect? No, of course not. They are men and women just like we are. And if one of them by chance does something he or she should not do, the

good news about our system of justice is we will punish the folks who do things wrong, on occasion.

By and large, the vast majority of them, their hearts are in the right area. I met one young man and young woman from Texas in Afghanistan. We had a dinner with them just before we left. Out of the clear blue sky they just mentioned that on Friday afternoons, on their days off, on their time off they both go to the local orphanages to volunteer to go hug those kids, to play with them, to read to them, and do the kinds of things that good American GIs have done in every single war that we have ever been involved in. And they are carrying on that great tradition of the American spirit of helping the folks that they are there to protect and do just a wonderful job.

I thank the gentleman from Kentucky for organizing a wonderful trip, a trip as I mentioned when I first started would be incredibly memorable. We have some great photographs of that time together. And you get to know people a little bit better when you spend collective 44 hours on jets and C-130s and Chinooks and Blackhawk helicopters. You get a little bit different feel for that person. That is one of the pluses that travel together like that gives, particularly when you go to places as important to what is going on in America as Iraq and Afghanistan.

We are doing the job that has to be done. The leadership has a plan in place to get it done. The young men and women that are doing the job are getting it done. The Iraqi army, the Iraqi police are training and becoming more and more capable every single day to take over the job and stand in the breach in place of America's youth to create this democracy in their country.

The same thing has happened in Afghanistan, the Afghan National Police, the Afghan National Army. They are standing up, as the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) mentioned as well.

One final comment and then I will close. Over the weekend we saw a suicide bomber who was associated with a car bomb that went off. Two suicide bombers had gotten out of this car and walked away from it. The car exploded with the suicide bomber in it. A crowd gathered to try to help the wounded, to try to care for those who were injured. And these two men on foot ran back at the crowd, one of whom set off an explosion, blew himself up, and killed some additional people.

The Iraqis shot and wounded the second suicide bomber on foot. And as he lay on the ground struggling to reach his detonation button, an Iraqi EOD member disarmed him through a series of events where they grabbed the guy. They put him in the back of the pickup. The Iraqi EOD specialist went up to him wearing the big bulky protective gear that they are supposed to wear. He understood he could not reach the fellow in that gear so he took the gear off

and then went back to the pickup truck. The insurgent was trying to get his hand on the switch, and the Iraqi EOD guy disarmed that bomb.

That is a great anecdote to show that the Iraqis are doing the job that needs to be done.

I thank the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS) for a wonderful trip, and I look forward to additional experiences like that in the future. I thank him for letting me have time tonight.

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) for his thorough description of many different aspects of the trip. We certainly saw some tremendous perspectives.

As time winds down, I will leave the evening with Task Force Fury. I will talk more about it in future evenings.

In one of the messages that was shared with me by Colonel Tim McGuire and Captain Sean McCray, the assistant operations officer for the battalion passed on some of their perspectives. We know these are America's paratroopers. They are combat infantry men and their supporting team members. But he wrote this. He said, On any given day, Task Force Fury soldiers mentor Afghan citizens and leaders in the establishment and management of democracy, capitalism, ethics, education, business ethics, law enforcement, and organizational skills, all the while ready to destroy those who would stand against the Afghan National Government when they are present on the battlefield.

The keys are providing tangible hope, signs of improvement and stability. The best weapon they say that Task Force Fury maintains in its arsenal is the implementation of projects that build infrastructure in a region with little or none.

The year I graduated from West Point, Ronald Reagan asked a question in his campaign. He said, Are you better off now than you were 4 years ago? I think the citizens of Paktika Province are better off now having a paved road that can withstand the weather. The first paved road in 5,000 years.

The final story was this: this task force was moving on a convoy. A young boy, 10-year-old boy, approached Colonel McGuire's vehicle, running towards it. The children were remarkable in their acceptance and kindness towards American soldiers in Afghanistan.

This little boy was a little more agitated than normal. They stopped the convoy and they asked the little boy why he was concerned, and he said that there were a couple of bad folks had come into the village and planted an improvised explosive device. He pointed out in the road where that was. It was disabled.

Colonel McGuire asked the young boy why he did that and his response was profound. He said, Before you Americans came, I could not go to school.

I think right there shows the clash of world views and how our soldiers are

paying off on the front lines. I challenge the national media, I challenge the punditocracy to tell the truth.

George Orwell made a comment that certain things do not make sense to ordinary people, just to an intellectual. I would challenge the media that things that do not make sense in much of your reporting to us ordinary Americans maybe makes sense to you from your perspective; but I would challenge you to spend time with these soldiers, spend time with their command and see the fruits on the ground, the great things they are doing, and how we are winning this.

Our young men and women are accepting a call to duty that is bringing great honor on the heritage and traditions of this Nation.

### 30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor being before the House. I would like to thank the Democratic leader for allowing us to have one more 30-something Working Group hour. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) will be joining me tonight.

Mr. Speaker, as we would like to outline at the beginning of every 30-something, we have come to the floor bringing not only ideas but also calling out some of the issues that are not being handled in an appropriate way.

As we explain week after week, the Democrats are in the minority here in the House. It is important for everyone to understand that when bills are agendaed or non-agendaed, that is because the Republicans are in the majority. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, we work every day to make sure that we do good work on behalf of the American people, but we also make sure that we raise issue when that is not happening.

And I can tell you as it relates to the whole veterans issue, I am so glad to now see the majority side take an opportunity to smell the coffee, knowing that our veterans are in need. We have men and women in Iraq, in Afghanistan; but the question is not how we treat them and how we talk about them here in this Congress and how we tell their families that we are with them. It is important that we are with them when they come home. When they come home, they need to be able to go to the VA hospital or a VA clinic and get service.

As it stands right now, there are a number of backlogs throughout the country, but one thing I can tell you that I am very proud of, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that all along the Democratic Caucus raised the issue as it relates to veterans affairs issues, not only on the substantive standpoint but also on an appropriations standpoint.

I just want to say that if it were not for the Democrats pushing the card and

making sure that we are able to get \$1.3 billion additional supplemental funding for 2005, it would not have happened. It took all the way to July 12 when the Bush administration admitted that it needed another \$300 million dollars. It was only at a million. The Senate moved to 1.5. We still have a gap. There is still work to do.

When many say, Why do you go to the floor? Why do you raise these issues? Why do you share with the Members what they are not doing versus what they can do, that is the reason. The reason is making sure that we apply the appropriate pressure and making sure that our veterans are not left behind. So I am very proud of that. I am very glad the 30-something Working Group has taken it on as an issue. We are going to continue to stand with and by our veterans and by our troops. But at the same time, when they come back, when they go home and when they have to live with what they are bringing back from the theater, we are there with them because that is the promise we made to them. As far as we are concerned at the 30-something Working Group, we will keep that promise and make sure we stand up to it.

Mr. Speaker, another thing that is important. We now have a bill that is filed by some Members of the House, H.R. 3304. I think not only for the Members but if anyone wants to get a copy of this bill, it is [www.thomas.loc.gov](http://www.thomas.loc.gov). But I just want to share some information as it relates to this bill.

It is just privatization all over again. Whichever way you cut it, it is just privatization. With this particular bill, it creates private accounts and it cuts the guarantees of Social Security benefits and it increases the national debt. Period. Dot.

At the same time, you have the issue of going into the trust fund. And contrary to the claims of the bill's sponsors, the legislation does not stop the raid of the Social Security trust fund. It does not deal with the sovereignty issue of Social Security. I thought that is the reason why we were trying to go through this exercise of making sure that we can have Social Security around past the 40, 50-some-odd years that it would be sovereign. It has nothing to do with it. It has everything to do with moving into the private account area.

This is something we will have to continue to work on. I am hoping that the majority side works with the minority side in making sure we can come up with a bill. But from the outset, I think it has been purely stated that there is really no intention to have a debate or a discussion or even working on anything outside of privatization. The bill is called private accounts. Period. And that is just what it does. It moves it into private accounts. So it is important that the American people and also the Members of this House understand that nothing has

changed. It is just a sponsor, 40-something sponsors on the bill I must say on the majority side, and I think people need to be very concerned.

We talk about 48 million Americans that are taking part in receiving Social Security benefits, be it retirement, survivor benefits, or disability. Those individuals take part in Social Security, and I think it is important we understand that it touches every one of our families. So we have to pay very, very close attention to that.

One other thing I just want to start off with, last week we talked about the whole issue of Mr. Rove and we have something from the President what he said today, contrary to what he said before. For months the President said he would fire anyone involved in the disclosure of a CIA agent. Period.

Today he says that anyone that is caught or is convicted of leaking information on a CIA agent would be fired from the White House.

Now, that is far from what he said before. I am not going after the President. I am just saying that the President is saying, hey, I need a conviction before I do anything. Even though I said that it is something very, very important, I am sticking next to my guy.

Well, I think we have to look forward to the news heading off or reading something in the newspaper saying "a White House source says." You might as well get used to it. It gets deeper. It is far beyond politics. It goes into national security now. It is okay. It is okay. So if you are looking at the statute, the statute, really, it is a high bar to leap. And we do not know all we need to know right now. And that is the reason why members of governmental oversight have asked for Mr. Rove to come to the Hill and share with us what he did say and what he did not say. That is simple when it comes down to national security.

□ 2145

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman is exactly right. We mentioned this last week when we talked on Thursday on the floor that this has more to do with the buildup and the drumbeat and the rush to war than it has to do really about Karl Rove leaking and everything else.

To me, from the get-go this has been about this administration fudging the intelligence to make it look worse than it was, the threat from Iraq to look worse than it actually was. Weapons of mass destruction, mushroom clouds in Cincinnati, and all the rhetoric that we heard. That is really what this Karl Rove story to me is all about.

Because why would Karl Rove want to leak information to destroy Joe Wilson's wife? Not just for giggles. He did it because the information that Joe Wilson came back to the United States with said Iraq does not have a nuclear weapons program and there was no sale of uranium, there was no overt or covert acts that were going to justify this war. Joe Wilson came back and told

the truth, and now all of a sudden the White House and Karl Rove began to out his wife as a CIA agent. That is what this is all about.

This is about the administration getting called out for giving us bad information and not enough people in this Chamber or in the other Chamber asking enough questions. That is really, to me, is what the leak story is all about. That is the heart of the story: Why would Karl Rove want to try to destroy Joe Wilson? Reason: Joe Wilson basically outed the administration.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Ambassador Joe Wilson.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Ambassador Joe Wilson outed the administration and their rhetoric and lack of hard facts to bring us to war legitimately with Iraq.

Now, we are both on the Committee on Armed Services, and we both voted for the defense appropriation budgets, and I think we both voted for just about every supplemental to support the troops. We have been trying to make sure the troops have the body armor and everything they need. It is the Democratic Party that has been talking about funding the veterans' benefit system, the VA system, and making sure the veterans have the benefits they have earned, these new young soldiers and some older soldiers who are coming back and who will take advantage of the VA system. We want to make sure that system is there and fully funded.

We support mandatory funding for the VA system, and not just being paid at the whim or the discretion of the political season or whoever is in charge. Mandatory funding for veterans' benefits, period, paragraph, end of story. So we have been the party who has been trying to move the ball down the field.

I think we are finally getting some success from the other side to at least admit there is a shortfall in VA funding and trying to get this extra \$1 billion in. But I think the bottom line is this, my colleague. This administration manipulated the intelligence to get us in the war. And right, wrong or indifferent about the war, whether we should still have gone to try to set up a democracy in the Middle East, like Iraq, is a whole other debate, but the bottom line is there were not enough people in this Chamber and in the other Chamber who asked enough hard questions. That is really why we are where we are today.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. The gentleman said two things, Mr. Speaker, two great points that he just made, and I just want to elaborate a little more.

When it comes down to a reason why people voted for us to come to Washington to represent them, and the title on our door says U.S. Representative of the House, U.S. House Representative, that makes us, A, a Member of Congress, and that is comprised of the Senate also, but I think it is important for us to remember that we were not sent up here to cultivate strong relationships over the will of not only our constituents but also the American people

that are risking their lives overseas right now.

I get very concerned when people start doing funny things, when people start saying funny things like, well, if anyone outed a CIA agent they are out of the White House, and then progresses to, well, I did not really mean that. If someone is convicted of outing a CIA agent, that is fine. Now, that bothers me, too.

One other thing that bothers me as relates to being a representative of not only the 17th Congressional District but also Florida, this House, when we take a vote, it is for the entire country and not just for our district. But I am also concerned about those of us, and I have gone to Iraq, who go and take pictures and talk to the troops and have lunch with them and do all those things, and I encourage Members to do that, but when I went to Iraq it was a life changing experience, and in Afghanistan it was a life changing experience, seeing those men and women, some older than me, many younger than me, that have put their lives on the line and also put their lives on hold to go over and do what their country has asked them to do.

For us to come back here and not work with vigor and commitment to make sure that we follow through on our promise to them, it goes far beyond making sure that they have the equipment that they need. It goes far beyond making sure that the mess hall stays open. What is important is making sure that we hold their needs and values as it relates to making sure that not only they have what they need in theatre but when they get back home that they have what they need.

So it bothers me when we have to be on the floor having a partisan debate on appropriations for veterans. It really does.

I believe in the whole back-and-forth, and the Republicans are in the majority, I am in the minority, and so let us have a great debate. It is part of our democracy. But what I am very concerned about is when it comes down to issues like national security, when it comes down to issues like veterans affairs, when it comes down to issues where we all salute one flag, intelligence, I get very concerned when I hear the partisanship.

Health care. We have different views on health care. All right, that is fine. Let us go back and forth on that, because we have plans and we want to make sure that everyone is able to have health care. They have a health savings account, we have a health care plan to make sure that we can shut down this emergency room care or the CVS, or Walgreen's, you name it, RiteAid care that many families have to live under now.

But I get concerned when we get to the area of national security and a lot of chest beating on this floor and a lot of chest beating in committee, and a lot of great speeches back home about how I love the troops. I get concerned

when they take personal relationships on what the leadership says versus what they have to do and what they should be doing on behalf of those men and women. That is not a donkey or an elephant issue, or whatever the party symbol may be, it is an American issue. And it is important we remember that and just cut out the partisan politics.

We have to take them to task here for what we have to work with. That is important, too. Some people may get a little irritated and ask why are they saying this and why are they saying that? We are saying it on behalf of those individuals that are doing what they have to do right here, right now, in the present, making sure they have a voice here on this floor, making sure that individual is going to the V.A. hospital, whether they were a World War II, or Korea, or Vietnam, or you name it. I mentioned Grenada the other day. The first Gulf war. You name it. If they were in Kosovo, if they were there, they deserve the care. So I think it is important.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague is right, and the point he made about the President backtracking on what he had said before and then relating that to the conversation the gentleman and I have had on this floor, I think a million times already, and we have not even been in Congress that long, about this issue of consistency. This issue of always throwing something out there and stating it as fact. Oh, my God, this is just the way it is, then slowly starting to backtrack.

We witnessed it here during the Medicaid prescription drug debate. This Chamber was told this bill was going to cost us \$400 billion.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Let me correct my colleague. It was \$350 billion.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Right. It started out at \$350 billion. Then, by the time we were going to vote on this bill, it became \$400 billion because many of the fiscal conservatives in this Chamber said they would not vote for a prescription drug benefit that cost more than that. The night we voted on it, we were told \$400 billion. After the election, it became \$700 billion. After we had already voted on it. Later it was over \$1 trillion, the extended cost of this Medicare prescription drug benefit.

Come to find out, the actuary that had the real numbers was told by one of his bosses not to tell the Congress what the real number was. So the 700,000 people my colleague represents, the 700,000 people I represent were not told the truth and so could not base their decision on the real facts because they were covered up so that we would pass this. Same thing happened with the war.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. If my colleague would yield, once again, relationships over what the American people need to know. It may not be what they want to hear, but what they need to know. It is

important we do not allow those relationships to stand in front of democracy and making sure we stand for those we have been sent here to stand for.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. How can we adequately represent our constituents if we do not have all the facts? I think that is what we are talking about.

So we have the whole Medicare issue we had to deal with, then the war. Everybody knows how the war intelligence went. It was Saddam Hussein had something to do with 9/11. Then it was, well, okay, we are still going to say that, but some people do not believe it. Remember the polls? How long did the polls reflect that most people in America thought that Saddam Hussein had something to do with 9/11? And the only real reason was because the President and the leaders in this Congress kept saying it.

Then it went from Saddam having something to do with 9/11 to Saddam having weapons of mass destruction, and that they were going to be administered and executed in a way that there may be a mushroom cloud in Cincinnati, Ohio. The President came to Cincinnati and gave that speech. Then it became Saddam is a bad guy. Once we pretty much were sure there were no weapons of mass destruction, it became Saddam is a bad guy. Now we are in this because we need a democracy in the Middle East.

This war has increased the number of terrorists around the world. It has put a bull's eye on the back of Western democracies, as we saw unfortunately with the tragedy last week in London, which was just a real atrocity on civilized societies all around the globe.

So we have all these issues, and now it is I am going to fire whoever it is that has leaked any information. Then, once you find out it is your best friend and your top political adviser, it is, well, someone has to get convicted before we get rid of them.

I think the American people are so tired of the Potomac two-step down here, always saying one thing and then something else happens, that we have to get to work on the real issues that we have before the country. Let us be honest with the country. Let us be honest with the people of this country. There is nothing the American people cannot deal with if they are told the truth. Unfortunately, we gloss over everything and make everything look good and then backpedal and then they are caught in a lie.

Just tell the American people the truth and let us go to work. Let us get the job done. We have a lot of work to do in this country. Unfortunately, we are just not getting the leadership that the American people deserve.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Well, I will say this right now, something so very, very important to us all. We talk about relationships and knowing the truth. The bottom line is that Congress has one of the lowest ratings in many years right now because people are very, very

turned off about what is happening here under this dome. They are not excited about what is happening under this dome because there is a lot of politics going on, a lot of side shows going on.

We have issues like education, issues like health care, issues like making sure our veterans are getting what they need, the Federal government is continuing to spend, spend, spend, and, at the same time, there are issues like homeland security.

We talked about that last week and we said we were going to mention something about it, and I am very, very concerned. I am a member of the Committee on Homeland Security, ranking member of the Subcommittee on Management, Integration and Oversight. Once again, I was a little bothered by seeing some officials over at the Department of Homeland Security immediately after the London transit explosions that took place not only on buses but also on rail.

□ 2200

I cannot help but think about a letter I wrote to the Department. I must say, I cosigned it with the chairman and also the ranking member, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON), and the chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security.

It is important that Members know as of April 30 there was supposed to be a report sent back to this Congress, not me personally, but this Congress that was passed in the 9/11 bill making sure that the Department shares with us their transportation strategy. That did not happen.

There was another deadline when the Department said it would get that transit security strategy to Congress. They did not meet that deadline either. As I stand here on the floor tonight, we still do not have a transit homeland security strategy back to this Congress.

If we want to talk about Members, if we want to talk about officials over at the Department of Homeland Security, we can do that. We can talk about the White House also. But I will tell Members for anyone to walk around here and say we are fine, everything will be fine, I will tell Members right now, we must have a strategy. I do not want to be a Member of Congress telling the American people that we are fine, do not worry, our transit oversight and security is what it should be. It is not.

If we do not have something as simple as a transportation strategy, then how in the world do we expect the whole country to be in accord as relates to making sure every system is secure. The system here in Washington, DC, we need to start talking about vulnerabilities here on the floor. When you start talking about it, and people say you should not say anything about it, they will know. They know. These individuals have been caught staking out different areas trying to figure out how to do what they do.

It is not like they are watching C-SPAN and saying I did not know

that until he just said it. That is not the case. These are highly trained, highly educated people, and know exactly what they want to do. For us to say we are secure, saying we have it covered is less than an understatement.

The real issue is we need to really make sure that we ratchet it up, not only on the Department and the White House, but in this Congress, having a sense of urgency. There have been two major events within 12 months on mass transit outside of the United States, but I can guarantee you if we do not get a strategy and the kind of accountability that we deserve, and when I say we, we the American people deserve, we may very well have a situation far beyond what we have. Let us not get started on cargo and planes; let us just talk about a simple thing like turning over a strategy to Congress. I would hate to be a city police chief or county sheriff. If Congress is not getting it, what are they getting? That is the big question.

I want to make sure that people understand. We can talk about what we have, but we have to focus on what we do not have. We have to continue here on the minority side, and some of my friends on the majority side, to put pressure where pressure is due. We make things happen. I have seen things come to this floor far less important than homeland security, and in one day. From committee to the floor in one day.

Now if there is not a sense of urgency on homeland security, be it air cargo, containers at the port, making sure that the firefighters and police officers have the kind of equipment they need, making sure that our health care personnel are appropriately trained, making sure that we have a way of making sure that the American people will know what to do when a terrorist attack happens or even what to do versus duct tape, I think that is far greater.

I wanted to mention that. I have a couple of other things that we have been asking for and needing from the Department and also from the administration.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, before we get to that, I think we need to talk about a couple of basic principles that we want to implement from our side.

I hate to go back and say this, but at one point before the war, before the war, there were some of us who were arguing, and I was in a campaign at the time, that \$300 billion or whatever that we were going to spend, would it not have been better spent here at home with rail security, with taking care of the Metro system here in Washington, DC and in New York and Boston and some of our bigger cities? Would it not have been better, and I offered amendments in the Committee on Education and the Workforce, to get the money down to the local communities to first responders?

We have many jurisdictions throughout the country that cannot afford to

pass police and fire levies and are laying off police and firemen. These are the issues that are ultimately going to prevent a terrorist attack here on the homeland, by making sure that we have enough first responders on the ground, how we are going to react to a biological attack, how we are going to respond, is there enough coordination between a local police chief, a sheriff, the FBI and the ATF, and is there a coordinated response to something that would happen, whether it is in Youngstown, Ohio, or Washington, DC or New York City.

These are the things that we could be working on here and making sure that the \$300 billion was put to use here in the United States of America; and, oh, by the way, it would have been a stimulus for the economy as well.

So in both instances, I think there was a choice to be made. I think we are arguing that at least a good portion of that money could have been spent here on the homeland to try to achieve some of the objectives that the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) has stated.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the real issue is making sure we are straight with the American people. We have Members on our side and the minority staff that are here, and even groups outside of the Congress that are willing to give information as it relates to taking up 60 minutes here on the floor that could be talking about heroic acts on behalf of Americans. But I think we are sent to Congress to make sure once again that we give individuals who do not have voices voice.

In New York you have a great strategy, and rightfully so. Just like this Capitol, New York, certain key areas within New York, they are terrorist targets internationally because of the financial community, just the fact that it is an international community. The rest of the country may very well have issues, not only in Florida but in Ohio, and receiving the kind of attention that it deserves also, making sure we send our dollars where those dollars are needed and prevent terrorist attacks from happening.

April 1 a report was due to Congress. It is not here.

Second date, July 1, a report was due to Congress. I said the 30th on each of one of those earlier, and I want to correct those dates. So when folks start talking about you have Members of Congress that are legislating and they do not know exactly what the needs are, we do not know what the needs are for a national transportation strategy, not because we are sitting at home cracking our toes saying the job situation looks sad and we have nothing better to do. It is because the Department of Homeland Security has not given us what we need on the overall transportation strategy. How can one file and put in legislation without hearing back from the very Department that has been legislatively required to give Congress the information that they need? That is majority

and minority. That has nothing to do with partisanship, and it has everything to do with national security.

I think it is important for us to use our time wisely. I think it is important for us to come here and give voice where there is not a voice on these issues, and make sure that people understand that we have to be serious about this. It is one thing about having a sense of security and another thing about having actual security. We were not sent here for a sense of security. We were sent here to secure America and those properties that we have throughout this world as they relate to embassies and American interests.

I want to also state that we always talk about what is the difference. What is the difference. What is the difference between the minority and the majority. I can tell you many instances as it relates to homeland security and transportation issues such as our delegate here, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), and also our chairman, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), who serves on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and the ranking member on the Committee on Homeland Security, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON), and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) who have reintroduced a transit security bill, H.R. 3270, which has been included in the Democratic substitute in the homeland security authorization bill.

House Democrats are fighting to make sure that we are able to do the things that we need to do, absent the report that we needed. We are working with what we have, but I can tell Members, I would hate for an event to happen on some transit, mass transit or bus or rail and say, well, we knew we had a vulnerability there. We would be very happy to share that with the Congress, not only the administration but the Department of Homeland Security.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of good people. I had an opportunity to go out to the Department during the July 4 break and visit with many of the individuals that are working there. They feel like they are serving their country, but at the same time they need the leadership to ensure that they are able to do the things that they need to do.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I agree with the gentleman and thank him for his leadership on the committee. We obviously have a good number of challenges here in the Congress to deal with that. I hope that as time goes on we try to shift the focus back here because I think we all know that the threats are here. As what happened in London, it is scary when homegrown terrorists are the ones causing the most strife in your own country. We have to be very careful and very vigilant, and part of that is protecting the infrastructure here in this country.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to say going back to what we were talking about here earlier, we

were not sent up here to have great relationships and give people a pass. We came up here to represent not only the people in our districts, but also the people of the United States of America. Sometimes we have to make ourselves uncomfortable.

I have a great relationship with those that are in leadership in the Department of Homeland Security, but my job as a Member of Congress and also ranking member of the Subcommittee on Oversight, Management and Integration goes far beyond those relationships. I think that anyone that may take issue with the fact that we are talking about a congressional, federally mandated report to Congress so we will know what we need to know when we need to know it so we can legislate in the appropriate way, to be able to address the needs of not only the Department of Homeland Security, but all of the way down to the village sheriff, that firefighter that is trying to make sure that they have what they need, and to that transit worker running that train or bus, that is what we have to do.

We have to get out of our comfort zone and make sure that we do what we need to do. We cannot allow relationships to jump in front of homeland security.

□ 2215

We cannot allow relationships to jump in front of what we need to do as it relates to making sure that our veterans get what they need because back at the ranch we are pounding our chests, the troops and all, but when they get back they cannot even get an appointment at the VA. So do not love me, lights, cameras, action, and then drop me off and leave me after the cameras are gone, when I get back home facing the real issues, trying to find a job, trying to pay some of these bills that I was not able to address while I was over there fighting on behalf of my country, doing what I was told. Do not leave me.

So that is why we are here, to make sure that those individuals are heard, how strong or weak or whatever their voice may be, because in many instances they are single parent families. In many instances they could be two-parent families, but the bottom line is making sure that we in this Congress stand by what we said we would do for them. So I go back to that issue of relationships.

Are we here to cover for our friends or are we here to represent the American people, bottom line, period? I do not care if one is a Democrat or a Republican. Are they hear to represent the American people or are they here to cover for their friends? So we need to make sure when we raise our hand at the beginning of every Congress to uphold the Constitution of the United States, we remember that, not uphold our friendship with our friends and making sure that we cover for them when they do something wrong. That is

not what it is about. It is about making sure that we do what we have to do as constitutional officers.

I just had to share that.

I see the gentleman has that national debt there, and I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman and appreciate his words, and I think as we start to wrap up here and are getting near the end of the fourth quarter of our time, I think it is important that everything that we talked about tonight, whether it was veterans benefits, homeland security, the war, I think all of this in one way or another gets back to Social Security, gets back to what is the United States economy going to be like in the next couple of decades. And I think that is the one issue that is not being addressed here that would have ramifications on all of these other topics that we have been talking about. And if we do not figure out a way to get the U.S. economy up and running again, we are going to continue to sit here and have debates about our national debt at \$7.8 trillion or the \$27,000 that every citizen owes to the government and high tuition costs and not enough money to pay for the VA benefits and how are we going to compete, wages are stagnant. What is the plan? What is the agenda here in this Congress and at the White House and in the Senate to address the issue of stagnant wages?

We hear a lot about globalization and trade, and I do not think either of us are saying we are going to start building walls up and putting them up around the country because we know that is not possible, but are we making the proper investments into education, into lowering college tuition costs and into making sure that everybody can afford to get an education?

And I was just looking at a recent article in Fortune Magazine, and if we do not get this problem figured out here in the next few years, we are going to be in big trouble. I just want to share these with the Members: College graduates, which will be the engine for any kind of economic growth over the next 2 decades, in China 3.3 million college graduates, in India 3.1 million college graduates, and in the U.S. 1.3 million. I recognize that they have a lot more people than we have, and this is not ethnocentric or any other kind of derogatory remark. I think the Chinese and the Indians are doing what they need to do to be competitive. What are we doing? College tuition probably doubled in Florida just like it doubled in Ohio over the past few years, 4 or 5 years. Engineering graduates: China, 600,000; India, 350,000; in the U.S., 70,000.

If we want to fix the veterans problem, if we want to fix the issue of national debt, if we want to have money to have a strong military, and Governor Mitt Romney was before the Committee on Education and the Workforce about 3 or 4 weeks ago, and he was testifying, and he said something that was very enlightening, that

if we want to have a top tier military, we have to have a top tier economy to be able to fund it. And we could talk about going to Afghanistan and going to Iraq and all the troubles we have with South Korea. China had a professor make a very interesting statement about using nuclear weapons against the United States and causing great damage to cities here in the United States of America over the issue of Taiwan. I mean we have all these little fires burning, and if we are going to be able to keep our military strong and continue to fund the military, which we are doing now but we are doing it at the expense of education, health care, making sure our veterans have the proper health care and benefit systems that they need. So are we going to be able to lead the world with a second tier economy? No. And it is getting very competitive.

And just in Ohio the No Child Left Behind Act is underfunded by \$1.5 billion. Thousands and thousands of kids live in poverty. They are not going to go to school and learn if they live in poverty. They are not even eating properly, let alone going to school and focusing and concentrating and figuring out algebra and trigonometry and physics. It has got to be the commitment here, and I think if there is one issue that we are going to address, it has got to be the issue of economy, jobs, and education, and therefore these people will go out and create the kind of wealth that we need, generate the kind of tax revenues we need to make sure our veterans have their health care and to make sure that health care is provided to every citizen in the country and other people can afford to go to college.

So all the issues that we talked about here, reducing the debt, veterans, transit safety, homeland security, all the issues the gentleman is working on, Medicare, prescription drug, and all these other things, we have got to figure out. And I think the levers have been pulled by the other side for a long time. They have tried their supply-side economics again for the second time in the past couple of decades, and it has been great for a very small number of people, but in Youngstown, Ohio and Akron, Ohio and all over the State, wages are stagnant but tuition costs are doubled, property taxes are going up to fund mental health levies and school levies and everything else, police and fire levies, sales tax. Counties are going bankrupt. This has not worked for everybody, and until we all figure out, regardless of party, how we are going to fix this problem, we are going to be slowly dropping and we are not going to be able to meet our military commitments around world, which I think is the most dangerous aspect of it.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, the gentleman was saying we are having trouble with North Korea, but I noticed he said South Korea.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I am sorry.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. We have troops in South Korea, not in North Korea, but I just want to make sure. We have to watch out for one another, but I can tell the gentleman this: It is a relationship, but we watch out for one other in the right way, not in the wrong way.

But regarding something the gentleman pointed out, I was in the State legislature for 8 years before I got here, served 4 in the Florida House, 4 in the Florida Senate, and I can tell the Members it was one of the best public jobs I have ever had outside of being a State trooper in Florida. And I can tell the gentleman this: We used to really dislike it when the Congress did what it is doing now. It is called devolution of taxation, and what I mean by devolution of taxation is it is saying that not only are we going to cut taxes up here for the very, very wealthy, I mean we are not talking about the super, super majority of our constituents. We are talking about the very, very wealthy individuals. But we are going to pull back on the federal commitment to the States financially. So when we send fewer dollars to the States, what do they have to do? They have to pass on the unfortunate duty of passing that on to the local county governments, the local city governments, the village council, name it. The most vulnerable individuals within the State budget are students. So that is the reason why we spend a lot of time, this 30-something Working Group, in making sure that young people know exactly what is happening to them versus what is happening for them because more and more things are happening to them, Mr. Speaker, and I can tell the Members this also: Another reason why we spend so much time talking about Iraq veterans' benefits is because 70 percent of the individuals that are coming back from Iraq or that are in Iraq now are under the age of 30. They are there fighting. So we have to make sure that they have a voice. So this whole devolution of taxation is saying, Oh, well, you are going to get a \$50 check from the Federal Government, run out to Bennigan's and do what you do or save that \$50 and you will have something one day, down to the State government where they have to cut and raise tuition. Guess what? Someone may say, Well, those kids, they need to learn how to save their money and pull themselves up by their bootstraps; I did. I can tell the Members this right now: The average college student is coming out \$20,000 in debt right now, and the reason why they are coming out \$20,000 in debt is because Pell grants are not what they used to be, the State commitment and scholarships for kids to go to school are not what they used to be. In my State, we have the Bright Future Scholarship that is supposed to provide a full ride for students, and they have it over in Georgia too. As a matter of fact, we in the State legislature worked with Georgia, and it was tied into the lot-

tery and all of that. But it is not what it used to be. Not because the kids are not learning. It is because the State government can no longer support good behavior on behalf of our future generations, academic good behavior. So when we are up here pounding and talking about what we are going to do and it is their money and we are going to cut it, well, there are very few individuals that are receiving a true tax cut; and, Members could talk to anyone in this country and I guarantee them there has been some sort of millage hike or some referendum on building schools, not because all of a sudden we want to tax ourselves to build schools. It is because the federal commitment is not what it should be.

So when we talk about those issues and we start talking about future generations, we cannot help but think about what happens in this Chamber and across the hall and what happens in the White House because we are the individuals where this whole public taxpayer dollar starts from. So if we cut it, they are going to pay it either on the State level or they are going to pay it on the county level or on the city level.

No Child Left Behind, let me just mention something. We have Texas that is suing the Federal Government over No Child Left Behind unfunded mandates. I am just going to leave it at that. There are other States that have joined in in suing the Federal Government. The National Governors' Association, I invite the Members to go to their website and see how they feel about what we are doing on No Child Left Behind. They wish they could come up here and get on this floor and grab a voting card and really make something happen on behalf of States. We say we want accountability. Then doggone it, we had better send the money.

So when we start talking about the difference, No Child Left Behind was a bipartisan piece of legislation. I mean we had individuals over in the Senate and individuals here, ranking members hugging and press conferences and all because we all believed that we were going to do actually what we said that we were going to do, that the level of commitment, federal commitment, as it relates to the dollar, not only the interest but the dollar will go to the States and also to the local school boards. That has not happened. It is miserably underfunded, and that is the reason why we come to the floor to talk about not only the difference. I do not want to talk about it. I want to see some action, and the only way that is going to happen is unless the American people start to say, Mr. Speaker, I am not happy with what I have.

That is the reason we come to the floor. We come to the floor to make sure that the American people know and the Members of this Congress know we have to rise to a higher occasion as it relates to what we have to do on behalf our constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, it is not even just the taxes either, which I think the tax rate and the amount people are paying now has significantly increased, but I think it is important also to talk about the health care issue that I think went up about 50 percent since President Bush got in office, with no real plan.

We hear a lot about health care savings accounts. Those are great if they have enough money to put in them every month. If they have a little disposable income, they start a health care savings account. But a lot of people are living paycheck to paycheck. They do not the money to put into a health care savings account.

□ 2230

The issue we need to address is health care costs with information technology and preventative care and stop using the emergency rooms as clinics, because they are not; and it is the most inefficient way to run the kind of health care system that we are running here. Again, another major issue that is swing and a miss.

Swing and a miss on the economy; swing and a miss on health care; swing and a miss on making the proper investments in education, at least the funding side of things. I agree, it was great to see the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) and Ted Kennedy with President Bush saying this is the way to move forward with education. But if the money and resources are not there, things become problematic.

So the bottom line is, and I think what we are trying to say here, as we wrap it up, we have got a lot of issues, but we need to focus on some of these core issues, about the economy, investments to make sure that we are producing enough engineers and computer scientists to compete with these other countries who are focusing on those kind of issues, having a national program.

I think the space program and going to the Moon was a lot more about getting people educated and into corporate America and into our universities than it was actually putting somebody on the Moon. That was the goal. But we need something like that. We need something, some national goal that is going to set and coordinate our efforts here, to inspire young children to study math, to study science, to become engineers and contribute to the economy. We have to generate a lot of wealth.

We are going to be losing a lot of wealth because of the outsourcing. These jobs are moving to China and India, they are moving to Ireland, they are moving to these other countries; and if we are going to keep our status as a tier-one economy so that we can have a tier-one military, we have to make these investments. You do not hear that word "investment" used much around here anymore.

Just drop us e-mail. It will be interesting to hear what people who are out there watching think that the priorities should be here in the United States Congress: 30something democrats@mail.house.gov.

I thank the gentleman for allowing me to join him here tonight and be part of this great debate. I thank him for his leadership on the Committee on Homeland Security. I know that, unfortunately, it is going to be a focus more and more for our country and this Congress. I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I want to thank the gentleman for pointing out not only the importance of future generations, but also we talked about tonight the issue of relationships versus what we are sent up here to do.

This issue of homeland security, the gentleman knows we are working on a piece of legislation as it relates to disclosure to the American people. I think that is important also as it relates to some financial issues.

But we appreciate the gentleman's representation of his fine district in Ohio. We hope that we can work in a bipartisan way on many pieces of legislation.

The whole issue as it relates to private accounts, the name "private accounts" lets us know on this side of the aisle that the majority side has already decided on what it is going to be. We know what private accounts are going to bring. We have to continue to fight.

That is why we come to the floor, not only to talk about the difference, but to talk about the will to lead in the areas we need to lead.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank not only the Democratic leader, the gentleman from California (Ms. PELOSI), but the leadership, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) and all the way to our Democratic Caucus, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and also the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN) and others for allowing us to come to the floor one more time.

#### THE CONGRESSIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, this evening several of my colleagues and I are going to discuss a topic which is a little bit different from what normally is discussed here on the House floor. I think the general impression that one would get in watching the debate and some of the Special Orders is that this is a highly partisan, very divided body, and somewhat a Godless body at times. I do not believe that this is the whole story.

One activity in the House that is not partisan or contentious is the weekly

prayer breakfast that is held every Thursday morning. There are roughly 30 to 40 Republicans and Democrats who meet during that hour. It is completely nonpartisan. It is Members only. It is confidential. Whatever is said there stays there. Of course, it is the precursor to the national prayer breakfast which is held every spring.

Just a word or two of historical background. I think it is important that we from time to time recall that we are a spiritual Nation and that our foundation is of a spiritual nature.

To quote Benjamin Franklin, who many believe was somewhat irreligious, this is what he said in a speech on the House floor: "We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings, that except the Lord build a house they labor in vain that build it. I firmly believe this. I also believe that without his concurring aid, we shall succeed in the political building no better than the builders of Babel. We shall be divided by our little partial local interests, our projects will be confounded and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a byword down to future ages."

Then he goes on to say: "I therefore beg leave to move that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of heaven and its blessing on our deliberation be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business."

Of course, that speech was the precursor of the morning prayer that we have every day that we meet in Congress. So Franklin was alluding to the fact that without acknowledging the divine presence and without prayer, that many of the deliberations of this body were of no more worth than the builders of Babel.

George Washington, of course, was a Founding Father that also was one who relied heavily upon his faith. This is what he said in his inaugural address. He said: "The propitious smiles of heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which heaven itself has ordained."

Both Benjamin Franklin and George Washington indicated that the foundation of a successful nation really needed to be based upon spiritual principle.

Mr. Speaker, our purpose here tonight is to talk a little bit about the prayer breakfast, what we think the benefit of the prayer breakfast is. It is not to proselytize, it is not necessarily to even express our personal faith, but to let people know that there is an organization, there is a group here that meets regularly that is certainly not contentious and is focused upon spiritual issues.

I would just like to say one word about my personal experience at the prayer breakfast that has been very beneficial, and that is that I began to see people as they really are. We all have a facade. We bear titles. We are Republicans, we are Democrats, we are chairmen, we are vice chairmen, and

we are from different parts of the country. As we speak on the floor, many times we are somewhat contentious. At the prayer breakfast, all of those titles and all of those masks that we wear tend to be stripped away, and you begin to see a person as he or she really is.

I remember particularly one morning where a Member was to speak. I was not looking forward particularly to that particular day, because the image that I had of that individual was that of a person who was highly partisan, someone who had no relationship to anything that I believed. And yet as I listened to that person and I began to feel the pain in that person's life and I began to understand him better, I saw him entirely different. As a result, that person has become a very close friend, even though politically we are a long ways apart. I think many people have experienced that as well.

At this point, I am going to yield to a number of individuals who attend the breakfast who want to just give those who would be viewing a snapshot of how they feel about this particular organization and the service that it renders to this body.

The first person I believe who was here this evening was the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY), so I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) at this time.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Nebraska for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is one of the best times of the week for me to reflect on why I am here, what is my purpose in being a Member of this body; why did I leave my prior profession, that of a physician, an OB/GYN doctor for 26 years, and in the comforts of my own hometown and all my patients, and all of a sudden embark on another career. I have to believe that I was sent here by the grace of God. I think that my fellow Members on both sides of the aisle must have that same feeling.

But it is the coming together once a week at the prayer breakfast that the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) just described that reminds us of that purpose, and reminds us, each Member, why we are here.

Just listening tonight, this evening, Mr. Speaker, from both sides of the aisle, you will hear a lot of times a discussion that sounds so highly partisan, you would think that we literally hated each other. Some Members are a little more strident, Mr. Speaker, than others, but it is not hatred; and I think it is important for us always to remember why this type of dialogue goes back and forth.

Both sides want to be in control. In this body and the other body, there is no sharing of this power and everybody wants to be in those leadership positions. Sometimes the dialogue gets pretty strident, and you literally would think, Mr. Speaker, those of us sitting as we come as new Members listening to the discussion from the other side

and them us, that we literally hate each other.

Truly, we do not, and to have an opportunity to come, as I say, and as the gentleman from Nebraska explains about the prayer breakfast, you get to know your colleagues in a different way. You know that they have parents and grandparents and husbands and wives and they have brothers and sisters and moms and dads, and they love the Lord, and they talk about it.

Some are more eloquent than others. I know I have to admit that I have not yet been the speaker, to talk about my life and why I am here and what purpose I hope to serve in this great body. I probably should not have admitted that, because the coach may have me down next week to give my testimonial, Mr. Speaker; and I may be more nervous during that than I am here participating in this Special Order tonight.

But I love my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. Thursday morning at that prayer breakfast, that devotional, it gives me an opportunity to really understand why I am here, why we all are here: to do good, just to do good, to do the right thing, not to ever let political expediency get in the way of our principles, and always try to do God's will.

So for me to share a few moments talking about that tonight is a great pleasure, and I appreciate the gentleman from Nebraska bringing us together in a bipartisan fashion. You are going to hear from Members on both sides of the aisle; and because of our participation in that group, that Thursday morning prayer breakfast, they are my good friends and I am their good friend, and we respect one another and we love one another and we are going to continue to try, Mr. Speaker, to always do God's will.

□ 2245

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to recognize the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. Fox).

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity very much. I thank the gentleman from Nebraska for coming up with the idea of our doing this.

I think there are a lot of misconceptions about Congress. People think from the media, and I am not sure from where else, that we are a bunch of people who go out at night with lobbyists and carry on, and a lot of people do not have an idea that we do have this prayer breakfast every Thursday morning. I think that it is very important that we share as broad a perspective on what we do here in Congress as we possibly can.

There are 435 Members in the House of Representatives, and I think one of the best things that our prayer breakfast does is give us a chance to get to know people that we would not have an opportunity to get to know otherwise. As we have all pointed out, and others will too, it is bipartisan, and that is

one of the better parts of the breakfast. Because most of the time, we do meet by party and talk with people by party, and it is very difficult to get to know people of the other party unless you are serving with them on a committee. But this gives us an opportunity, as my colleague said earlier, to get to know people in a way that we would not get to know them otherwise.

It is a very structured meeting that we have in many ways. We are blessed that we have scripture reading brought to us by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLEAVER) who does a wonderful job every week. I will have to say that many of us think when we go to church and hear a sermon, if it is a good sermon, the preacher is preaching right at us; and I think that I have been amazed at our scripture reading and the message that he brings every week. It seems always to hit the spot for me. So I am very grateful for that. We do a lot of praying and we do a lot of music. We sing. And we have been very blessed to have had the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. AKIN) lead our music this time, and it has been some of the most vigorous music that I have had a chance to participate in. I am very, very grateful for that.

As the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) said earlier, our Founding Fathers turned to God in prayer at the most difficult times of the founding of this Nation. And they did set a pattern for us, a pattern that I am pleased that we are continuing here by every day opening this session with a prayer but, again, encouraging us to get together to pray.

In addition to our having scripture and prayer and music, we also have someone who reminds us of the sick and wounded. When I thought about speaking tonight, I realized that is basically the only place where we are gathered together where we take the time to remember those amongst us who are having problems. I want to say I am very grateful for the group. My husband recently had surgery and our group prayed for him very vigorously, and I think those prayers meant a lot in terms of God bringing him through that in a very successful way.

We need our prayer breakfast. Those of us who go there need it. We call it the best hour of the week. It provides a grounding for us. It helps us remember what is important about life. We are here to do important work.

I remember once when I was in the legislature, somebody said to a group of us that we were important people; and one of the Members said, no, we are not important people; we are just ordinary people doing important work. And I think by going to our prayer breakfast on a regular basis, we understand we are not important people, but we are ordinary people doing important work and doing it with the values and the morals that I think that the people of this country expect us to have.

I am very grateful for those who have kept the prayer breakfast going over

the years and made it possible for those of us who are there now. I hope that our sharing tonight a little bit about our prayer breakfast will help break some of the misconceptions that people might have about us and give a broader viewpoint about how we spend our days in Congress and what we focus on.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Nebraska (Coach OSBORNE) for organizing this Special Order, and I thank the gentleman for the leadership that he provides to us at the prayer breakfast.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her comments. At this time I would like to yield to the cochair of the prayer breakfast, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for having the foresight to bring a group of us together here this evening on the House floor to talk about something that is an event that happens each Thursday morning, not something, but an event that happens each Thursday morning that I think helps mold us to realize that all of us have deep, abiding faith, regardless of which political party we claim to be of.

We keep saying that Thursday morning is the best, it is the best hour of the week. Well, there is no question that is the case. But for me it gives me an opportunity; most of us in our districts, I have 10,000 square miles, and Tennessee is 40,000 square miles, and in my congressional district, you probably would not find any more God-fearing people, God-loving people than in the district I represent. Now, I know each of you will challenge that, I am sure. But I know the folks that I represent, and my colleagues know the people that they represent. But the people I represent are very rural people, they are close to nature, and worship is important to them.

From time to time, Sunday mornings, never Wednesday nights can I go to prayer meetings anymore, but on Sunday mornings sometimes we have schedules that prevent us from being at our own home church. I am Southern Baptist. So Thursday morning has become the day that I look to as kind of my church day. It is the day that I know that I will get together with people here in Congress, 435 of us, I wish all of us came, that I could get with individuals and we share our faith, without knowing which party that we are a member of.

I go back to my youth when I was growing up, and I think when you start looking especially in the rural areas, the gentleman from Nebraska represents a huge area of Nebraska, and I am sure he probably has small communities that have less than 20 to 30 people, but there is a church there, is there not? There is a house of faith that is built there.

So when our early settlers first came to this country, a family or two would locate, and one of the first buildings

they would build other than their home was a house where they could worship, a house of worship. Oftentimes it was used also to educate the young children. That has always been the nucleus that has held that community together.

So I think our prayer breakfast basically gives me that same magnetic feeling of being among those who share a faith. We have had different faiths who speak, and I have been impressed with each one of them. I have been surprised, in many cases, by each of them as they talk about how they grew up and what their father and mother did and how their mother and father encouraged them and took them to church with them and encouraged them to develop a deep, abiding faith. I listen to those Members of Congress and I think, there is no partisanship there.

Sometimes, when we are looked upon by those outside of this Chamber, through the media, through some of the partisan efforts, quite frankly, probably in our different parties in our local communities, I am not sure they realize how close many of us are at those Thursday morning prayer breakfasts and how we pray for each other and for this country and for our soldiers that are in harm's way. And we pray for the wisdom to look to God's will as we make the decisions here inside this Chamber.

I often get an opportunity to go down to the country stores. Some of my colleagues may not have the rural country stores where that also is kind of an area where if it is not Wednesday night or Sunday morning or Sunday evening, where people gather. I go to a little place called Forbus General Store. It has been in operation since 1887; it is over 100 years old and continues to operate.

Years ago, if you wanted medications, if you were sick, the doctor would write a prescription, or you would go to that store, and even though a fellow may or may not have been a pharmacist, he would give you a prescription. If you had lost a family member, you could buy a casket. If you had a team of mules, you could buy a harness. It is a huge facility that is still in operation.

Obviously, those particular items you do not purchase there any more, but one thing we will do. We will sit back in the back, and there is usually a table where you can sit and drink coffee, and I know the Republicans and I know the Democrats. I think all of them probably are for me; at least I hope they are. But as we talk about issues, there is never a time when it appears that we get angry at each other. There is always that, because we know each other, there is that camaraderieship amongst each other, and issues that come up that are important to them.

As a Congressman, the other day I was there; I tell this joke and I probably should not. But this one fellow, I

was carrying on a pretty good conversation, and one of the boys in the back named Johnny Anderson reared back and he said, Lincoln, you are getting just like those fellows in Washington. I believe you are getting so winded you could blow up an onion sack.

So, in essence, they look at us sometimes differently in these small rural areas; and maybe in the urban areas it is the same way. But what I hope, after our presentations tonight, that Americans will realize that as a group of men and women collectively, men and women of faith, that our faith does mean something to us; that in most cases, I truly believe all of us make a faith-based decision on the issues that come before this House. I know I do. And I think all of the Members do.

So it has been a delight for me to work with the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE). He is of a different political party than me. As a matter of fact, Tennessee Vols learned to have a greater respect for the gentleman from Nebraska (Coach OSBORNE) when he was a coach in Nebraska. So, in essence, I have learned a greater respect for him as well, for the man, for the man of faith that I know him to be, and for a spiritual leader that many of us can look to for spiritual guidance.

So to me, on Thursday mornings, bringing together folks who seem to be so different in the eyes of the American public, if they were only here, would realize that there is at least one place that bipartisanship thoroughly survives and is loved among those of us who go on Thursday morning to a prayer breakfast. In February we have the Congressional Day of Prayer, and it is attended by many people from different nations. And at that prayer breakfast, I think we have been able to probably minister and reach out to individuals of different faiths and some even to help establish a faith in them and perhaps in their country.

So I look forward to working with the gentleman for the rest of the year and continue as long as I am in Congress to share with men and women of faith on the special hour each Thursday morning.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much, and I certainly appreciate his leadership at the prayer breakfast. I was hoping we would get through this hour without talking about football, but it did come up and, fortunately, we do not get too involved with that and it keeps things on a little higher plane. So at this point, I would like to recognize a gentleman who has really added a lot to the prayer breakfast through the fact that he plays guitar and can carry a tune and usually gets us started on the right note, and that is the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. AKIN).

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Nebraska. I think some people might be surprised that there is a prayer breakfast like this

down here and that people get along very well and encourage each other, pray for each other and really have a time of sharing, but also it is very special to me, because when you are in Congress, everybody here is so busy all the time. And this is a time where you can actually set aside a little bit of time in the morning, and you can get to know somebody new in a special kind of way.

But this thing should not really surprise us all that much. If we go back to the beginning of our country, this is a country that just has been loaded up on faith right from the beginning. The Pilgrims came here and the very first Constitution they wrote says "in ye name of God, amen" it starts out. In 1620, 1630, the Puritans arrive and coming down the coast, they say, we believe that God has confirmed His covenant by bringing us safely to this country, and that we shall be as a city on a hill, a light to all people, if we deal faithfully with our God.

□ 2300

You can spin forward another 150 years to the time when they are framing, trying to put the constitution together. You have got old Ben Franklin there, 84 years old, and everybody is arguing, these politicians making long winded speeches, it is hot, there is no screens on the windows, everybody's patience is a little bit short. And old Ben Franklin gets up and look over his old bifocals and he is speaking to George Washington now at the time. He says, we have been assured, sir, in the sacred writing of scripture that a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without the notice of God. Is it probable that a Nation can rise without his blessing? And he goes on to say that we really need to start with prayer as we start looking at putting this new constitution together.

And then you get this building built, a certain number of years later, the great big old Capitol dome right next to us here this evening. It was for I guess about 80 or 90 years, the biggest church in Washington, D.C. because on Sunday that is where they held services. So we stand in a long tradition. And that tradition is continuing to go on in this wonderful time that we have Thursday mornings to just let each other pray for each other. And then usually the way it works is somebody stands up for about a half an hour and just shares about what their life is about. And you know there are so many wonderful people that have been elected down here, and they all have such unique stories and every one of them is a picture of the side of America. And those of us that take the time to go really get to love it. It is almost sort of like a living Norman Rockwell picture when people share their lives, and it is such a treat to be able to do it.

And the one thing there is a little bit of lack of talent in the music department so they called on me. I used to

get kicked out of choir all the time, so they did not know that when they asked me to do it. But we do manage to sing through a few songs and have a little bit of fun in the process.

But I thank the gentleman from Nebraska for his leadership and just taking a little bit of moment tonight so we could share with everybody who is interested what a wonderful time that is Thursday morning at 8 o'clock.

Mr. OSBORNE. Well, I certainly thank the gentleman and we really have appreciated the music that he has brought to the prayer breakfast.

And at this time I would like to recognize the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE), who also has been very faithful in his attendance and adds a lot to the Thursday morning activities.

Mr. PEARCE. I thank the gentleman for verifying that. My pastor at home would be deeply interested to understand that I do attend prayer breakfast every week or almost every week. And I thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVIS) for his leadership in that group.

You know, when I travel at home, people, the most common comment that people make to me, first of all, is tell the President we are praying for him. And that is often repeated, even into this last weekend when I was at home.

The second thing that people ask, and they are almost surprised to find out, is there are not many Christians in Congress. And they are surprised to find out that not only are there many Christians, but that we actually gather in a bipartisan basis once a week and have this prayer breakfast.

And I think it is essentially one of the strongest components of our Nation that we still recognize the founding of this Nation on the Christian principles. It was our Founding Fathers who declared that a democracy demands a moral people. They understood that a democracy does not use the force of strength on its people to cause them to follow the law; that instead it depends on a voluntary compliance, and that volunteer compliance depends on having a moral fiber and a moral instruction.

Now we go to schools to understand knowledge and wisdom. But I think that our religious education, our moral education helps us to understand how to live correctly and rightly, how best to order our lives, that we do not impair the freedom of others, and yet we access the blessings that are given to us. And what better opportunity for us to explore that than to come together in a bipartisan way to pray for those things that a Nation should be praying for, for wisdom for its leaders, for steadfastness that we would keep to the same course, that we would not vary back and forth, for clarity, that as we deal with difficult subjects, that we can understand and discern correctly between the competing value systems that we are confronting.

What better prayer group could we have than to ask for the blessings of

God on to this Nation. And I think as we do that in a bipartisan way each week, it softens up the tendency to for us to see the differences between the two parties and the two different philosophical sets and we begin to see the commonalities that are approached from different directions. And that, for me, gives the real strength to this country because the strength of a country is not one single set of ideas but a single set of values that are approached from different directions, and the dramatic tension that plays back and forth between competing philosophical sets is what gives us the strength.

Commonly we think of the strength of trees and pine trees that grow up in New Mexico without winds that blew from more than one direction have one kind of strength. But the people who know lumber say that in Washington State where the winds blow from all directions and the cellular structure in the tree is moving back and forth creates a strength that the pine trees in our state do not have. And I think that we as a Nation must understand that as we toss ideas back and forth that is a strengthening process as long as we keep it civil. And I say to the gentleman from Nebraska and the gentleman from Tennessee, for me, you all lead that prayer breakfast in an excellent fashion to help us get that tension back and forth in a reasonable, and a calm and spiritual way. So for me the prayer breakfast serves a very compelling reminder that God uses ordinary people in extraordinary ways as our colleague had mentioned elsewhere.

Finally, the thing that the prayer breakfast does for me is it offers accountability. The lifestyle of a congressional representative with the travel back and forth is extremely disorienting, and that accountability to members of the same faith who are declaring similar values is a very important part of me coming here and remembering who I am and where I am from and what my commitments are too.

So again, I thank all of the people in this Congress who participate in the prayer breakfast and who reach out hands of encouragement and accountability each week. So I thank the gentleman from Nebraska again for his leadership in this.

Mr. OSBORNE. I thank the gentleman from New Mexico. We appreciate the gentleman's faithfulness.

Madam Speaker, at this time I would like to yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. WAMP). The gentleman has been a long time faithful member of the Thursday morning prayer breakfast. Currently the gentleman does the accountability in terms of those people who are hurting, those people who are injured, those people who are ill, and we really appreciate that part of his service here. And I think the gentleman has a genuine ministry here within Congress. And so it is my pleasure to yield time to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. WAMP).

Mr. WAMP. Madam Speaker, I am so grateful the gentleman from Nebraska has done this. I can feel the sweet spirit in this room that we feel every Thursday morning, that most people would really never have a chance to feel and many people come to this body with great success in their previous vocation. Few people come with greater success than the gentleman from Nebraska. Yet the gentleman is among the most humble, decent, selfless thoughtful people that I have ever seen and here the gentleman truly is salt and light in a place that needs that. It is the best hour of the week. It is what many of us look forward to each week. I find it very interesting that when Members leave this place, if they came to the prayer breakfast and people will say what do you miss the most, that is always the first thing that they say is I miss that prayer breakfast, or if there was some bipartisan activity they were engaged in, whether it was a trip, family activities or maybe in the gym to exercise, they miss that. They miss the bipartisan aspects of the House more than anything else. And I think that is important and instructive for us.

We should not be too surprised though that this is a time of great tension and political division. I can remember in the mid-90s, I was here, Speaker Gingrich was the Speaker. Many things that he said were almost a forewarning, almost prophetic. He said he thought we had entered into a period that may go 20 years of very close competition between the parties, and that political power may swing back and forth.

□ 2310

And since he said that, we had the Senate that changed hands without an election, just with one person switching parties. We had the closest election in the history of our country in 2000, and the country still ideologically is very divided. So you can see how people might engage in rancor or very divisive debate. That is why it is even more important for us to be active at trying to bring people together, trying to hold up the institution, the things that are good, and to talk openly about civility.

I think we talk about a whole lot of things that do not matter as much, and we do not talk near enough about things that do matter more, and that is what we are here tonight to talk about.

Senator Brock, who served in the House seat I am in, gave a speech in Tennessee last week about the lack of the civility in the public arena in this country today and how important that is. Dr. David Abshire, former ambassador, just wrote an essay called "The Grace and Power of Civility." The Grace and Power of Civility.

We need to claim that grace and that power. This weekly hour that we come to is truly salt and light in a place here; and the scripture calls us to be salt and light. This gives us an opportunity to be salt and light.

Let me say humbly as a member of the majority party that it is imperative if we are going to have civility and we are going to have any unity, unity is a powerful force in a family, in a Congress, in the country. It is the goal that caused Abraham Lincoln to keep us together at our worst hour. He said, We are going to preserve our union. We are going to stay unified.

Unity is a powerful principle. And humbly may I say, it is the responsibility of the majority to reach out in a civil way to try to work together to work together with the minority. It is a lot easier for the minority to get along with the majority than it is for the majority to take the initiative to try to find ways to be civil and decent and uphold the institution.

Now, there are so many wonderful stories of this hour; and as the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) said, what is said there stays there. But I want to give you just a little snapshot of a couple of the moments that have taken my breath away in the last 11 years.

We had the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) speak one day. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) is a great leader of the civil rights movement. He almost went into fire and brimstone preaching that day, and it was powerful. But when he talked about the civil rights march going from Alabama to Mississippi and how he was met, that group was met at the Mississippi State line with the Adjutant General from the Mississippi National Guard having orders to arrest them as they entered the State of Mississippi. And that very general, General Sonny Montgomery of Mississippi, a member of Congress for over 30 years and for over 30 years the anchor of this weekly prayer breakfast, he was sitting in the room when John Lewis told the story, the very man that arrested them was in the room as a colleague, a Member of Congress. And the two of them that day, the love they have for each other years later is such an example of reconciliation and forgiveness. If they cannot only get along but find a way to love each other, surely, goodness, we can with the silly disagreements that we have from time to time.

I think of relationships that were forged. George Herbert Walker Bush when he was a Member of the House was a regular at this prayer breakfast and he became best friends, he was a Republican from New England, became best friends with a Democrat from Mississippi named Sonny Montgomery, and their friendship has lasted a lifetime, but it was forged on Thursday morning. It transcends everything that is done here. This is so meaningful.

I think of Charlie Stenholm, my friends for years. I think of Bob Stump, who is in heaven today, from Arizona who came for over 20 years every Thursday morning to pour coffee, walk around the room and serve his colleagues, faithfully coming early and staying late to clean up and serve others.

Someone chairs each week, as has been said. One of my favorite lines of any contemporary Christian song was written by Ray Boltz in a song that says, "When others see a shepherd boy, God sees a king."

Every Thursday somehow we all see a king or a queen because there is such goodness in every person that when they peel their heart back and show who they are, you can find something good. That is what we do not do enough around here is look for the good in the other person. When we do, this place gets a lot better; and I think a lot more will get done.

It has been said, but I want to say it this way, the vast majority of people in this body are good and decent people just trying their best to represent the folks back home to the best of their ability. But I want to close on this note. It takes maintenance to stay informed. It takes maintenance to stay fit of mind, body, and spirit. It does not just happen. It takes maintenance to be civil and decent and thoughtful and kind. You cannot just flip a switch and go from being a crass and cold and egotistical person to being good and decent and thoughtful to the other person. It takes maintenance.

That is one thing that we are here tonight to promote and say in a bipartisan way. We want this place to function as best it can. Before they introduce any of us, not just now but for the rest of their lives, they use one word in front of our name and that word is "honorable." They will say "honorable" for the rest of our lives. And I would say that if every one of us wants to live up to that call, we should think long and hard about how honorable we act towards each other while we are here. Because when it is all said and done, we are all just children of God called for two purposes: to serve him and to serve each other.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much. The gentleman certainly, as you can tell from his comments, is a mainstay in one of the pillars of the prayer breakfast, and we really appreciate his leadership.

The last person I believe that I have here tonight to call on is the person who currently handles our scripture, the gentleman from Kansas City, Missouri (Mr. CLEAVER). He has been the mayor of Kansas City. He is also an ordained minister. And since the gentleman has joined our breakfast, I think that we have seen a heightened quality and a real contribution. We want to thank him for all that he has contributed. And we are pleased that he would join us at this late hour.

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) has benefited all of us and perhaps even the Nation by arranging for us to discuss something that perhaps many men and women around the country did not know existed. And the only untrue statement tonight is, I think, the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) perhaps overstated our singing

ability. I do think that we have a couple of people with talent, but it certainly does not go past a couple. And I just wanted to get the record straight for purposes of history.

When I was elected to this body, this hallowed hall, I made a commitment to the people of my district, to my family and to my God that I would not come here to call people names, that I would not come here and disrespect my colleagues. I might disagree, but I would never disrespect.

I did not realize that there was a prayer group here. The second week after I was sworn in, the gentlewoman from my State of Missouri invited me to the prayer breakfast. I came to the prayer breakfast with some uncertainty. I had no idea what it was about. I had no idea whether I would get anything from it. That quickly melted into the woodwork of that room where we meet.

□ 2320

My commitment not to call names, my commitment not to be disrespectful is now empowered by the Hour of Power, the prayer breakfast. It is an opportunity for renewal for me to be with people who are like minded, men and women of faith.

There is a great deal of discussion taking place across the length and breadth of this Nation about the relevance of religion in politics. It is important for me to say that there is great relevance between faith and public service through elective office. If there is not relevance, then faith is frail. All of us are informed by our faith, albeit differently, because self-interest, unavoidably, creeps into our theology. So there are times when I am absolutely certain that I hear the voice of God, when in fact I may be hearing my own voice, disguised.

And so, because of that, in our prayer breakfasts there is no proselytizing. No one comes to the prayer breakfast to speak about legislation and the rightness or wrongness of it, or whether God has embraced it or whether God is against it. We come there in prayer. We come there as men and women looking for a moment. If we can just snatch this little moment where we can come into a setting where nobody is trying to do anybody any harm. It is a nonpolitical hour. You do not find Democrats standing up trying to present a donkey prayer. There are no elephant prayers. Men and women come to pray. So I am convinced that through that prayer breakfast we are able to build up our own personal faith so that it can inform us on how we conduct ourselves politically.

I realize that in this Congress there are no saints, just elected sinners who, for the most part, are trying to do the right thing and coming to the prayer breakfast reminds us that we are trying to do the right thing. Now, everybody here is fallible. We are flawed. We make mistakes. But I am convinced, at least based on what I have seen, that

everybody is here trying to do the right thing, and those of us who come to the prayer breakfast are working on it. We are not a complete product, but we are in fact working on it. We realize that working on our faith is a tortuously difficult and long process, but this helps.

I have family in Tanzania, Africa, in the City of Arusha, which sits in the shadows of Mount Kilimanjaro. When last there, I went to the Episcopal church, which is in downtown Arusha, such as it is, and I listened to a priest reprimand one of his parishioners. You see, in Tanzania, many of the people who live in huts build a little prayer spot somewhere near their door, usually a back door, and the priest can walk by and see whether there is a well-worn path from the door to the prayer spot. And I listened to a priest say to one of his parishioners, I saw much weeds growing in your prayer path, which meant that he had not been frequenting the place where he had established a relationship with God.

Without the prayer breakfast, I do not think that I would have the well-worn prayer path that I have now. For me, Thursday morning at 8 o'clock is the Hour of Power. There are people here who are in powerful positions, there are people here even now trying to become even more powerful in this Congress, but the real power, for me, the power that enables me to continue to function is the Hour of Power on Thursday mornings, and I thank God for it.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague very much. We appreciate all that he contributes each Thursday, and certainly his knowledge of scripture and his use of scripture has been something that has been an inspiration to all of us.

I would like to conclude this time, Mr. Speaker, by just making a few other observations and reflections. We want to make sure that people understand this is not an exclusive hour. We have many foreign dignitaries. These are all members of parliament, members of governments around the world. You have to be an elected member to attend. Some of them are Muslims, some are Jews.

We have had many of our Jewish Members in the Congress who have come and shared with us, and we want to have each person who comes to understand that they are cared for, that they are accepted, and that they are loved during that hour. So we find that by being inclusive in that way that we are able to share what we are put on this earth to do.

I would like to conclude by just reading a brief excerpt from a book by David Barton. Again, he was alluding to some of the Founding Fathers. And we know they had tremendous foresight and great anticipation of what was to come. "Franklin had warned," and Barton says this, "Franklin had warned 'forgetting God' and imagining

we no longer need his 'concurring aid' would result in international disputes, the decay of the nation's prestige and reputation, and a diminished national success. Washington had warned if religious principles were excluded, the nation's morality and political prosperity would suffer."

So these were some words from 200 years ago that I think resonate today. And certainly not necessarily as warnings but as indications that this Nation was founded on spiritual principle, and that forgetting those principles and moving away from them does have an inherent danger in it.

Reggie White is certainly much more contemporary. Reggie was a great defensive football player from the University of Tennessee and later played in the National Football League. Reggie said something that I thought was rather profound at one time. He said, "God honors those who honor him." I think Reggie was talking on a personal level, that certainly those individuals who honor God will in turn be honored, but I think Reggie also was referring to the fact that this is true at a national level, that those nations who honor him and remember him, and serve him and honor him will also be honored by God or divine providence, as Franklin and as Washington mentioned.

So it is worth mentioning and worth remembering at this time that this Nation is in a time of peril and a time of crisis and, therefore, we feel that the Thursday morning breakfast serves a useful purpose. And we hope that by having this hour this evening and having these Members come and share, that maybe the general public would get a little better understanding of what this assemblage is about and some of the things we think are important.

#### REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2601, FOREIGN RELATIONS AUTHORIZATION ACT, FISCAL YEARS 2006 AND 2007

Mr. BISHOP of Utah, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109-175) on the resolution (H. Res. 365) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2601) to authorize appropriations for the Department of State for fiscal years 2006 and 2007, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Mr. ETHERIDGE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Mr. HIGGINS (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Mr. HINOJOSA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and until July 21 on account of a district emergency.

Ms. MCKINNEY (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Mr. REYES (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and July 19.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mrs. MCCARTHY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. GUTKNECHT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for 5 minutes, today and July 19.

Mr. OTTER, for 5 minutes, July 19, 20, 21, and 22.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and July 19, 20, 21, and 22.

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, July 19 and 20.

Mrs. BLACKBURN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WELDON of Florida, for 5 minutes, July 19.

Mr. GINGREY, for 5 minutes, today.

#### BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Jeff Trandahl, Clerk of the House reports that on July 15, 2005 he presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills.

H.R. 1001. To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 301 South Heatherwilde Boulevard in Pflugerville, Texas, as the "Sergeant Byron W. Norwood Post Office Building".

H.R. 3071. To permit the individuals currently serving as Executive Director, Deputy Executive Directors, and General Counsel of the Office of Compliance to serve one additional term.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, July 19, 2005, at 9 a.m.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

2737. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting a request for a FY 2006 budget amendment for the Department of Veterans Affairs; (H. Doc. No. 109-46); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

2738. A letter from the Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting the De-

partment's quarterly report as of December 31, 2004, entitled, "Acceptance of contributions for defense programs, projects and activities; Defense Cooperation Account," pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2608; to the Committee on Armed Services.

2739. A letter from the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting information submitted to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, pursuant to Public Law 101-510, section 2903(c)(6) and 2914(b)(1); to the Committee on Armed Services.

2740. A letter from the Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting notification of the Department's intention to close the Defense commissary stores at Aschaffenburg and Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany by the end of July 2005; to the Committee on Armed Services.

2741. A letter from the Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's quarterly report as of March 31, 2005, entitled, "Acceptance of contributions for defense programs, projects and activities; Defense Cooperation Account"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

2742. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's STARBASE Program 2004 Annual Report; to the Committee on Armed Services.

2743. A letter from the Chairman, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the fifteenth annual report on the Profitability of Credit Card Operations of Depository Institutions, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1637 note, Public Law 100-583, section 8 (102 Stat. 2969); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2744. A letter from the Chairman, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Ninety-First Annual Report of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System covering operations during calendar year 2004; to the Committee on Financial Services.

2745. A letter from the President and Chairman, Export-Import Bank of the United States, transmitting a report involving U.S. exports to Canada, pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 635(b)(3)(i); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2746. A letter from the Deputy Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting notification concerning the Department of the Navy's Proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) to Australia for defense articles and services (Transmittal No. 05-22), pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(b); to the Committee on International Relations.

2747. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting notification concerning the Department of the Army's Proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) to Egypt for defense articles and services (Transmittal No. 05-24), pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(b); to the Committee on International Relations.

2748. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting notification concerning the Department of the Army's Proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) to Egypt for defense articles and services (Transmittal No. 05-26), pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(b); to the Committee on International Relations.

2749. A letter from the Deputy Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting notification concerning the Department of the Navy's Proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) to Australia for defense articles and services (Transmittal No. 05-16), pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(b); to the Committee on International Relations.

2750. A letter from the Director, International Cooperation, Department of De-

fense, transmitting a copy of Transmittal No. 04-05 which informs you of our intent to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Concerning the Medium Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) between the United States and the United Kingdom as pursuant to Executive Order 11958, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2767(f); to the Committee on International Relations.

2751. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification of a proposed Manufacturing License Agreement with Australia (Transmittal No. DTC 009-05), pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(d); to the Committee on International Relations.

2752. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting notification of a proposed license for the export of major defense articles or defense services sold commercially to Australia (Transmittal No. DDTC-007-05), pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c); to the Committee on International Relations.

2753. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction that was declared in Executive Order 12938 of November 14, 1994, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); to the Committee on International Relations.

2754. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles that are firearms controlled under category I of the United States Munitions List sold commercially to the Government of Ghana (Transmittal No. DDTC 003-05), pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c); to the Committee on International Relations.

2755. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification of a proposed license for the export of defense articles that are firearms controlled under category I of the United States Munitions List sold commercially to the government of Haiti (Transmittal No. DDTC 010-05), pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c); to the Committee on International Relations.

2756. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Inspector General's semi-annual report for the period October 1, 2004 through March 31, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 5(b); to the Committee on Government Reform.

2757. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Labor, transmitting the semiannual report on the activities of the Office of Inspector General for the period October 1, 2004 through March 31, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 5(b); to the Committee on Government Reform.

2758. A letter from the Investment Manager, Treasury Division, Army & Air Force Exchange Service, transmitting a copy of the Retirement Savings Plan and Trust for Employees of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service for the year ending December 31, 2003, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 9503(a)(1)(B); to the Committee on Government Reform.

2759. A letter from the Chairman, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the semiannual report on the activities of the Office of Inspector General for the six-month period ending March 31, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 5(b); to the Committee on Government Reform.

2760. A letter from the Chairman, Broadcasting Board Of Governors, transmitting the Annual Program Performance Report on the FY 2004 Performance Plan, pursuant to

the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA); to the Committee on Government Reform.

2761. A letter from the Acting White House Liaison, Department of Commerce, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2762. A letter from the Acting White House Liaison, Department of Commerce, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2763. A letter from the Acting White House Liaison, Department of Commerce, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2764. A letter from the Acting White House Liaison, Department of Commerce, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2765. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel for Equal Opportunity and Administrative Law, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2766. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's FY 2006 Annual Performance Plan; to the Committee on Government Reform.

2767. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting the Commission's semiannual report on the activities of the Office of Inspector General for the period October 1, 2004 to March 31, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 8G(h)(2); to the Committee on Government Reform.

2768. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the semiannual report on the activities of the Office of Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2004 through March 31, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 5(b); to the Committee on Government Reform.

2769. A letter from the Chairman, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the 2004 Annual Report of the National Credit Union Administration, pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 1752a(d); to the Committee on Government Reform.

2770. A letter from the Chairman, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting the semiannual report on activities of the Office of Inspector General for the period October 1, 2004 through March 31, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 5(d); to the Committee on Government Reform.

2771. A letter from the Chairman, U.S. Postal Service, transmitting the semiannual report on activities of the Inspector General for the period ending March 31, 2005 and the Management Response for the same period, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 8G(h)(2); to the Committee on Government Reform.

2772. A letter from the Chief Administrative Officer, transmitting the quarterly report of receipts and expenditures of appropriations and other funds for the period April 1, 2005 through June 30, 2005 as compiled by the Chief Administrative Officer, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 104a Public Law 88-454; (H. Doc. No. 109-45); to the Committee on House Administration and ordered to be printed.

2773. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General for Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting a report on the activities of the Community Relations Service for Fiscal Year 2004, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2000g-3; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2774. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General for Legislative Affairs, Department

of Justice, transmitting a report on the activities of the Community Relations Service for Fiscal Year 2004, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2000g-3; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2775. A letter from the Executive Director & CEO, American Chemical Society, transmitting the Society's annual report for the calendar year 2004 and the comprehensive report to the Board of Directors of the American Chemical Society on the examination of their books and records for the year ending December 31, 2004, pursuant to 36 U.S.C. 1101(2) and 1103; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2776. A letter from the Attorney, National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements, transmitting the 2004 Annual Report of independent auditors who have audited the records of the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements, pursuant to 36 U.S.C. 4514; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2777. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of the Army, transmitting a copy of the the Final Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment of the Southwest Valley Flood Damage Reduction Project, Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, New Mexico; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2778. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30441; Amdt. No. 3119] received April 19, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2779. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Newburgh, NY [Docket No. FAA-2005-20673; Airspace Docket No. 05-AEA-06] received June 20, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2780. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revocation of VOR Federal Airway V-623 [Docket No. FAA-2005-21329; Airspace Docket No. 05-AEA-13] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received June 20, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2781. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Newburgh, NY [Docket No. FAA-2005-20674; Airspace Docket No. 05-AEA-07] received June 20, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2782. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Harrisburg, PA [Docket No. FAA-2005-20056; Airspace Docket No. 05-AEA-01] received June 20, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2783. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revision of Class E Airspace; Nome, AK [Docket No. FAA-2005-20449; Airspace Docket No. 05-AAL-06] received June 20, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2784. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Class E Airspace; Harper, KS Cor-

rection [Docket No. FAA-2005-20577; Airspace Docket No. 05-ACE-14], pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2785. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airport Noise Compatibility Planning [Docket No. FAA-2004-19158; Amendment No. 150-4] (RIN: 2120-A137) received May 24, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2786. A letter from the FHWA Regulations Officer, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise [FHWA Docket No. FHWA-2004-18309] (RIN: 2125-AF03) received April 12, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2787. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Area Navigation Routes; FL [Docket No. FAA-2004-19667; Airspace Docket No. 04-ASO-13] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received June 20, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2788. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Definition of Commuter Aircraft at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport [Docket No. FAA-2005-21249; Amendment No. 93-84] (RIN: 2120-A158) received May 24, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2789. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Parsons, TN [Docket No. FAA-2005-20235; Airspace Docket No. 05-ASO-1] received April 19, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2790. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Class D Airspace; Grissom ARB, IN [Docket No. FAA-2004-17896; Airspace Docket No. 04-AGL-13] received April 19, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2791. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Tracy, MN [Docket No. FAA-2003-19237; Airspace Docket No. 04-AGL-19] received April 19, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2792. A letter from the FMCSA Regulatory Ombudsman, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Rules of Practice [FMCSA Docket No. FMCSA-1997-2299] (RIN: 2126-AA15) received May 24, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2793. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30445; Amdt. No. 3122] received May 24, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2794. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Ineligibility for an Airman Certificate Based on Security Grounds [Docket No. FAA-2003-14293; Amendment Nos. 61-108, 63-32, 65-44] (RIN: 2120-AH84) received May 24, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2795. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revocation of VOR Federal Airway V-623 [Docket No. FAA-2005-21329; Airspace Docket No. 05-AEA-13] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received June 20, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2796. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 747 Series Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2005-21027; Directorate Identifier 2005-NM-048-AD; Amendment 39-14070; AD 2005-09-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received June 20, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2797. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Cessna Model 750 Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2005-21026; Directorate Identifier 2005-NM-069-AD; Amendment 39-14069; AD 2005-09-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received June 20, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2798. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30446; Amdt. No. 3123] received June 20, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2799. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Certification of Aircraft and Airman for the Operation of Light-Sport Aircraft; Correction [Docket No. FAA-2001-11133; Amdt. 65-45] (RIN: 2120-AH19) received June 20, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2800. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revision of Class E Airspace; Blanding, UT [Docket FAA 2004-16896; Airspace Docket 02-ANM-08] received June 15, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2801. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Restricted Areas 5103A, 5103B, and 5103C and Revocation of Restricted Area 5103D, McGregor, NM [Docket No. FAA-2004-17773; Airspace Docket No. 04-ASW-11] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received June 27, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2802. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Area Navigation Instrument Flight Rules Terminal Transition Routes (RITTR); Charlotte, NC [Docket No. FAA-2005-20246; Airspace Docket No. 04-ASO-15] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received June 27, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2803. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment to Class E Airspace; Wray, CO [Docket FAA 2003-16460; Airspace Docket 02-ANM-16] received June 27, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2804. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule —

Amendment to Restricted Area 2211 Blair Lakes; AK [Docket No. FAA-2005-20616; Airspace Docket No. 05-ANM-04] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received June 27, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2805. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company (GE) CF6-80E1A2 Turbofan Engines [Docket No. 2003-NE-27-AD; Amendment 39-13325; AD 2003-20-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received May 18, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2806. A letter from the Administrator, Small Business Administration, transmitting the Annual Report on Minority Small Business and Capital Ownership Development for Fiscal Year 2004, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 636(j)(16)(B); to the Committee on Small Business.

2807. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a recommendation to continue in effect a waiver of application of subsection (d)(1) of section 402 of the Trade Act of 1974 with respect to Vietnam for a further 12-month period and a determination that continuation of the waiver currently in effect for Vietnam will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act and the reasons for such a determination, pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 2432(d)(1); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2808. A letter from the United States Trade Representative, Executive Office of the President, transmitting consistent with the Trade Act of 2002, supporting reports to implement the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

2809. A letter from the Secretaries, Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, transmitting a report on the implementation of the health resources sharing portion of the Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense Health Resources Sharing and Emergency Operations Act for FY 2004, pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 811(f); jointly to the Committees on Armed Services and Veterans' Affairs.

2810. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's annual report to Congress on the FY 2002 program operations of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP), the administration of the Black Lung Benefits Act (BLBA), the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act (LHWCA), and the Federal Employees' Compensation Act for the period October 1, 2001, through September 30, 2002, pursuant to 30 U.S.C. 936(b); jointly to the Committees on Education and the Workforce and Ways and Means.

2811. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report entitled, "Suspension of Limitations Under the Jerusalem Embassy Act" (Presidential Determination No. 2004-24), pursuant to Public Law 104-45, section 6 (109 Stat. 400); jointly to the Committees on International Relations and Appropriations.

2812. A letter from the Acting President and Chief Executive Officer, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's annual Management Report for FY 2004, Performance Budget for FY 2006, Performance and Accountability Report for FY 2004, and Report on Development and U.S. Effects on OPIC's FY 2004 projects and Report on Cooperation with Private Insurers, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 9106; jointly to the Committees on International Relations and Government Reform.

2813. A letter from the Deputy Director of Communications and Legislative Affairs,

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting the Commission's Annual Report on the Federal Work Force for Fiscal Year 2004, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2000e-4(e); jointly to the Committees on Government Reform and Education and the Workforce.

2814. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a copy of the report entitled, "Finalizing Medicare Regulations under Section 902 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA) for Calendar Year 2004"; jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce.

#### 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. TOM DAVIS of Virginia: Committee on Government Reform. The National Drug Control Strategy for 2005 and the National Drug Control Budget for Fiscal Year 2006 (Rept. 109-172). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. BOEHLERT: Committee on Science. H.R. 3070. A bill to reauthorize the human space flight, aeronautics, and science programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 109-173). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 3199. A bill to extend and modify authorities needed to combat terrorism, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 109-174, Pt. 1).

Mr. HOEKSTRA: Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. H.R. 3199. A bill to extend and modify authorities needed to combat terrorism, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 109-174, Pt. 2). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 365. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2601) to authorize appropriations for the Department of State for the fiscal years 2006 and 2007, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 109-175). 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. GREEN of Wisconsin (for himself and Mr. POMEROY):

H.R. 3318. A bill to amend the Clayton Act to restore the application of the antitrust laws to rail carriers; and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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. WELDON of Florida (for himself and Mr. SHAYS):

H.R. 3319. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an exemption from the harbor maintenance tax for certain shipping between United States mainland ports; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia (for himself, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr.

SMITH of New Jersey, and Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California);

H.R. 3320. A bill to extend eligibility for refugee status of unmarried sons and daughters of certain Vietnamese refugees; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts:

H.R. 3321. A bill to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the Taunton River in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut (for herself, Mr. SIMMONS, Mr. SHAW, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, and Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire):

H.R. 3322. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act with respect to the H-1B and L-1 visa programs to prevent unintended United States job losses, to increase the monitoring and enforcement authority of the Secretary of Labor over such programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PENCE (for himself and Mr. BOUCHER):

H.R. 3323. A bill to maintain the free flow of information to the public by providing conditions for the federally compelled disclosure of information by certain persons connected with the news media; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. REICHERT:

H.R. 3324. A bill to arrest methamphetamine abuse in the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. REICHERT:

H.R. 3325. A bill to conduct a study evaluating whether there are correlations between the commission of methamphetamine crimes and identity theft crimes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. SLAUGHTER (for herself, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. ALLEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CROWLEY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. DICKS, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. FARR, Mr. FILNER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HOLT, Mr. HONDA, Mr. INSLER, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mrs. LOWEY, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ROTHMAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. STARK, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. WATSON, Mr. WAXMAN, and Ms. WOOLSEY):

H.R. 3326. A bill to establish a public education and awareness program relating to emergency contraception; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SPRATT:

H.R. 3327. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to allow certain beneficiaries covered by TRICARE for Life to be reimbursed for travel expenses for certain medical care; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. SHAW (for himself, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, Mrs. CAPPS, Mrs. MYRICK, and Mr. ISRAEL):

H. Con. Res. 210. Concurrent resolution supporting the goal of eliminating suffering and death due to cancer by the year 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DELAY (for himself, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. HYDE, and Mr. LANTOS):

H. Res. 364. A resolution commending the continuing improvement in relations between the United States and the Republic of India; to the Committee on International Relations, considered and agreed to.

#### PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Mr. SPRATT introduced A bill (H.R. 3328) for the relief of Gerald Robert Christopher Haefelin; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

#### ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 11: Mr. MCCAUL of Texas.  
 H.R. 97: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.  
 H.R. 98: Mr. SHADEGG.  
 H.R. 193: Mr. BACA, Mr. FILNER, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. HARMAN, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. BAIRD, and Mr. UDALL of Colorado.  
 H.R. 220: Mr. MCCOTTER.  
 H.R. 302: Ms. BEAN and Mrs. TAUSCHER.  
 H.R. 398: Mr. LANTOS.  
 H.R. 503: Ms. DELAURO.  
 H.R. 515: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. ACKERMAN, and Mr. STUPAK.  
 H.R. 521: Mr. DOOLITTLE.  
 H.R. 552: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.  
 H.R. 576: Mr. FLAKE.  
 H.R. 581: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.  
 H.R. 609: Mr. PRICE of Georgia.  
 H.R. 698: Mr. NEUGEBAUER.  
 H.R. 747: Ms. KAPTUR and Mr. CUMMINGS.  
 H.R. 764: Mr. PUTNAM and Mr. JEFFERSON.  
 H.R. 865: Mr. CONYERS and Mr. BUTTERFIELD.  
 H.R. 867: Mr. PAYNE, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, and Mr. FILNER.  
 H.R. 872: Mr. CAMP, Mr. FILNER, Mr. LEACH, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. WALDEN of Oregon, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.  
 H.R. 896: Mr. KING of New York and Mr. MARSHALL.  
 H.R. 923: Mr. DAVIS of Florida and Mr. MCCAUL of Texas.  
 H.R. 931: Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. DUNCAN, and Mr. ROYCE.  
 H.R. 985: Mr. LIPINSKI.  
 H.R. 998: Mr. ISRAEL.  
 H.R. 1000: Mr. McDERMOTT and Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.  
 H.R. 1106: Mr. STRICKLAND.  
 H.R. 1201: Mr. HINCHEY.  
 H.R. 1245: Mr. NADLER and Mr. DUNCAN.  
 H.R. 1293: Mr. DEFAZIO.  
 H.R. 1298: Mr. LATHAM and Mr. BILIRAKIS.  
 H.R. 1307: Mr. ROTHMAN.  
 H.R. 1342: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey and Mr. ROTHMAN.  
 H.R. 1351: Mr. PASTOR.  
 H.R. 1402: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD and Mr. HINCHEY.  
 H.R. 1409: Mr. MCHUGH, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. PASTOR, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. PUTNAM, and Mrs. BONO.  
 H.R. 1426: Ms. ESHOO.  
 H.R. 1471: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. JEFFERSON, and Mr. ETHERIDGE.  
 H.R. 1498: Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, and Mr. GRIJALVA.  
 H.R. 1500: Mr. ADERHOLT.  
 H.R. 1545: Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. ISRAEL, and Mr. SOUDER.  
 H.R. 1558: Mr. BACHUS and Mr. ENGEL.  
 H.R. 1648: Ms. PELOSI, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. KILDEE, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H.R. 1658: Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky.  
 H.R. 1668: Mr. KILDEE.  
 H.R. 1671: Mr. SANDERS.  
 H.R. 1704: Mr. OSBORNE, Mr. STRICKLAND, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. SCHIFF.  
 H.R. 1714: Mr. CUELLAR.  
 H.R. 1742: Mr. SHERMAN.  
 H.R. 1837: Mr. KOLBE.  
 H.R. 1850: Mr. BLUMENAUER.  
 H.R. 1853: Mr. GERLACH.  
 H.R. 1898: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. JENKINS, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire, and Mr. CUNNINGHAM.  
 H.R. 1951: Mr. BUYER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan, Mr. CUELLAR, and Mr. KANJORSKI.  
 H.R. 2000: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.  
 H.R. 2012: Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. UPTON, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. PITTS, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. CASTLE, Mr. BASS, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. LEACH, Mr. SWEENEY, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. GOHMERT, and Mr. AKIN.  
 H.R. 2037: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.  
 H.R. 2045: Ms. KAPTUR.  
 H.R. 2049: Mr. SHAYS.  
 H.R. 2106: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.  
 H.R. 2206: Mrs. MUSGRAVE.  
 H.R. 2207: Mr. HINOJOSA.  
 H.R. 2209: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama.  
 H.R. 2238: Mr. WAMP.  
 H.R. 2308: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.  
 H.R. 2389: Mr. GORDON.  
 H.R. 2409: Mr. FILNER.  
 H.R. 2412: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, and Mr. CUMMINGS.  
 H.R. 2526: Mr. BAIRD.  
 H.R. 2646: Mr. ORTIZ and Mr. HOSTETTLER.  
 H.R. 2793: Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota.  
 H.R. 2803: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. HOOLEY, and Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland.  
 H.R. 2842: Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina.  
 H.R. 2930: Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan and Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan.  
 H.R. 2960: Mr. SHERMAN.  
 H.R. 2961: Mr. GOODE.  
 H.R. 2963: Mr. UDALL of New Mexico.  
 H.R. 2989: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. UPTON, Mr. ROTHMAN, and Mr. FORD.  
 H.R. 2992: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. ENGEL, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Ms. DELAURO.  
 H.R. 3059: Mr. LIPINSKI.  
 H.R. 3082: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.  
 H.R. 3135: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. COLE of Oklahoma, Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. ISTOOK, Mr. SHAW, and Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico.  
 H.R. 3146: Mr. CROWLEY.  
 H.R. 3147: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.  
 H.R. 3166: Mr. MARSHALL.  
 H.R. 3178: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.  
 H.R. 3196: Mr. DOGGETT.  
 H.R. 3205: Mr. BAIRD, Mr. WHITFIELD, and Ms. ESHOO.  
 H.R. 3263: Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, and Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico.  
 H.R. 3273: Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.  
 H.R. 3274: Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.  
 H.R. 3282: Mr. POE.  
 H.R. 3298: Mr. MARCHANT and Mr. SMITH of Texas.  
 H.R. 3304: Mr. BURTON of Indiana.  
 H.J. Res. 59: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. CAPUANO, and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.  
 H. Con. Res. 38: Mr. RYAN of Ohio and Mr. KIND.

H. Con. Res. 85: Mr. KIND.  
H. Con. Res. 137: Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.

H. Con. Res. 197: Mr. PAUL.  
H. Con. Res. 206: Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. BACA, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. FARR, Mr. FILNER, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. HOYER, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. KANJORSKI, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. McNULTY, Mr. MOLLOHAN, Mr. MURTHA, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. RAHALL, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUSH, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. STRICKLAND, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. WEINER.

H. Res. 76: Ms. WOOLSEY.  
H. Res. 316: Mr. MARKEY, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. ALLEN, Miss MCMORRIS, Mr. DELAHUNT, Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania, Mr. STRICKLAND, Mr. NADLER, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. ENGEL, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. HONDA, Mr. OLVER, and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.  
H. Res. 323: Mr. CAPUANO, and Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia.

H. Res. 325: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H. Res. 326: Mr. OWENS and Mr. ACKERMAN.  
H. Res. 329: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. EMANUEL, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. DINGELL, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Ms. HOOLEY, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. McNULTY, Mr. WATT, Mr. JEFFERSON, and Mr. ENGEL.

H. Res. 357: Mr. LEWIS of California, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, and Mrs. MCCARTHY.

H. Res. 360: Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Mr. ISRAEL, and Mr. PALLONE.

H. Res. 361: Mr. BAIRD, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.

#### DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 3154: Mr. DAVIS of Alabama.

#### AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 2601

OFFERED BY MR. BURTON OF INDIANA

AMENDMENT NO. 1: At the end of title X (relating to reporting requirements), add the following new section:

#### SEC. 1027. ALIEN SMUGGLING AND TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS FROM ECUADOR.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than six months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report, based on a cost-benefit analysis, that examines and describes the most effective use, across all responsible Federal departments and agencies, of United States security assistance (including assistance under chapter 8 of part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2291 et seq.; relating to international narcotics control)) to Ecuador, including the use of intelligence gathering

and surveillance, to establish mechanisms to—

(1) prevent and interdict alien smuggling, including trafficking in persons, from Ecuador, either at land points of assembly, or later at sea;

(2) prevent potential concealment of terrorists attempting to enter the United States within the smuggled group; and

(3) identify and prosecute individuals or organizations that engage in or promote such alien smuggling.

(b) COOPERATION IN PREPARATION.—The Secretary shall prepare the report referred to in subsection (a) in cooperation with the Secretary of Homeland Security, who shall specifically address the roles and impacts of alien smuggling from Ecuador on United States air and surface assets assigned to counternarcotics missions in the eastern Pacific Ocean.

H.R. 2601

OFFERED BY MR. BURTON OF INDIANA

AMENDMENT NO. 2: Page 241, after line 21, insert the following new section:

#### SEC. 947. TRANSFER OF MARINE PATROL AIRCRAFT TO THE GOVERNMENT OF COLOMBIA.

(a) TRANSFER AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of State, acting through the Assistant Secretary of the Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, is authorized to transfer to the Government of Colombia two tactical, unpressurized marine patrol aircraft for use by the Colombian Navy to interdict and disable drug trafficking vessels in the territorial waters of Colombia. Such transfers may be on a grant or lease basis, as appropriate.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2006.