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No. 132

House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.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,
October 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 Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) for 5 minutes.

HONORING THE FALLEN IN IRAQ

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow will mark the 4-year anniversary of our troops' deployment in Afghanistan. In honor of their service and their memory, Democrats and Republican colleagues of mine have been reading their names, the names of those who have died in Iraq and Afghanistan, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD so that our Nation will never forget their sacrifice. Prior to the summer recess, a number of us have read a little over 1,800 of their names into the RECORD. Since that time in July, an additional 188

have fallen. To date, 244 American service men and women have perished in the Afghanistan theater of combat. Additionally, 1,957 members of our armed services and fellow citizens have died fighting in Iraq. We owe these brave men and women and their families a debt of gratitude that can never fully be repaid. At the very least we must pay tribute to our fallen service-members.

Staff Sergeant Jefferey J. Farrow
Private Lavena L. Johnson
Sergeant Arthur R. McGill
Corporal Steven P. Gill
Petty Officer Third Class Travis L. Youngblood

Sergeant Bryan James Opskar
Sergeant Jason T. Palmerton
Specialist Jacques Earl "Gus" Brunson

Specialist Ernest W. Dallas, Jr.
Staff Sergeant Carl Ray Fuller
Sergeant James Ondra Kinlow
Staff Sergeant Jason W. Montefering
Sergeant Milton M. Monzon, Jr.
Sergeant Christopher J. Taylor
Sergeant John Frank Thomas
Private First Class Ramon A. Villatoro, Jr.

Specialist Adam J. Harting
Staff Sergeant Michael W. Schafer
Specialist Adrian J. Butler
Captain Benjamin D. Jansky
Specialist Edward L. Myers
Specialist John O. Tollefson
Lance Corporal Christopher P. Lyons
Corporal Andre L. Williams
Private Ernesto R. Guerra
Sergeant First Class Victor A. Anderson

Sergeant Jonathon C. Haggin
Staff Sergeant David R. Jones, Sr.
Private First Class Jason D. Scheuerman

Sergeant Ronnie L. "Rod" Shelley, Sr.

Private First Class Robert A. Swaney
Specialist James D. Carroll
Corporal Jeffrey A. Boskovitch
Lance Corporal Roger D. Castleberry, Jr.

Sergeant David J. Coullard
Lance Corporal Daniel Nathan Deyarmin, Jr.

Sergeant James R. Graham, III
Lance Corporal Brian P. Montgomery
Sergeant Nathaniel S. Rock
Petty Officer First Class Thomas C. Hull

Staff Sergeant James D. McNaughton
Lance Corporal Timothy Michael Bell, Jr.

Lance Corporal Eric J. Bernholtz
Lance Corporal Nicholas William B. Bloem

Lance Corporal Michael J. Cifuentes
Lance Corporal Christopher Jenkins Dyer

Lance Corporal Grant B. Fraser
Specialist Jerry Lewis Ganey, Jr.
Specialist Mathew V. Gibbs
Sergeant Bradley J. Harper

Over the next couple of weeks, I will continue to read the names until we complete the 188 that have fallen since the summer.

I want to also read the words of then 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 its blessings."

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to read all the names and think of the lives that have been lost in service to our country. My colleagues and I will continue to pay tribute to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our Nation. Your Nation thanks you and we will never forget you.

INCREASING DOMESTIC PRODUCTION AND REFINING OF OIL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, as summer turns towards winter, the American people will continue to face high

□ 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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prices of gasoline and soon will face even higher costs for natural gas. Short of moving to Florida or another warm weather State, the American people are looking to Congress to solve this problem. Recent events such as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have highlighted a very serious problem with the Nation's crude oil and gasoline supply/demand balance. One way to fix this balance is for the United States to increase its refining and production capacity. No new refinery has been built in the United States in nearly 30 years. Total current capacity at operating refineries is 17 million barrels per day while total U.S. demand is nearly 21 million barrels per day. Therefore, the only way to bridge this gap is to increase the amount of imported refined products from foreign sources. Currently the U.S. imports 7.9 percent of its total refined petroleum products. By 2005, the U.S. is expected to import 10.7 percent of its total.

Mr. Speaker, these staggering numbers further underscore the dire need for new and increased refining capacity in the United States. If not, we will continue to rely on unstable, anti-American governments to meet our growing demand for gasoline. Not only will this situation be a blow to economic growth in this country but it will also represent a serious national security risk for all of us.

Even before Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, a number of market factors contributed to the record high gas prices: An increased demand at home and abroad, political unrest in the Middle East and in Africa and product disruptions contributed to the already tightening supply of crude oil. Until refining capacity and production capacity grow faster than demand, oil markets will remain tight and vulnerable to unforeseen and unpreventable events such as natural disasters. The high cost of gasoline and other fuels has the potential to stifle economic and job growth and is putting a strain on the wallets of American families.

Of course the most efficient way to reduce our dependence on oil and gas is to encourage conservation. Making sure your tires are inflated properly, carpooling and using public transportation are all fast and easy ways to conserve gasoline. In homes, buying energy-efficient appliances and making sure doors and windows are properly sealed are effective ways to conserve. But, Mr. Speaker, these are short-term fixes. Curbing demand is necessary, but in the long term it is not merely enough. We need to increase domestic production of oil. Currently the U.S. imports about 60 percent of all of its oil. The Department of Energy projects this number to increase to 73 percent by the year 2025. In order to ensure reliable and secure supplies of oil, we have no choice but to increase the domestic supply.

One way to increase production is to finally open ANWR to oil and gas exploration in Alaska. The United States

Geological Survey estimates that there is between 5.7 and 16 billion barrels of oil that is technically recoverable. This estimate does not take into account that with new technology, the share could become even higher. A resource of this magnitude cannot simply be ignored. ANWR alone would be capable of reversing the decline in U.S. petroleum supply within a decade. It is not a quick fix. There are no quick fixes. But it is the quickest and most reliable option we now have to reverse the decline brought upon us by years of neglect of our domestic capacity.

In addition to gasoline, oil and natural gas play a key role in the homes of all of us. Oil and natural gas help generate the electricity that powers lights, appliances and entertainment systems. They also provide the building block for plastics, resealable food storage containers, and durable appliances and electronics, all of which contribute to a convenient and safe environment for all of us.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, even under the best circumstances, storms like Hurricanes Katrina and Rita would have had a noticeable impact on oil markets. However, at a time of extremely high demand and tight supplies, practically shutting down the United States' largest oil and refining region caused even greater pressure on our oil markets. In order to alleviate this pressure, we must increase our domestic refining capacity and production. If not, gasoline and home heating prices will continue to climb.

REPUBLICAN CORRUPTION AND ITS IMPACT ON AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, at a time when working families are trying to pinch pennies to pay for skyrocketing gas, record high heating bills and ever-increasing health insurance premiums, this is not the time for Washington to ignore the real needs of the American people.

But that is exactly what has happened over the last 5 years under Republican leadership in Congress. Mr. Speaker, a culture of cronyism exists here in Washington unlike anything we have ever seen before. At the White House, we have the President's chief political adviser and the Vice President's chief of staff under investigation for illegally leaking a covert CIA operative's name to reporters. Today we learn that the Vice President himself may also be under investigation in that case. Evidently, according to today's Washington Post, the special prosecutor is assembling evidence that, and I quote, "Cheney's longstanding tensions with the CIA contributed to the unmasking of operative Valerie Plame."

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend. Members are reminded to avoid remarks personally offensive to the Vice President.

Mr. PALLONE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Despite the fact that President Bush promised 2 years ago to fire anyone that was involved in the leak, both Karl Rove and Scooter Libby remain on the White House payroll.

And it is just not over at the White House. Here on Capitol Hill, you have the Republican Senate leader under investigation by the SEC for possibly having inside information on stocks that he sold off earlier this year. Over on this side of the Capitol, the Republican majority leader was forced to step down from his leadership post—

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend. Members are reminded that they are to avoid personalities toward Senators, as well.

Mr. PALLONE. Okay, Mr. Speaker. Shortly after the majority leader stepped down, Time Magazine's Jonathan Alter wrote about the majority leader's tenure as majority leader and how the Republican majority leads this House. Alter recalls his first visit with DELAY a decade ago. These are Alter's own words, and I quote: "A decade ago, I paid a call on Tom DeLay in his ornate office in the Capitol. I had heard a rumor about him that I figured could not possibly be true. The rumor was that after the GOP took control of the House that year, DeLay had begun keeping a little black book with the names of Washington lobbyists who wanted to come see him. If the lobbyists were not Republicans and contributors to his power base, they—"

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his point of order.

Mr. STEARNS. Can a Member of Congress intimate as the gentleman from New Jersey is doing about Mr. DELAY in reference to a black book and all the innuendo that he is doing on the House floor? Can he do that?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman stating an inquiry or making a point of order?

Mr. STEARNS. I am stating an inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Jersey has not yielded for purposes of a parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I am just reading from Time Magazine, so I do not see why I cannot continue.

As I said, the gentleman from Texas may no longer be the majority leader, but he is still wielding power here in this Chamber and that power is not benefiting the American people. Instead, the actions of the House Republican majority benefit only a small few to the actual detriment of everyday Americans.

Mr. Speaker, it is no wonder that this House only brings legislation to the floor that benefits the wealthiest few in our Nation, because these are the people who are in TOM DELAY's black book. The House Republican leadership has heard that the American people are struggling to afford skyrocketing gas prices, so what do they do? House Republicans pass an energy law this summer that even the Bush administration admits will do nothing to lower gas prices for the American consumer. Instead, the energy law provided billions of dollars in tax breaks for oil and gas companies, and these are companies that are already experiencing record profits.

What about the American people? Well, as Alter explains in the Time Magazine article, they are not in the Republican leadership's black book and so their concerns really don't matter to the Republican leadership.

Mr. Speaker, whether you are in New Jersey or wherever you happen to be, the American people do not like what is happening here in Washington. They see examples of cronyism in every Republican corridor and they want it to stop. The American people want us to get back to addressing their needs and their concerns. It is time for the House Republican leaders to throw away their special interest black books like the one that TOM DELAY has so they can finally listen to the real needs and concerns of ordinary Americans.

IRAQI ELECTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Saturday was a great day in American history. It was a great day in international history. And for those of us that do not read Time Magazine, it was a great day for democracy.

The Iraqi elections came off Saturday. The results are still coming in. We do not know all that occurred. But there are great things that already can be gleaned from what happened. The Iraqis showed an extraordinary amount of courage. Whereas in America on election day we have people who say, I don't know if I can brave going down and standing in line for 5 or 10 minutes. That may be more than I can handle.

Or, gee, the traffic is kind of heavy today. I don't know if I am going to go vote. I don't know, it looks like it might rain. I may catch the next election.

Not in Iraq. The Iraqis had the opportunity to vote on a constitution. They had an opportunity to vote for governing themselves for the first time in the history of mankind in what many acknowledge to be the cradle of humanity, where mankind began, and they came out and voted.

When I was in Iraq earlier this year, it was after the January elections, and

they talked in terms of 8 by 11 flyers that were posted all over the countryside, around the voting areas, that simply said, If You Vote, You Die. Those people that voted knew they were going to have to dip their fingers into permanent blue ink that would be on their fingers for probably a couple or 3 weeks. They knew they could be targets by what they had marked on their fingers. Yet they had the courage to step forward.

Some of the things people do not hear and do not read because not all magazines give you all the facts, but there were many places where Iraqi policemen stepped up to protect the voters. These were not American soldiers. These were not American police. They were Iraqis protecting Iraqis who had developed national pride in what they were trying to accomplish. I did not hear it on any of the media, I certainly did not read it in Time Magazine, but there were a couple of policemen who gave their lives in stepping forward and trying to protect voters. I was told by the Iraqis when I was over there, the voters never got out of line because they realized if they got out of line from voting and ran for cover, those guys that died protecting them while they tried to vote would have died for nothing, much like if we cut and ran from Iraq before this process is finished, then those valiant, brave people whose names we have just heard more of would have died for nothing. Thank God we have a President who is seeing this through to the end.

There was an additional policeman, I was told by Iraqis, who found a suicide bomber in the voting place. He grabbed him, rushed him outside, threw him to the ground, threw himself on top of him and they were both killed in the ensuing explosion. Nobody got out of line, they told me, because they knew that would have meant that the policeman died for nothing. They stayed, they voted, and thank God they have some great days ahead. It is not easy days. It is difficult days. We have got to stay the course.

Some of the headlines I did read, not in magazines necessarily but some of the periodicals said it turned out to be the most peaceful day in months, this preceding Saturday when it was voting day. Only one of Baghdad's 1,200 polling stations came under attack, another article read. The relatively small number of insurgent attacks compared with the last poll may be a sign of how Sunni involvement in politics can complicate matters for insurgent leaders whose aim is to destroy the political process.

Just as evil unimpeded and unobstructed by good people will spread in an insidious way, so will good and democracy spread just like sunlight during the dawn of a new day as it touches more and more land and spreads. That process is in its infancy in the Middle East, but it is a beautiful thing to see occurring and we can thank God and thank those people who have served their country and given their lives.

Here are other comments. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said the Sunnis are now invested in this process. There is no political base any longer for this insurgency.

I was told by a former general under Saddam Hussein this past spring in Iraq that if you will just stand behind us in America until we get our constitution voted in, until we have an election under the constitution, you will see violence subside.

We are very grateful for all those who have contributed.

THE GROWING NATIONAL DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COOPER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, any day now, the United States of America will have borrowed over \$8 trillion. That is not an occasion to celebrate. That is an occasion to be very worried about the future of our country. \$8 trillion is a fantastic sum of money. To see how long it is, all those numbers stretched out, just look outside the office of any Blue Dog Member of this Congress and you will see a chart like this, because it will show you that as of today, the debt is \$7.989 trillion. That means we are only \$11 billion away from passing the \$8 trillion threshold.

How quickly are we approaching that threshold? We are borrowing almost \$1 billion a day. That means within the next week or two, we will pass the \$8 trillion threshold. Of course, much of the money we are borrowing, we are borrowing from foreigners, and increasingly from the Chinese. So all Americans need to be on alert, because this is something that has never happened before in all of American history. We have had ups and downs, we have had the Depression, we have had the Civil War, but we have never been borrowing money at this rate.

Let me put it in historical perspective. It took the first 204 years of our Nation's history to accumulate \$1 trillion in debt. And now we are doing that every 2 or 3 years. Our Nation's top accountant, David Walker, of the GAO has said that arguably the year 2004 was the worst year in America's entire fiscal history. Why would our top accountant say something like that? First of all, because he believes it is true, and it is also because this Congress promised \$13 trillion worth of new spending in one year, none of which is paid for. Imagine promising \$13 trillion and not even beginning to pay for it.

Later this week under a newly resolved Republican majority, they are planning on increasing the amount of reconciliation that we will undertake by some \$15 billion. That sounds mighty good on the surface, but that is about 2 weeks' worth of this borrowing. I do not think 2 weeks' worth is going

to be good enough for our kids and grandkids who want to know that we are leaving our Nation stronger than the way we found it. Instead what this Congress is doing and this administration is leaving us weaker than we used to be. There should be more leadership in this body, but with 435 people all contending to represent their districts back home, it is hard to characterize Congress as much more than an organized appetite. That is why our wise Founding Fathers gave us what they thought would be presidential leadership. That is why they gave the President the veto, for example, so that he could take a congressional bill and veto it.

Right now under President George W. Bush, we have the first President since James Garfield in 1881 never to have vetoed a single bill. 1881 was a long time ago. Poor President Garfield was only in office for 6 months. President Bush has been in office for 5 years, without a single veto. So you really have to go back even further than President Garfield to find a President who has accepted every bill that Congress sent him as if it were perfect. For that, to find a President who served two full terms, you have to go back to President John Quincy Adams. You can see his portrait right outside this Chamber. That is not a record to be proud of. Because this Congress needs to be tamed, it needs to be disciplined and the veto is the constitutional power the President has to do that.

But that is not the only power the President has. He also has the power of rescission. Every President since Richard Nixon has had that power. Every President since Richard Nixon has used that power except for President George W. Bush. He has never used the power. Let me give you an example. President Clinton used it 163 times. President Bush, Sr. used it, I think, 400 times. President Reagan used it 600 times, saving billions and billions of dollars of unnecessary spending as they use it. President Bush has never used that power.

IRAQI ELECTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, this year in January, I had the honor to go to Iraq for their first elections in history for a democracy. Iraq is where the world began, between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Myself and Congressman CHRIS SHAYS of Connecticut were the two Members of Congress that were in Iraq on election day.

You remember, Mr. Speaker, those were the times when the skeptics and the terrorists said, Oh, there won't be an election. The Iraqis won't do it. They won't go and vote. Yet they did. Sixty-one percent of those people went and voted.

While there, I learned a lot from the Iraqis. I learned, first of all, they are a very proud people, that they are somewhat underestimated about their ability to have and believe in a democracy. I also learned that those people are just like us and all people in the world, because, Mr. Speaker, down in our soul, where we are made, every person has the yearning to be free. The Iraqis are no different than Americans or other peoples in the world.

I also learned, Mr. Speaker, that they will not be intimidated by the terrorists. The terrorists in January told the Iraqis that if they go and vote, they will be killed. They were told that if they were seen with that purple finger, they would be killed. Yet the Iraqis voted. They willingly stuck their finger in that inkwell and stained their finger for several days. I remember here on the House floor where many of us stood when the President of the United States in his State of the Union message talked about those Iraqi people and how we stood defiant as well as those people with our finger in the air, showing that freedom will prevail and rule the day.

Mr. Speaker, this has been an interesting year for the Iraqi people. They started a country in January with their Parliament. They then elected a Prime Minister, a President. They wrote a constitution, they voted on it, and they have all done it in less than 10 months. Remarkable. We sometimes forget history. We forget our own history that it took us 13 years after 1776 to get our Constitution. In fact, only nine States ratified it at first, and the two big ones, New York and Virginia, were late comers to the table. In fact, North Carolina did not ratify it until the next year and Rhode Island took 2 more years to ratify the U.S. Constitution. Not all Americans supported the Constitution. One of my favorite Revolutionary War people, Patrick Henry, did not believe that the new Constitution should be ratified. He believed in a stronger State instead of a Federal Government.

We sometimes forget our own history and we sometimes sell the Iraqi people short as many people have done this year. Those people, the Northeast elites and the west coast Hollywood leftists, said it would not happen, that the Iraqis would not have a government this year. But they did. Maybe those folks seem to be somewhat disappointed that the Sunnis, the Kurds and the Shiites all came to the table and voted for this Constitution. Those Northeast elites and those west coast Hollywood leftists were the same ones who said that we couldn't help Germany and Japan in World War II. We fought those two countries, those two regimes of totalitarian states, but the United States went in and set up democracies in both of those countries. Now those countries are not only free but they are world powers and they are our allies.

And what if it happens? What if Iraq and Afghanistan do the same thing

that Germany and Japan did, become world powers, become democracies and, more importantly, become free and our allies?

Mr. Speaker, democracy is the enemy of terrorism and freedom is the enemy of anarchy, and the people are the enemy of dictators. The United States in its history has gone to war numerous times, but we go to war not to conquer but to liberate. We go to war not to enslave but to set free. And so our troops that I met with in January and the troops that are serving there today are serving a purpose in Iraq. I have talked to them and they are proud that they are able to represent the United States and fight the war on terror. But they are also proud of the fact that they are setting up a democracy in that land far, far away.

Mr. Speaker, history will look favorably on our role in Iraq and Afghanistan. History will record what amazing people these Americans were. It will be a good time in history for the United States and the Iraqi people.

Mr. Speaker, freedom once again has ruled the day.

WHITE HOUSE HAS NOT BEEN HONEST WITH AMERICAN PEOPLE ABOUT CIA LEAK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, for 2 years now, the White House has not leveled with the American people about its involvement in the leaking of a covert CIA operative's name to the press. As a former Ambassador, you have covert agents operating within your authority. To let those names become public could destroy the whole mission.

On October 1, 2003, White House press secretary Scott McClellan was asked about both Karl Rove and Scooter Libby's possible involvement in the leaking of Valerie Plame's identity. Mr. McClellan told reporters that they assured him they were not involved. One month earlier, McClellan told reporters, "If anyone in this administration was involved in it, they would no longer be in this administration."

Well, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that both Rove and Libby were involved and yet they both remain in the administration. Does the President forget how serious this issue is? Remember, it was his own father, a former CIA director, who said in 1999 that he had "nothing but contempt and anger for those who betray the trust by exposing the name of our sources. They are, in my view, the most insidious of traitors."

Mr. Speaker, it is time the President addresses these negative matters that are infecting all areas of the Republican Party here in Washington.

IRAQI ELECTIONS A PHENOMENAL EVENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, when I am at home and speaking to groups, I oftentimes ask them, the constituents that I am talking to, have you heard any good news lately on the radio or heard any good news on television or have you read any good news in the newspaper? Most often the silence is deafening.

But we do not have to look far for good news, either here at home or around the world. Much of that good news is directly related to the actions of Americans. That certainly has been true with the outpouring of support and relief for our fellow citizens who have been victims of recent hurricanes and other natural disasters, and this past Saturday the world witnessed not just good news but great news. The election in Iraq this past weekend was a phenomenal event, a remarkable step toward an independent, sovereign, democratic nation. What good news this is.

This is a momentous event, a huge step forward, and toward the approaching day when we will be able to bring home our service men and women.

Did you hear the good news, Mr. Speaker? Listen to some of the voices.

Lieutenant Colonel Steve Boylan in Baghdad said: "Nationwide security was a resounding success, with all of the 13 recorded attacks aimed at election targets failing."

Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari, talking about TV coverage, said: "I have seen pictures of citizens who are proud to be shown on camera having voted. There were no such pictures from these places in the last election. The victory for Iraq is that they are voting."

Listen to the voices, Mr. Speaker. Abdul Hussein Ahmed emerged from a polling station in the southern city of Najaf with his purple ink-stained finger raised aloft and he said: "Five members of my family were killed by Saddam and his people but now with this constitution everyone is equal under the law."

Listen to the voices, Mr. Speaker. Razifa Hussein Abdullah arrived at the polling station with tears in her eyes. Her husband, Hussein Salim, leaned on her for balance as they walked. They had returned several months ago from exile in Iran where they had fled during the Iran-Iraq war of the eighties. "We suffered a lot," she said, "and today I came to get revenge for all of these years I stayed away from my country to feel that I am an Iraqi again. It was a dream to get rid of Saddam and today is another dream come true," she said.

There is the quote from this poster, Mr. Speaker. Listen to the voices. "I voted then for Saddam, of course, be-

cause I was afraid, but this time I came here by my own choice. I am not afraid anymore. I am a free man."

Some editorials have finally recognized the importance of this occurrence. The New York Post said, "The referendum results vindicate U.S. policy and are a giant step toward regional peace." The New York Times, yes, the New York Times, said, "What we know already and can't fail to be impressed by is that large numbers of Iraqis of all persuasions turned out in defiance of terrorist threats to decide their constitutional future. They have exercised a basic democratic right that would have been inconceivable just a few years ago." Even the New York Times.

Mr. Speaker, oftentimes we are too close to the happenings of the day to appreciate their gravity and I think we are just a little too close now. This past Saturday was a red letter date in the history of the world, and the naysayers notwithstanding, this is a day and a time to celebrate and congratulate. I am proud to be an American. I am proud of and humbled by the selfless acts by so many of our fellow citizens in Iraq. In the 1800s, de Tocqueville said that America is not good because it is great, it is great because it is good. It is that goodness that continues to strive for liberty for all. What a momentous time we are in as we celebrate and witness that march of liberty around the world.

Mr. Speaker, it is good news. Let's spread that good news.

REPORT OF CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. DRAKE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, I came today to talk about the great privilege I had just 2 weeks ago to lead a congressional delegation to Iraq. It was my very first trip. I did not know what to expect. But as we approached the airport and you could look down, all you saw was very brown, very barren, very flat land. I realized as we were coming into Kuwait City that we had done a very, very poor job as elected leaders to tell the American people what our military men and women are doing in Iraq, why they are doing it, the incredible progress that they are making and the consequences not only to Iraq and to the Middle East, to the U.S. but to the entire world if they were to fail.

Since this was an armed services trip, our mission was to meet with the troops, to meet with their commanders, to learn more about their mission, to see some of the technology that they are able to use to help them, to hear of their successes and to hear of the problems or things that we as Members of Congress could help them with.

The very first person that I met was a young man on that airstrip in Kuwait City as we were waiting to board a C-130. As I was talking to him, he looked up to me and he said, "Ma'am, don't worry about me. I know what I'm doing and I know why I'm doing it, and I can tell you that there will never be another attack on our nation if I have anything to do with it. So don't worry. Just pray for me." And he walked away. What an overwhelming feeling that that was from somebody probably in their very, very early twenties.

That same evening as we had dinner with troops from Virginia, and I would like to take a moment and thank the Peterson Foundation and AT&T who provided us with telephone cards to give to our very brave men and women so that they could call home, but there was a young woman from Virginia who looked me straight in the eye and I already knew this, I had already sensed it and felt it, but she looked at me and said, "Why aren't our elected leaders telling America what we're doing?" I had no answer for her, except to make the commitment to her that we would do that.

Please understand that there are very huge successes that have been made in Iraq. We hear the stories, and any story is one too many, about our men and women who are injured or killed by the IEDs. The stories that we do not hear are about how successful our military men and women have been at finding these devices, at exploding them or disarming them before someone is hurt.

We watched the Predator land on film as it has been patrolling around Iraq and certainly been a great asset to the military. We talked about civil things, such as the need for electricity, the talk about blackouts, and what we learned is that, yes, there are blackouts in Iraq but the biggest reason is because of increased demand for electricity. I did not know that Iraqis were out buying TV sets and refrigerators and other appliances and have greatly increased it. I was not aware of the condition that Saddam Hussein put his own country in and that for 6 years prior to this conflict that he was allowing raw sewage from Baghdad to flow into the Tigris River.

During Saddam Hussein's reign, there were no independent TV stations. Today, there are 44. No independent commercial radio stations. Today, there are 72. No independent newspapers and magazines. Today, there are 100. We also do not talk about the huge successes of the Iraqi security force and the fact that we as Americans have turned over 24 fully operational bases to the Iraqi government.

We flew from Baghdad to Balad air base by helicopter. We flew very low and very fast. I was surprised, first of all, to see how green the nation was in that area, and more surprised to see the people who were working those agricultural fields who waved to that helicopter as it went by. When we landed

in Balad, I talked to General Frank Gorenc, who used to be the commander at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia and whom I know, and I said, "Frank, they're waving at us." They laughed and they said, "Thelma, they always wave at us. They're very glad that we're here."

I believe that these young men and women who are serving in Iraq are true American heroes. I believe that history will give them a name, just as they named my father's generation during World War II. I do not know what that name will be, but I can assure you that these young men and women understand the threat to our world but they need to know that America supports them and that America understands their mission.

I told them stories from back home about a presentation at Sea World, about what a great job they were doing and about how Americans stood and clapped. And how in Ireland on our way back Marines entered that airport and they stood and clapped.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 17 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS) at noon.

PRAYER

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

Watchmen over the Nation, awake! Come to attention all you, chosen by the people, to guard and guide the destiny of the Lord's people. Turn to the Lord when it is dark and you cannot read the shifting winds. The Lord will guide you from within and bring to surface your deepest instincts for what is good and where lies lasting justice.

You are stationed at the far corners of this mighty fortress that you may see what the people need. But your centered ground is what binds God's people together and builds security and peace.

As the Constitutional Congress of this Nation, you are the Lord's own watchmen over the Nation. Come now, let us bless the Lord on this new day. Let us act as God's blessing now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas 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.

WELCOMING PRESIDENT PARVANOV TO THE UNITED STATES

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, as we continue to wage a war against terrorism, I am inspired when I look at a vibrant young democracy that only recently started out on the road to freedom. The country of Bulgaria existed under an oppressive Communist regime for nearly 50 years, but now it serves as a beacon of hope for people throughout the world who seek liberty.

Today, I am honored to welcome Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov to Capitol Hill. He is a man of great accomplishment and a champion of the Bulgarian Miracle promoting economic success and enhanced security. He has led his country to become a strategically located member of NATO, and is now implementing the reforms to join the European Union.

We appreciate Bulgaria's strong friendship which President Parvanov and President Bush recognized yesterday at the White House as the warmest ever in the history of our diplomatic relations.

Bulgarian Ambassador Elena Poptodorova to Washington has worked professionally with former U.S. Ambassador Jim Pardew and now Ambassador John Beyrle for a mutually beneficial partnership.

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

TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS FOR PAKISTANI NATIONALS

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to appeal for temporary protective status for Pakistanis who are temporarily in our country. This would allow them, Mr. Speaker, to stay in this country for up to 18 months at a time when their country has experienced a devastating impact from an earthquake.

As we know, millions are homeless, scores of thousands are dead, and millions more are in need of our assistance. Many of the persons who are here temporarily do not have homes to return to. This appeal would allow them

to stay in this country until they will have an opportunity to regroup themselves and their lives.

Pakistan has been our ally in the war on terrorism. This is the right thing to do for the people who are here, the people of Pakistan, and it is also the right thing to do because it shows the soft side of our power.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, while all Americans have shown compassion for the victims of recent natural disasters, we must exercise this compassion in a fiscally responsible manner. We in Congress have an obligation to respond to these natural disasters, but we must not give future generations an IOU of billions of dollars that they will have to pay off.

How do we do this? Many of my colleagues have looked for savings and prioritizing programs, and that is a great start and I am sure many more ideas will come forward as we discuss this issue. We must focus our efforts only on spending that which is essential to the American people, just like a family budget. In the past we have reduced spending when needed, and now is such a time. The American taxpayers want Congress to be fiscally responsible.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to compare the government's budget to a family budget, and it is simple: When you spend more in one area, you must find savings in another. My colleagues and I should do just that. Now let us finish the job and show the taxpayers that Congress is able to act as responsibly as they would in their own life.

CALLING FOR A NEW DIRECTION

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I know we are pretty busy, so to catch everybody up here, a few of today's headlines:

"E-mail Show FEMA's Disarray." Documents offer a glimpse of communication breakdowns in the Federal response to Katrina.

"Inflation Soars Largest Amount in 15 years."

"General Motors Health Care Benefit Cut Part Of A Trend."

"Greenspan says surge in energy prices will act as a drag on economy."

"States Protest Contributions to the Medicare Drug Plan." The Bush administration is requiring States to pay billion of dollars to fund the new prescription drug benefit.

"Vice President Cheney's Office Is A Focus in Leak Case. Sources Cite Role of Feud With the CIA."

"As of Monday morning, 1,957 U.S. servicemen had died in the war on Iraq."

Mr. Speaker, these stories serve as a wakeup call for change, or we can continue the same policies that have led us to this direction and this place. America can do better. We need new priorities. In the spirit of Edward R. Murrow, "Good day, and good luck."

THE CROPS WERE IN THE FIELDS

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, when the relentless rain and howling winds of Hurricane Rita hit southeast Texas, the agriculture industry took a beating. Texas rice farmers were already having a tough year because of unpredictable weather, increased fuel and fertilizer costs, and the last thing they needed was a visit from the lady of the gulf. Rita's wrath ravaged rice fields and caused power outages in the mills where harvested rice was being dried. The crops in the field just weeks away from the second harvest took a beating.

Bill Dishman, Jr., a rice farmer in my district, owns a farm in the small town of China, Texas. He figures about one-fourth or more of his second crop, that is the one rice farmers count on to make a profit, was lost. Almost every southeast Texas rice farmer suffered damages from this storm.

Following the storm, I had the opportunity to travel to southeast Texas with Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns and assess the damage and speak to the local rice farmers. Their concerns were serious and their outlook was grim. Texas rice farmers like Bill Dishman and Ray Stoesser need to remain on their combines and the rice needs to grow more, and we need more markets like Cuba. These are tense and troubling times. The American rice farmer, Mr. Speaker, is becoming an endangered species.

REPUBLICAN CORRUPTION AND EXTREME BUDGET CUTS

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, this morning I note that Republicans in Congress have created a culture of corruption and cronyism at the expense of the American public. Instead of helping our senior citizens, students, veterans, and working families that are struggling every single day and see high prices at the gas station and high home heating costs, Republicans are demanding an additional \$15 billion in cuts for a budget reconciliation plan. Republicans I understand want to cut the Federal low income heating program known as LIHEAP at a time when families are expected to pay double and triple compared to last year's heating home costs.

Republicans also plan to cut Medicaid and Medicare at a time when the

number of people without health insurance has grown to 5 million people in 4 years. Republicans plan to cut higher education when we know that the cost of education and to send our kids to college is more than 20 percent higher than it was a few years ago. Republicans are demanding all these drastic cuts to help pay for the reconstruction of Katrina.

Why aren't we asking the wealthiest people in the country who have been given tax credits and giveaways and somehow make them accountable to help with this?

MORGAN MATLOCK

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

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the selection of former Lamesa resident Ms. Morgan Matlock as Miss Texas 2005. She will represent the State of Texas in the 2005 Miss America Pageant.

Although she currently resides in Fort Worth, Texas, Ms. Matlock was born in Lamesa and hails from a long line of Dawson County residents. Morgan is a talented and dedicated young woman and is active in public service. She is a National Task Force leader for the Words Can Heal organization, and she will use her opportunity as Miss Texas to promote putting an end to verbal abuse. She also founded the Hearts Across Texas, a motivational organization for students from kindergarten to 12th grade as a staff member and columnist for Teen Scene and Pageantry Magazine, and a member of the Colleyville Chamber of Commerce.

The Texas values that she has exhibited throughout her community service and career in pageantry are honorable. It is my great privilege to represent her here in Washington. She is a bright example of the difference that one can make when civically oriented. I would like to wish Morgan good luck in the Miss America Pageant and in all her future endeavors. She has made not only District 11 proud, but all of Texas.

REGARDING AMBASSADOR JOE WILSON

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, Mark Twain once observed that mankind is the only species that feels shame or needs to. That thought crossed my mind when I was reading about this corrupt effort to punish Ambassador Joe Wilson who told the truth and blew the whistle on the administration's misinformation about the Iraq war. Apparently in the grand jury testimony Judith Miller said, "She agreed to Libby's request to be cited in stories as a 'former Hill staffer,' a rather deceptive description for the Vice President's Chief of Staff."

Well, the Los Angeles Times got it right. It was deceptive, and there was a

reason. Anyone who would participate in any way to punish an American for blowing the whistle on the President's misstatements should feel shame. Obviously, Mr. Libby did feel shame and that is why he hid from the public, or attempted to, that he was actually part of the administration that attempted to punish an American for telling the truth.

We should not wait for the grand jury. This President should root out the corruption and discharge the people responsible for these misdeeds.

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the SPDC rules Burma with an iron fist. It has prevented the democratically elected leader of the nation from taking power, and nearly 1 million people have been driven from their homes and now live in the jungles hunted like animals by the SPDC military. They are called IDPs, internally displaced people.

I say to the people of Burma: Other human rights issues may get the headlines, but you are not forgotten. We stand with you. We will continue to work with you for as long as it takes to ensure that the people of your nation are able to live in peace and freedom.

On September 21, Assistant Secretary of State Eric John said that the Bush administration led by Ambassador John Bolton will put Burma on the Security Council agenda this month.

This is an important step towards resolving the tragedy in Burma and calling on the SPDC to account for its atrocities. Seventeen years after the formation of the Burma's main opposition party, the NLD, the U.N. is waking up and taking notice of the plight of the Burmese people. I hope the U.N. will act.

CALLING FOR INDEPENDENT COMMISSION REGARDING HURRICANE KATRINA

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, Americans were shocked by our government's response to Hurricane Katrina. They watched as days passed before the people of the gulf coast communities were rescued. Americans rightly wondered, given this poor response to a natural disaster, is our government ready to respond to a terrorist attack?

Americans now deserve the answers, and I believe those answers can best come from an independent commission to both identify what went wrong but, more importantly, to find solutions so that this failed response never happens again.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress shares with the current administration a

weak reputation for oversight. We need only to look back a couple of years to be reminded that it was not Congress nor the White House who demanded an appropriate oversight of 9/11 attacks. Members on the 9/11 Commission have acknowledged it was the families of those lost in the attacks that came to Washington and demanded a thorough review of what went wrong.

□ 1215

Mr. Speaker, do we intend to wait for the people of Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas to march to the Capitol and demand that their administration and their Congress do the right thing and create an independent commission to find out truly how we can best respond in the future?

WISHING NATIONAL REVIEW AND WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago a new periodical entered the marketplace in American history. That publication was National Review. Its founder and editor was 29-year-old William F. Buckley. From the beginning, Buckley's magazine stood "athwart history, yelling 'Stop,' at a time when no one is inclined to do so, or to have much patience with those who so urged it."

And for 5 decades, it has bravely and effectively espoused conservative values and ideas, with both humor and intelligence. It is no surprise that since its inception, we have seen widespread acceptance of conservative principles like economic freedom, individual responsibility, and traditional values.

Buckley and National Review did much more than "stand athwart history." They helped shape it and America and the world are better for it. I offer a most sincere happy birthday to William Buckley and thank him for his wonderful creation, and I congratulate the family at National Review for 50 years of fine work with hopefully many more years to come.

REPUBLICANS CUT IMPORTANT PROGRAMS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this week House Republicans plan to move ahead with drastic cuts to domestic programs. Republicans say the cuts are necessary to help fund the reconstruction of the gulf coast after Hurricane Katrina.

Mr. Speaker, the programs House Republicans plan to cut this week are the very ones that have helped Americans in the gulf coast begin to pick up the pieces after losing their homes and

their jobs. Imagine being injured during the hurricane and not having any access to health coverage because your job simply no longer exists.

The Federal Medicaid program has helped thousands of gulf coast residents with their health care bills over the last month. Now House Republicans are demanding that we cut Medicaid services. I know Republicans will say we need to make these cuts to address the deficit they created; but if Republicans really wanted to address the budget deficit, they would revisit their giant tax breaks for America's millionaires.

We are really helping the wealthiest elite in our Nation when there are so many people struggling from Hurricane Katrina. I cannot believe that the Republican answer to Hurricane Katrina is to cut the programs for the poor.

SPENDING REDUCTIONS

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, this morning Congress Daily ran a story, "House GOP drops plans for across-the-board spending cuts." At first glance, I was disappointed.

I have authored bills with the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) to offer across-the-board cuts because they work, and I believe we should have the courage to enact them. But I also know that those across the aisle favor massive spending and absolutely cannot stand across-the-board cuts. And while I am disappointed that we will not take that approach of across-the-board cuts, I am not going to give up on seeing major spending reductions.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the House Republican majority is going to find savings in our spending one way or another, despite opposition from the big spenders.

I want to thank the leadership for making it clear that we expect to see \$50 billion in entitlement reductions. It is great progress. While Republicans debate how do we reduce spending and get it under control, our friends on the other side of the aisle are debating how much more can we spend.

Mr. Speaker, they are out of touch with America, but they can still join us in this effort.

PRAISING IRAQI ELECTIONS

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, Saturday was a historic day for democracy in Iraq and a bad day for terrorists. Millions of Iraqis embraced the democratic process and turned out to vote for a new constitution. We will not know the final results until later this

week, but the large turnout of voters and the low level of violence are themselves milestones of progress on Iraq's path to democracy. As Prime Minister Ja'afari said, "The victory for Iraq is that Iraqis are voting."

More than 60 percent of registered voters turned out in the Sunni majority Ninewah Province compared to 17 percent in January's election. The higher turnout is an important change and a tribute to our political strategy which includes continued outreach to Sunni leaders. Additionally, this strong Sunni participation is evidence of a desire on their part to reject insurgent violence and place their trust in the democratic process.

In addition, we know Saturday's violence did not even come close to the 347 election-day attacks reported in the January election.

Mr. Speaker, Saturday's vote took place 3 years to the day following Saddam Hussein's made-up election in which he won 100 percent of the vote. Taking one more step toward democracy, Iraqis now know what a real election is.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, 3 weeks ago I had the opportunity to meet and discuss the situation on our borders with the members of the Minute Men Project. These dedicated individuals reaffirmed my concerns that illegal immigrants are crossing our borders in record numbers. They fear that any amnesty or free citizenship bill will only reward and entice more illegal immigration. I agree.

Therefore, as Congress moves closer to a substantial debate on immigration reform, it is important that we not consider any guest worker or amnesty proposal until the administration makes a concerted effort to secure our borders and enforce our laws and Congress passes legislation that allows local and State officials to act as immigration deputies.

The situation on our border is not pretty, and it is a problem that Congress must not ignore.

Mr. Speaker, I ask for your help to reform and restore accountability to our immigration laws.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). 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 later in the day.

ASSISTANCE FOR ORPHANS AND
OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN
IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ACT
OF 2005

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1409) to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1409

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) As of July 2004, there were more than 143,000,000 children living in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean who were identified as orphans, having lost one or both of their parents. Of this number, approximately 16,200,000 children were identified as double orphans, having lost both parents—the vast majority of whom died of AIDS. These children often are disadvantaged in numerous and devastating ways and most households with orphans cannot meet the basic needs of health care, food, clothing, and educational expenses.

(2) It is estimated that 121,000,000 children worldwide do not attend school and that the majority of such children are young girls. According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), orphans are less likely to be in school and more likely to be working full time.

(3) School food programs, including take-home rations, in developing countries provide strong incentives for children to remain in school and continue their education. School food programs can reduce short-term hunger, improve cognitive functions, and enhance learning, behavior, and achievement.

(4) Financial barriers, such as school fees and other costs of education, prevent many orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries from attending school. Providing children with free primary school education, while simultaneously ensuring that adequate resources exist for teacher training and infrastructure, would help more orphans and other vulnerable children obtain a quality education.

(5) The trauma that results from the loss of a parent can trigger behavior problems of aggression or emotional withdrawal and negatively affect a child’s performance in school and the child’s social relations. Children living in families affected by HIV/AIDS or who have been orphaned by AIDS often face stigmatization and discrimination. Providing culturally appropriate psychosocial support to such children can assist them in successfully accepting and adjusting to their circumstances.

(6) Orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries routinely are denied their inheritance or encounter difficulties in claiming the land and other property which they have inherited. Even when the inheritance rights of women and children are spelled out in law, such rights are difficult to claim and are seldom enforced. In many countries it is difficult or impossible for a widow, even if she has young children, to claim property after the death of her husband.

(7) The HIV/AIDS pandemic has had a devastating affect on children and is deepening

poverty in entire communities and jeopardizing the health, safety, and survival of all children in affected areas.

(8) The HIV/AIDS pandemic has increased the number of orphans worldwide and has exacerbated the poor living conditions of the world’s poorest and most vulnerable children. AIDS has created an unprecedented orphan crisis, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where children have been hardest hit. An estimated 14,000,000 orphans have lost 1 or both parents to AIDS. By 2010, it is estimated that over 25,000,000 children will have been orphaned by AIDS.

(9) Approximately 2,500,000 children under the age of 15 worldwide have HIV/AIDS. Every day another 2,000 children under the age of 15 are infected with HIV. Without treatment, most children born with HIV can expect to die by age two, but with sustained drug treatment through childhood, the chances of long-term survival and a productive adulthood improve dramatically.

(10) Few international development programs specifically target the treatment of children with HIV/AIDS in developing countries. Reasons for this include the perceived low priority of pediatric treatment, a lack of pediatric health care professionals, lack of expertise and experience in pediatric drug dosing and monitoring, the perceived complexity of pediatric treatment, and mistaken beliefs regarding the risks and benefits of pediatric treatment.

(11) Although a number of organizations seek to meet the needs of orphans or other vulnerable children, extended families and local communities continue to be the primary providers of support for such children.

(12) The HIV/AIDS pandemic is placing huge burdens on communities and is leaving many orphans with little support. Alternatives to traditional orphanages, such as community-based resource centers, continue to evolve in response to the massive number of orphans that has resulted from the pandemic.

(13) The AIDS orphans crisis in sub-Saharan Africa has implications for political stability, human welfare, and development that extend far beyond the region, affecting governments and people worldwide, and this crisis requires an accelerated response from the international community.

(14) Although section 403(b) of the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 (22 U.S.C. 7673(b)) establishes the requirement that not less than 10 percent of amounts appropriated for HIV/AIDS assistance for each of fiscal years 2006 through 2008 shall be expended for assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS, there is an urgent need to provide assistance to such children prior to 2006.

(15) Numerous United States and indigenous private voluntary organizations, including faith-based organizations, provide assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries. Many of these organizations have submitted applications for grants to the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to provide increased levels of assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries.

(16) Increasing the amount of assistance that is provided by the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development through United States and indigenous private voluntary organizations, including faith-based organizations, will provide greater protection for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries.

(17) It is essential that the United States Government adopt a comprehensive approach for the provision of assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children in devel-

oping countries. A comprehensive approach would ensure that important services, such as basic care, psychosocial support, school food programs, increased educational opportunities and employment training and related services, the protection and promotion of inheritance rights for such children, and the treatment of orphans and other vulnerable children with HIV/AIDS, are made more accessible.

(18) Assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children can best be provided by a comprehensive approach of the United States Government that—

(A) ensures that Federal agencies and the private sector coordinate efforts to prevent and eliminate duplication of efforts and waste in the provision of such assistance; and

(B) to the maximum extent possible, focuses on community-based programs that allow orphans and other vulnerable children to remain connected to the traditions and rituals of their families and communities.

SEC. 3. ASSISTANCE FOR ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

Chapter 1 of part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following section:

“SEC. 135. ASSISTANCE FOR ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN.

“(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

“(1) There are more than 143,000,000 orphans living sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Of this number, approximately 16,200,000 children have lost both parents.

“(2) The HIV/AIDS pandemic has created an unprecedented orphan crisis, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where children have been hardest hit. The pandemic is deepening poverty in entire communities, and is jeopardizing the health, safety, and survival of all children in affected countries. It is estimated that 14,000,000 children have lost one or both parents to AIDS.

“(3) The orphans crisis in sub-Saharan Africa has implications for human welfare, development, and political stability that extend far beyond the region, affecting governments and people worldwide.

“(4) Extended families and local communities are struggling to meet the basic needs of orphans and vulnerable children by providing food, health care including treatment of children living with HIV/AIDS, education expenses, and clothing.

“(5) Famines, natural disasters, chronic poverty, ongoing conflicts, and civil wars in developing countries are adversely affecting children in these countries, the vast majority of whom currently do not receive humanitarian assistance or other support from the United States.

“(6) The United States Government administers various assistance programs for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries. In order to improve targeting and programming of resources, the United States Agency for International Development should develop methods to adequately track the overall number of orphans and other vulnerable children receiving assistance, the kinds of programs for such children by sector and location, and any other such related data and analysis.

“(7) The United States Agency for International Development should improve its capabilities to deliver assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries through partnerships with private volunteer organizations, including community and faith-based organizations.

“(8) The United States Agency for International Development should be the primary

United States Government agency responsible for identifying and assisting orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries.

“(9) Providing assistance to such children is an important expression of the humanitarian concern and tradition of the people of the United States.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) AIDS.—The term ‘AIDS’ has the meaning given the term in section 104A(g)(1) of this Act.

“(2) CHILDREN.—The term ‘children’ means persons who have not attained 18 years of age.

“(3) HIV/AIDS.—The term ‘HIV/AIDS’ has the meaning given the term in section 104A(g)(3) of this Act.

“(4) ORPHAN.—The term ‘orphan’ means a child deprived by death of one or both parents.

“(5) PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT.—The term ‘psychosocial support’ includes care that addresses the ongoing psychological and social problems that affect individuals, their partners, families, and caregivers in order to alleviate suffering, strengthen social ties and integration, provide emotional support, and promote coping strategies.

“(c) ASSISTANCE.—The President is authorized to provide assistance, including providing such assistance through international or nongovernmental organizations, for programs in developing countries to provide basic care and services for orphans and other vulnerable children. Such programs should provide assistance—

“(1) to support families and communities to mobilize their own resources through the establishment of community-based organizations to provide basic care for orphans and other vulnerable children;

“(2) for school food programs, including the purchase of local or regional foodstuffs where appropriate;

“(3) to increase primary school enrollment through the elimination of school fees, where appropriate, or other barriers to education while ensuring that adequate resources exist for teacher training and infrastructure;

“(4) to provide employment training and related services for orphans and other vulnerable children who are of legal working age;

“(5) to protect and promote the inheritance rights of orphans, other vulnerable children, and widows;

“(6) to provide culturally appropriate psychosocial support to orphans and other vulnerable children; and

“(7) to treat orphans and other vulnerable children with HIV/AIDS through the provision of pharmaceuticals, the recruitment and training of individuals to provide pediatric treatment, and the purchase of pediatric-specific technologies.

“(d) MONITORING AND EVALUATION.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—To maximize the sustainable development impact of assistance authorized under this section, and pursuant to the strategy required in section 4 of the Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005, the President shall establish a monitoring and evaluation system to measure the effectiveness of United States assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The monitoring and evaluation system shall—

“(A) establish performance goals for the assistance and expresses such goals in an objective and quantifiable form, to the extent feasible;

“(B) establish performance indicators to be used in measuring or assessing the achievement of the performance goals described in subparagraph (A); and

“(C) provide a basis for recommendations for adjustments to the assistance to enhance the impact of assistance.

“(e) SPECIAL ADVISOR FOR ASSISTANCE TO ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN.—

“(1) APPOINTMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, shall appoint a Special Advisor for Assistance to Orphans and Vulnerable Children.

“(B) DELEGATION.—At the discretion of the Secretary of State, the authority to appoint a Special Advisor under subparagraph (A) may be delegated by the Secretary of State to the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

“(2) DUTIES.—The duties of the Special Advisor for Assistance to Orphans and Vulnerable Children shall include the following:

“(A) Coordinate assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children among the various offices, bureaus, and field missions within the United States Agency for International Development.

“(B) Advise the various offices, bureaus, and field missions within the United States Agency for International Development to ensure that programs approved for assistance under this section are consistent with best practices, meet the requirements of this Act, and conform to the strategy outlined in section 4 of the Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005.

“(C) Advise the various offices, bureaus, and field missions within the United States Agency for International Development in developing any component of their annual plan, as it relates to assistance for orphans or other vulnerable children in developing countries, to ensure that each program, project, or activity relating to such assistance is consistent with best practices, meets the requirements of this Act, and conforms to the strategy outlined in section 4 of the Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005.

“(D) Coordinate all United States assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children among United States departments and agencies, including the provision of assistance relating to HIV/AIDS authorized under the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-25), and the amendments made by such Act (including section 102 of such Act, and the amendments made by such section, relating to the coordination of HIV/AIDS programs).

“(E) Establish priorities that promote the delivery of assistance to the most vulnerable populations of orphans and children, particularly in those countries with a high rate of HIV infection among women.

“(F) Disseminate a collection of best practices to field missions of the United States Agency for International Development to guide the development and implementation of programs to assist orphans and vulnerable children.

“(G) Administer the monitoring and evaluation system established in subsection (d).

“(H) Prepare the annual report required by section 5 of the Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005.

“(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the President to carry out this section such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 2006 and 2007.

“(2) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Amounts made available under paragraph (1) are authorized to remain available until expended.”.

SEC. 4. STRATEGY OF THE UNITED STATES.

(a) REQUIREMENT FOR STRATEGY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the President shall develop, and transmit to the appropriate congressional committees, a strategy for coordinating, implementing, and monitoring assistance programs for orphans and vulnerable children.

(b) CONSULTATION.—The strategy described in subsection (a) should be developed in consultation with the Special Advisor for Assistance to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (appointed pursuant to section 135(e)(1) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as added by section 3 of this Act)) and with employees of the field missions of the United States Agency for International Development to ensure that the strategy—

(1) will not impede the efficiency of implementing assistance programs for orphans and vulnerable children; and

(2) addresses the specific needs of indigenous populations.

(c) CONTENT.—The strategy required by subsection (a) shall include—

(1) the identity of each agency or department of the Federal Government that is providing assistance for orphans and vulnerable children in foreign countries;

(2) a description of the efforts of the head of each such agency or department to coordinate the provision of such assistance with other agencies or departments of the Federal Government or nongovernmental entities;

(3) a description of a coordinated strategy, including coordination with other bilateral and multilateral donors, to provide the assistance authorized in section 135 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as added by section 3 of this Act;

(4) an analysis of additional coordination mechanisms or procedures that could be implemented to carry out the purposes of such section;

(5) a description of a monitoring system that establishes performance goals for the provision of such assistance and expresses such goals in an objective and quantifiable form, to the extent feasible; and

(6) a description of performance indicators to be used in measuring or assessing the achievement of the performance goals described in paragraph (5).

SEC. 5. ANNUAL REPORT.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date on which the President transmits to the appropriate congressional committees the strategy required by section 4(a), and annually thereafter, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the implementation of this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report shall contain the following information for grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, contributions, and other forms of assistance awarded or entered into under section 135 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as added by section 3 of this Act):

(1) The amount of funding, the name of recipient organizations, the location of programs and activities, the status of progress of programs and activities, and the estimated number of orphans and other vulnerable children who received direct or indirect assistance under the programs and activities.

(2) The results of the monitoring and evaluation system with respect to assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children.

(3) The percentage of assistance provided in support of orphans or other vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS.

(4) Any other appropriate information relating to the needs of orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries that

could be addressed through the provision of assistance authorized in section 135 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as added by section 3 of this Act, or under any other provision of law.

SEC. 6. APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.

In this Act, the term "appropriate congressional committees" means the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, over 140 million children living in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean have lost a parent resulting from conflict and disease, undercutting their already difficult struggle to cope with basic needs such as health care, food, clothing, and education.

The situation is even more dire for 16 million of these children who have lost both parents, the vast majority of whom had their lives taken by AIDS. Many of these surviving children themselves are living with HIV/AIDS and are doing so alone.

The size and scope of the problems facing orphans and vulnerable children in the developing world is daunting. The United States provides significant levels of assistance through the good work of the United States Agency For International Development and other U.S. agencies to provide much-needed help to these children. However, these children deserve the best effort of the United States, and the American people expect the same. We can do better.

American aid to help these children is provided by a patchwork of programs from various offices within USAID and across U.S. agencies with little overall coordination. H.R. 1409 will increase the coherence and cohesion, as well as the effectiveness, of our multifaceted approach without disrupting the flow of aid to help these children through existing mechanisms.

This legislation requires the Secretary of State to designate a senior officer, likely within USAID, to be a special adviser for assisting orphans and vulnerable children. This special adviser will ensure that our various assistance streams within our government will be complementary to each

other, that aid strategies developed in Washington and our field missions are informed with the best data, analysis, and practices to help these children, and that someone in our government is conducting regular monitoring and evaluation of our efforts so we can continually improve the effectiveness of these programs.

This legislation does not construct costly new bureaucratic structures such as a new office, nor does it expand personnel requirements to accomplish these tasks. There are already sufficient numbers of people and programs. Rather, we expect that the new special adviser will be drawn from existing ranks, someone who is already familiar with and working on these issues and can be dual-hatted in these responsibilities.

In the last Congress we passed a previous version of this bill to help orphans and vulnerable children. Unfortunately, the Senate did not follow our lead. This time the Senate is already working on a bill identical to H.R. 1409, so we are hopeful that the passage of this bill today in the House will result in its being enacted into law very soon.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the tireless work of the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) and her staff for working to maintain momentum for this important legislation and bringing it to a vote today. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 1409.

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 legislation, and I would first like to thank the chairman of the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), for his hard work and long-standing advocacy for orphans and vulnerable children, particularly those affected by HIV/AIDS. I also want to congratulate the outstanding efforts of the sponsor of this legislation, my neighbor, friend and colleague from the San Francisco Bay area, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Mr. Speaker, the world faces an insidious and horrifying threat to human life in the form of HIV/AIDS. This deadly pandemic has left millions of men and women in its wake, but they are not its only victims.

Mr. Speaker, a child is orphaned by HIV/AIDS every 14 seconds. Let me repeat this staggering statistic: every 14 seconds a child is orphaned by HIV/AIDS.

Today, by passing this legislation, we take a step to help relieve the world's orphans and vulnerable children of the suffering they endure at such alarming rates. As of midyear 2004, there were over 15 million children worldwide who were identified as orphans, more than 12 million of whom live in Africa. We expect by the year 2010 this figure will climb to 25 million children.

Mr. Speaker, that means that in 5 years there will be more HIV/AIDS or-

phans than the combined population of 18 of our States. Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Maine, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming have a combined population which will equal the number of HIV/AIDS orphans. Our government has made a global commitment to combating HIV/AIDS.

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Now we must provide international leadership and do our share to highlight the suffering of children and bring hope to the world's future generations.

This bill is limited in scope, but it does represent our political will and our moral determination to wage battle against child misery in the developing world. I recognize of course that our agencies on the frontlines of this disease are already doing a great deal to aid poor children. However, this effort needs to be coordinated and brought to the attention of leaders in the Congress and around the world.

The legislation we are considering is important because it designates a Special Adviser to coordinate and support all of our efforts to protect orphaned and vulnerable children in poor, developing countries. The legislation will promote accountability for U.S. dollars that are given to programs to help orphans.

Mr. Speaker, our legislation will ensure that donor nations do not constantly reinvent the wheel as aid is provided to orphans in the developing world. The Special Adviser created by this legislation will spread aggressively best practices in assisting orphans to aid agencies and foreign governments around the world.

The orphans of HIV/AIDS around the globe are among the most vulnerable people on our planet. If we care for them, we can overcome this crisis and turn the tide against AIDS and the ravages of poverty.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote in support of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 7 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), the author of this legislation.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, first let me thank the gentleman from Illinois, our chairman, for his strong and consistent support and his consistent commitment to orphans and vulnerable children throughout the world. Also I want to thank the gentleman from California for helping us make sure that we stayed on track to ensure that this was truly a bipartisan bill, and I want to thank him for his leadership.

This bill is, as the gentleman from Illinois mentioned, a bipartisan-bicameral compromise and has attracted the sponsorship of 130 Members of Congress. We have been working on this bill with the gentleman from Illinois and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and their staffs for nearly 1½ years now. So I want to specifically

thank Matt McLean on the chairman's staff and also Pearl Alice Marsh on the gentleman from California's staff for their help in putting this bill together. Not to mention my staff, Christos Tsentas, who has worked day and night. Without them this bill would not be possible.

Let me also mention our advocates and NGOs, including the Global AIDS Alliance, the Elizabeth Glaser Foundation, Save the Children, RESULTS, the Global Action for Children campaign, and many others who helped make this bill a reality.

As we move to pass this bill today, I also want to very briefly acknowledge the work of former President Bill Clinton in focusing on AIDS orphans. He was really one of the first to highlight the importance of addressing the needs of children orphaned by AIDS in a speech on World AIDS Day in 1998. The following year President Clinton invited the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. KILPATRICK), and myself to join Sandy Thurman, then Director of the Office of National AIDS Policy at the White House. We went on a Presidential Mission to sub-Saharan Africa in late March of 1999 to focus specifically on children orphaned by AIDS. We visited Zambia, Uganda, and South Africa and met with a number of dynamic leaders and individuals and saw just how devastating the AIDS crisis had become and how deeply children were being affected.

So out of that visit, in 1999, the White House produced an action report and began to take the first steps towards a broader U.S. role in the global fight against AIDS. And, Mr. Speaker, I will include that report in the RECORD.

BACKGROUND

On December 1, 1998, World AIDS Day, President Clinton highlighted the growing global tragedy of children orphaned by AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. At that time, he directed Sandra Thurman, Director of the Office of National AIDS Policy, to lead a fact-finding mission to the region and to report back to him with recommendations for productive action. From March 27 through April 5, Director Thurman led a Presidential Mission to Zambia, Uganda, and South Africa. Director Thurman was accompanied by Representatives Jackson-Lee, Kilpatrick, and Lee, and senior staff from the offices of Senators Hatch, Helms, and Kennedy, and Representative Pelosi. Also joining the Mission was a group of community leaders from outside of government including Mayor David Dinkins, Bishop Felton May, and William Harris. [Attachment A: Trip Manifest]

The goals of the trip were to: investigate the extent of the AIDS crisis in sub-Saharan Africa particularly as it relates to children orphaned by AIDS; identify proven and promising interventions; and, promote leadership both at home and abroad.

Information for this report was gathered from meetings with African presidents, government ministers, donors, experts, providers, children, parents, and community leaders. In addition, site visits were made to a wide variety of community-based programs serving children and families affected by AIDS. Both the meetings and the visits pro-

vided an important perspective on the problem regarding actions taken, lessons learned, and further progress needed. [Attachment B: Groups Visited]

PLAN OF ACTION

The Background

Throughout the Mission's travel in Africa, it was clear that President Clinton's "Partnership with Africa" is making hope a reality, even at the village level. From Kampala to Cape Town, people across Africa know of this historic initiative. Unfortunately, AIDS threatens to decimate the progress of this partnership and everything else in its path. To protect and defend the legacy of growth and opportunity we have built with Africa, and the children and families who depend on it, an aggressive AIDS initiative, involving concrete action both at home and abroad, is essential.

Given the magnitude of the AIDS pandemic and its devastating impact on child survival, economic development, trade, regional stability, and civil society in Africa today, and in India tomorrow, the President established a Global AIDS Emergency Working Group. Included were the National Security Council, Office of Management and Budget, Office of the Vice President, USAID, and the Departments of Defense, State, Treasury, Commerce, and HHS. The Office of National AIDS Policy coordinated this effort, and together the Working Group and the members of the Presidential Mission made specific recommendations. These recommendations form the basis of the Plan of Action now put forward by the Administration.

The Goals

UNAIDS, in cooperation with its bi-lateral and multi-lateral partners, has laid out a series of goals for the next five years as described below. The Administration seeks to further these goals through an initiative entitled "Joining Forces for LIFE: Leadership and Investment in Fighting an Epidemic."

The incidence of HIV infection will be reduced by 25% among 15-24 year olds by 2005. (Currently 2 million young adults are infected each year in sub-Saharan Africa.)

At least 75% of HIV infected persons will have access to basic care and support services at the home and community levels, including drugs for common opportunistic infections (TB, pneumonia, and diarrhea). (Currently, less than 1% of HIV infected persons have such access.)

Orphans will have access to education and food on an equal basis with their non-orphaned peers.

By 2001, domestic and external resources available for HIV/AIDS efforts in Africa will have doubled to \$300 million per year. (Currently, approximately \$150 million per year is spent on HIV/AIDS prevention in sub-Saharan Africa.)

By 2005, 50% of HIV infected pregnant women will have access to interventions to reduce mother-to-child HIV transmission. (Currently, less than 1% of HIV infected pregnant women have access to such services in sub-Saharan Africa.)

The Initiative

I. Increasing the US Government investment in the global battle against AIDS to begin to reflect the magnitude of this rapidly escalating pandemic.

Making a difference in Africa and in other highly impacted areas requires broader political commitment, enhanced community mobilization, and, most urgently, increased resources. In 1998, spending on AIDS in Africa totaled only \$165 million. Compared to the ever-escalating need and other health programs, this amount is woefully inadequate. For example, in 1998, over \$500 million was

spent for basic childhood immunization programs in Africa. Based on our experience in those countries that are starting to demonstrate success, such as Uganda and Senegal, UNAIDS and donors now agree that a minimum of \$600 million is needed in sub-Saharan Africa per year for HIV prevention alone (\$2 per adult per year).

While we acknowledge the leadership role that the US plays globally and the urgent need to act, clearly an effort to combat AIDS must be driven by many actors including host countries, multi-lateral organizations, and bilateral donors, to be successful. In FY1999, the US Government spent \$74 million in USAID prevention and care in Africa and \$38 million in HHS research and surveillance/prevention. But more remains to be done in sub-Saharan Africa and in other seriously affected parts of the world.

The Administration proposes to commit an additional \$100 million in FY2000 to the global battle against AIDS. This initiative will enable us to move forward on four critically important and interconnected fronts including:

Containing the AIDS Pandemic (\$48 million)—Implement a variety of prevention and stigma reduction strategies, especially for women and youth, including: HIV education, engagement of political, religious, and other leaders; voluntary counseling and testing; interventions to reduce mother-to-child transmission (MTCT); and enhance training and technical assistance efforts, including Department of Defense efforts with African militaries.

Providing Home and Community-Based Care (\$23 million)—Deliver counseling, support, and palliative and basic medical care including treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, opportunistic infections (OIs), and tuberculosis (TB) through community-based clinics and home-based care workers. Enhance training and technical assistance efforts.

Caring for Children Orphaned by AIDS (\$10 million)—Assist families, extended families, and communities in caring for their children through nutritional assistance, education, training, health, and counseling support, in coordination with micro-finance programs.

Strengthening Prevention and Treatment by Augmenting Planning, Infrastructure, and Capacity Development (\$19 million)—Strengthen host country ability to plan and implement effective interventions. Strengthen the capacity for effective partnerships and the ability of community-based organizations to deliver essential services. Strengthen surveillance systems to track the epidemic and target HIV/AIDS programs.

This US Government assistance would be provided through USAID (\$55 million), HHS (\$35 million), and DoD (\$10 million). The focus of this funding is HIV prevention, and AIDS care and treatment. In those areas, this initiative represents nearly a doubling of funding in Africa from current levels (\$81 million in FY99, which excludes research). The Administration recognizes the fight against AIDS must be sustained to keep pace with this burgeoning epidemic, and is committed to a multi-year effort in this critical area.

II. Building partnerships with other key stakeholders to maximize our impact on the rapidly expanding pandemic

Increasing US investment in the global battle against AIDS is critical, but is not sufficient to achieve the outcomes needed. The commitment of in-country political leaders and of various segments of civil society are key to success. Moreover, resources provided by the US Government need to help leverage, and to be coordinated with those of other donors, the private sector, and national governments to ensure synergy and to

maximize impact. Building partnerships with key stakeholders in support of effective action at the community level is our greatest hope for progress.

This initiative will pursue a variety of strategic opportunities for challenging other partners to join in an enhanced effort, including:

Leadership Meeting—On September 7, 1999, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton will convene a meeting of key US officials, The World Bank, UNAIDS, as well as heads of foundations, corporate CEOs, and others to discuss how best to enhance AIDS prevention and treatment efforts in Africa and around the world. The meeting will focus not only on leveraging additional resources, but also on establishing priorities, identifying effective public/private partnerships, and identifying targets for action to combat the crisis of HIV/AIDS.

African Leaders Summit—We propose hosting a high-level meeting with Africa government and community leaders within the next ten months. This meeting will highlight the critical role of leadership in arresting the epidemic and will work to encourage increased leadership efforts. Topics will include the economic impact of HIV/AIDS, examination of models of success in reducing the transmission of HIV, and addressing the need for increased investment in health programs. Additional topics will include AIDS care and treatment and support for children orphaned by AIDS.

UN Conference on Children Orphaned by AIDS—On December 1, 1999 (World AIDS Day), the United Nations in conjunction with the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS, The White House Office of National AIDS Policy, The Magic Johnson Foundation and a variety of NGOs, will organize a conference to focus attention on the growing number of children orphaned by AIDS worldwide. Special emphasis will be placed on assessing the needs of orphaned children in sub-Saharan Africa and the Americas. Participants will include noted experts on the priority issues identified by UNAIDS, UNICEF, and other UN agencies.

Business—The Department of Commerce will facilitate a meeting of business leaders active in Africa to encourage them to increase their efforts to rise to the AIDS challenge. Given the impact that AIDS is having on businesses as well as the overall economic-impact on African countries, such a meeting will seek enhanced business commitment and involvement in AIDS programs.

The Commerce Department will work with American Chambers of Commerce abroad and other business organizations to publicize the successful AIDS efforts of US firms in Africa and to support others taking similar action. In addition, the Department will direct work to promote closer coordination in Africa between Commercial Service Offices, other USG agencies, the business community, and African NGOs in a united effort to promote corporate partnership in AIDS programs.

Labor—The Secretary of Labor will facilitate a meeting of US and African labor leaders, which will be co-chaired by the AFL-CIO. The success of the AFL-CIO and its Solidarity Center in South Africa (supported by USAID) in working with the South African Trade Union Federations to include AIDS as a key labor outreach and policy issue provides a model for similar action elsewhere. Outcomes include assisting labor organizations in educating their members and securing commitments to develop workplace-based AIDS education and prevention programs, including outreach to youth.

Religious Leaders Summit—The US government will facilitate a meeting of African, American, and other religious leaders to dis-

cuss the important role of communities of faith in the fight against AIDS. In Uganda and Senegal, the involvement of religious communities and leaders had a dramatic impact on the ability of these two countries to reduce HIV incidence and to maintain it at low levels over time. The outcome of such a meeting would be to increase attention to the need for involving religious communities, to mobilize these organizations and leaders in the fight against AIDS, and to identify ways to support their efforts.

Diplomatic Initiatives—The Department of State, National Security Council, and ONAP will work with US and African ambassadors to increase attention to AIDS within the diplomatic community. The NSC, the Department of State, and USAID will work with G-8 and other donors, and challenge them to match the increased investment put forward in this initiative.

ATTACHMENT A—TRIP MANIFEST

Presidential mission to AFRICA—March 27–April 5, 1999

Members of Congress: Representative Carolyn Kilpatrick, Foreign Operations Subcommittee, Appropriations, and Congressional Black Caucus; Representative Barbara Lee, Africa Subcommittee, International Relations, and Congressional Black Caucus; and Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, Founder and Chair, Congressional Children's Caucus, and Congressional Black Caucus.

Congressional Staff: Bruce Artim, Health Staff, Senator Hatch; Mary Lynn Qurnell, Legislative Assistant, Senator Helms; Stephanie Robinson, General Counsel, Senator Kennedy; and Carolyn Bartholomew, Legislative Director, Representative Pelosi, Minority Staff, Foreign Operations Subcommittee, Appropriations.

Non-Governmental Participants: William Harris, President, Children's Education and Research Institute; Bishop Felton May, General Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Church; David Dinkins, Chair, Black Leadership Commission on AIDS; Dr. Jacob Gayle, UNAIDS Technical Advisor and Liaison to The World Bank; Rory Kennedy, Documentary filmmaker, Moxie Films; and Nick Doob, Documentary filmmaker, Moxie Films.

Administration Officials: Sandra L. Thurman, Director, Office of National AIDS Policy; Michael Iskowitz, Consultant, USAID; Dr. Paul DeLay, Director, HIV/AIDS Programs, USAID; Maria Sotiropoulos, Protocol Officer, State Department; and Phil Drouin, Desk Officer, Bureau of African Affairs, State Department.

ATTACHMENT B—GROUPS VISITED: COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Zambia

Bwanfano, CHIN, Christian Council of Zambia, Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, Family Health Trust, Fountain of Hope, McKinney Islamic Center, Mulenga Compound, National AIDS Network, Ndeke House, Project Concern International, Society of Women Against HIV/AIDS, St. Anthony's Compound, and Twapia Widows Group.

President Jacob Titus Chiluba; Dr. Nkandu Luao, Minister of Health; Peter McDermott, UNICEF Country Representative; Vincent Malambo, Minister of Legal Affairs; Edith Z. Nawakwi, Minister of Finance and Economic Development; Abel Chambeshi, Minister of Youth, Sports and Child Health; Keli Walubita, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Dawson Lupunga, Minister of Community Development; Dr. Moses Sichone, HIV/AIDS Coordinator, GRZ; GRZ public-private orphan task force; and Ambassador Arlene Render.

Uganda

AIDS Development Foundation, AIDS Information Center, The AIDS Support Organi-

zation (TASO), Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA), Joint Clinical Research Centre, Makerere University, National Community of Women Living with AIDS, Save the Children (UK), Uganda AIDS Commission, Uganda Cancer Institute, Uganda Virus Research Institute, and United Women's Effort to Save Orphans.

President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, First Lady Janet Museveni, Dr. Crispus Kiyonga, Minister of Health; Hajat Janet Mukwaya, Minister of Gender, Labor and Development; Dr. Elizabeth Madraa, AIDS/STD Control Program, Ministry of Health; Rafina Ochago, Commissioner for Child Care and Protection, Ministry of Gender, Labor and Development; and Ambassador Nancy J. Powell.

South Africa

Bethesda House, CINDI Coalition (Children in Distress), Don McKenzie TB Hospital, Edendale Hospital, Edith Benson Babies Home, Ethembeni Centre, Grey's Hospital, Highway Hospice, Hope Worldwide-Jabavu Clinic, King Edward Hospital, Lilly of the Valley, Makaphuthu Children's Home, Project Gateway, and Streetwise Shelter.

Nkosa Zana Zuma, Minister of Health; GJ Fraser-Moleketi, Minister of Welfare and Population Development; Dr. Ben S. Ngubane, Premier, KZN; Dr. Zweli Mkhize, Minister of Health, KZN; Siphwe Gwala, Mayor, KZN; and Ambassador James Joseph.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I also want to make special note of the work of Bono and his organization Debt, AIDS, Trade, Africa for their work in really driving the agenda of HIV and AIDS and for bringing the attention to the needs of African people. He will be here, incidentally, today in the Capitol, and I know he will appreciate the importance of passing this bill.

And also, finally, I must thank my predecessor, Ron Dellums, who for many years was a lone voice in the wilderness who also developed the concept of the AIDS Marshall Plan and the Global Fund for AIDS.

Quite simply, this bill, H.R. 1409, will better coordinate and address the growing problem of orphans and vulnerable children in the developing world. As we heard earlier, an estimated 143 million children were living as orphans throughout sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. This is extremely hard to even comprehend.

The rapid growth of HIV and AIDS especially in Africa has dramatically impacted the number of children who are newly becoming orphans. According to UNAIDS, today there are over 15 million children living as orphans due to HIV and AIDS, again, the vast majority in sub-Saharan Africa. By 2010 there will be 25 million children. Today every 14 seconds another child is orphaned by AIDS. With parents dying at an alarming rate, children are left without food, shelter, education, or protection. We actually saw children raising children, 10-year olds raising their siblings.

The global orphan crisis is a profound humanitarian disaster that will be felt for decades to come. This bill seeks to address the growing global problem of orphans and vulnerable children by providing assistance to support basic care through community, school food

programs, increased primary school enrollment, employment training, protection of inheritance rights, psychosocial support, and treatment for children living with HIV and AIDS.

Together these activities will be overseen by a Special Adviser for Orphans and Vulnerable Children within USAID, which is a new position that my bill establishes. The Special Adviser will be responsible for coordinating, advising, and monitoring the provision of assistance for orphans and ensuring proper accountability for this program.

The amendments that we put into this bill have been made after careful negotiation with the other body and the gentleman from Illinois and the gentleman from California, our House leadership, and I thank them for helping us with these negotiations. These amendments would clarify the role of the Special Adviser in focussing specifically on orphans and vulnerable children. The amendments would also give USAID some flexibility to aggregate data in its report to Congress rather than providing detailed information on each individual grant and program.

Many of us, as I said earlier, have seen firsthand the desperation that orphans and vulnerable children are facing. There are many, in Africa especially, who have risen to the occasion. Father D'Agostino, for example, of Nyumbani orphanage. Many of us know Father D'Agostino, and he is doing unbelievable work in primarily Kenya. He has got the care and devotion of a staff and all of its volunteers who are really basically saving lives of children and helping develop their futures. He needs resources.

Also Mama Jean. I have got to mention her. Mother of Peace Orphanage Community in Zimbabwe. It is an orphanage I have become quite familiar with because it benefits adjacent rural communities, and I am proud to say that my own church in Oakland, California, the Allen Temple Baptist Church, is one of the sponsors of this orphanage.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say that these two programs are incredible programs and it is really a testament to how much good can be done on a shoestring budget by a committed group of people.

Bwafwano Home-Based Care Organization, run by Beatrice Chola, I met her when I traveled to Zambia last year with the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE). She is working as a nurse in the Chipata health center of Lusaka. Beatrice started this clinic, this orphanage, back in 1996 when she saw that the health center was overrun by HIV and AIDS and TB-infected patients.

So today, Mr. Speaker, to our chairman, to the gentleman from California, and to all of those who have made this bill possible, I want to thank them on

behalf of the millions of children who are going to be helped, whose lives will be saved, and who will lead the quality of life that they so deserve. They need our help. We are stepping up to the plate.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM), a member of the Committee on International Relations, who has been a fighter for children's rights and a fighter to defeat the ravages of AIDS.

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this important legislation to address the needs of children orphaned and vulnerable as a result of the AIDS pandemic. The gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) and her staff, as well as the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), and the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) are to be commended for their commitment to setting forth a policy that creates a framework to meet the needs of AIDS orphans. This bill deserves the full support of this House.

At this moment millions of boys and girls, children, across the continent of Africa are struggling to survive, struggling to find food and shelter and to care for siblings. They too often live in fear of sexual exploitation or are forced to use sex in exchange for food, safety, and survival. By 2010 an estimated 25 million children across Africa alone will be orphaned as a result of AIDS. Millions more will be caring for sick parents as well as for brothers and sisters.

Mr. Speaker, today's Seattle Post-Intelligencer details how the small southern African nation of Malawi is facing an AIDS disaster which is now fueling a famine. In this nation of nearly 12 million people, nearly 1 million more people are infected with HIV, many too sick to farm their fields. Five million Malawians are at risk of starvation. In Malawi there are also 700,000 AIDS orphans struggling to survive a famine, and this does not include the vulnerable children.

When a country is starving, who feeds the children? Who feeds, cares for, educates, and protects the children, the AIDS orphans? Mr. Speaker, AIDS is killing an entire nation, and the children left behind must be protected and cared for and educated and, most importantly, valued.

This bill is an important first step. U.S. leadership is needed for these children who deserve our help.

Mr. Speaker, for the RECORD I submit the Seattle Post-Intelligencer article.

[From the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Oct. 18, 2005]

MALAWI VILLAGE UNDERSCORES IMPACT OF AIDS

(By Clare Nullis, Associated Press Writer)

NAPASHA, MALAWI.—It's so quiet you can hear scrawny hens pecking at the dust. A few ragged children peer timidly from the shadow of their mud huts but show no interest in playing. Beyond them lie barren cornfields, abandoned to the blistering heat.

The despair is unmistakable in Napasha, a village in the southern African nation of Malawi where an AIDS epidemic has compounded the vicious cycle of poverty, hunger and disease.

"Our fields are idle because there is nobody to work them," says Toby Solomon, a local commissioner.

Subsistence farmers dominate Malawi's struggling economy. But an estimated 900,000 of 12 million people are infected with the HIV virus, a national rate of just over 14 percent. In the southern province of Nsanje, which includes Napasha, the rate is as high as 35 percent, according to Solomon.

"We don't have machinery for farming, we only have manpower," Solomon says. "If we are sick, or spend our time looking after family members who are sick, we have no time to spend working in the fields."

Numbers aren't easy to come by in Napasha, a cluster of simple mud buildings with no electricity or sanitation and just one communal water pump. But the 400 or so households here include about a hundred children who have lost one or both parents to AIDS.

The epidemic has aggravated a food crisis stemming in part from a drought that is withering corn crops. President Bingu wa Mutharika declared all of the southern African nation a "disaster area" Saturday and appealed for international help. He warned that 5 million people, almost half the population, are threatened with hunger.

Monica Kasitomu, a tiny graying woman who thinks she is around 70, is struggling to feed three young grandchildren who lost both their parents to AIDS. She says she depends on the corn meal and oil she receives from the United Nations.

"I'm getting too old to care for my grandchildren," she frets. "When I die, I don't know what will happen to them," she says, tears in her eyes.

One roadside sign near Napasha urges people to use condoms. "AIDS is real. It's not witchcraft," it says.

Many people here, as in much of Malawi, believe AIDS is caused by witchcraft and consider condoms taboo. The government and foreign relief agencies have launched campaigns to try to educate people about the disease, but results have been slow to filter down.

AIDS kills about 90,000 people in Malawi every year, and about half of the country's hospital beds are occupied by people with AIDS-related complications. Napasha, which is far from any health facilities, has at least eight households with terminally ill AIDS victims.

One is Melania Nakhove, a tall and graceful woman who looks older than her 50 years. She lost her husband to AIDS in 2002 and then discovered that she too was infected with the virus. She used to have a job but gave it up when she became too ill to work. Her house—like most others in the village—is bare. Her monthly ration of cornmeal lies drying on the floor of her living room, adorned only with a 2002 calendar and an AIDS awareness poster.

Nakhove counts herself lucky to receive both food aid and anti-retroviral medicines thanks to a government program funded by foreign donations.

Of an estimated 140,000 Malawis who need the life-prolonging drugs, only 19,000 were receiving them in June, according to the World Health Organization. The government aims to put 80,000 on treatment by the end of the year, but that is subject to foreign funding.

At the Saint Montfort feeding center in southern town of Nchal, nurse Getrude Mkwapu estimates half the children admitted to the intensive feeding ward are HIV-positive, complicating efforts to treat their malnutrition.

James, just 14 months old, is one of them. The skeletal boy, who looks no older than four months, wails incessantly as his grandmother, Weza Jugen, tries to coax him to drink a cup of milk.

"I don't know what I can do," Jugen said. "All I can try to do is to give him milk and porridge."

James, whose mother died last month, is one of 700,000 orphans in Malawi.

"The epidemic is giving people a sense of no hope," says Solomon. "No hope for life."

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and ask unanimous consent that he be allowed to control that time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois for his usual gracious accommodation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), a fighter for children's rights.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank both the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for their graciousness in this debate, something that I know the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) has waited on and fought for for such a long time. My hat is off to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), and the good news is that at the end of my name there is L-e-e. But I celebrate her leadership today and join in reminding the world that this may sound like a celebration but it is only the beginning.

I rise to enthusiastically support H.R. 1409, Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005.

Though, Mr. Speaker, that we rise today and speak about the scourge of AIDS, the vitality and importance of this legislation looms even more important as we look at the backdrop of now the rising numbers of those who have lost their lives in the terrible tragedy of the earthquake in Pakistan and, of course, as I am facing two disasters, the terrible tragedy of Hurricane Katrina and Rita where we know that the largest numbers of those impacted are children. In the instance of Pakistan, we know that children may be the highest numbers of those who have lost their lives, now numbers rising above 40,000. We know in Hurricane Katrina and Rita that we also will feel a terrible impact on our children.

□ 1245

So this bill that is now focused specifically on the issues dealing with HIV/AIDS speaks volumes that we were able to pass legislation based upon the mission that the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), myself, and the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. KIL-

PATRICK) joined as the first Presidential mission led by Sandy Thurman of the White House under President Bill Clinton.

As I said, the steps were measured but the effort was persistent and determined, and so this bill will authorize assistance to provide basic care through the community, school food programs, increased primary school enrollment, employment training, protection of inheritance rights, psychosocial support, and treatment for people living with HIV and AIDS.

I will tell my colleagues as I listened to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), she is right. As we walked into various living facilities, huts, throughout the nations that we visited, we stopped in to visit and see a 4-year-old bending over a dying body, we visited with a grandmother who was now taking care of a number of the children of her dead children, both husbands and wives. We knew that this had to be confronted in a very drastic, severe, persistent, and large way. This bill is a large way of responding to it.

We all know that according to a report developed by the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS, UNICEF, and the United States Agency for International Development, as of July 2004 there were more than 143 million orphans living in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, 143 million, which is more than almost half of the population of the United States of America.

We realize that these children are vulnerable, with no hope, no life. We also realize that those who are dying in their care need greater care than a 4-year-old, a 5-year-old, a 6-year-old might be able to give. We know that infants are poor and malnourished and are more likely to contract respiratory infections, diarrhea, and measles and other preventable diseases. We also know that those who were taking care of had tuberculosis and HIV, and so we recognize that this bill is long in coming, but it is so much needed.

Just imagine these poor children with no hope; and so, today, America rises to the occasion of the America that we all have loved and recognize for what she has always been, the defender of the most vulnerable around the world. Some have called her Mother America. In this instance, we embrace those from around the world, and we join with H.R. 1409, and I ask my colleagues to support it. I congratulate my colleagues, and I look forward to working with the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) as we move this forward for a better world.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1409, the "Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005." This bipartisan bill seeks to address the growing problem of orphans and vulnerable children in developing countries, which has been exacerbated by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The bill establishes the position of Spe-

cial Advisor for Assistance to Orphans and Vulnerable Children within the United States Agency for International Development with responsibilities including coordination, advising, and the monitoring of assistance.

Additionally, the bill will authorize assistance programs to provide: Basic care through the community; school food programs; increased primary school enrollment; employment training; protection of inheritance rights; psychosocial support; and treatment for children living with HIV/AIDS.

As of July 2004, there were more than 143 million children living in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean who were identified as orphans, having lost one or both of their parents. Of this number, approximately 16 million children were identified as double orphans, having lost both parents—the vast majority of whom died from AIDS. These children often are disadvantaged in numerous and devastating ways and most households with orphans cannot meet the basic needs of health care, food, clothing, and educational expenses.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has increased the number of orphans worldwide and has exacerbated the poor living conditions of the world's poorest and most vulnerable children. AIDS has created an unprecedented orphan crisis, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where children have been hardest hit. An estimated 14 million orphans have lost 1 or both parents to AIDS. By 2010, it is estimated that over 25 million children will have been orphaned by AIDS.

Working to combat poverty and to protect the vulnerable is an issue that members of both parties can agree on. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), orphans are less likely to be in school and more likely to be working full time. Providing children with free primary school education, while simultaneously ensuring that adequate resources exist for teacher training and infrastructure would help more orphans and other vulnerable children obtain a quality education. It is critical for the future of these developing nations that the orphaned and vulnerable populations have access to basic needs like food, health care, and education.

GENERAL FACTS ON CHILDREN

According to a report developed by the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UNICEF, and the United States Agency for International Development, as of July 2004 there were more than 143,000,000 orphans living in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

Assessments carried out by the International Labor Organization (ILO) to investigate the situation of children who are working found that orphans are much more likely than non-orphans to be working in commercial agriculture, the domestic service industry, and the commercial sex industry, as street vendors, or in industries that violate internationally recognized rights of children.

Infants who are poor and malnourished are more likely to contract respiratory infections, diarrhea, measles, and other preventable diseases, and are less likely to receive needed health care.

According to UNAIDS and UNICEF, by the end of 2001 there were an estimated 14,000,000 children under the age of 15 who had lost one or both parents to AIDS.

As the number of HIV cases increases in sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean, as well as in Eastern Europe and Asia, the death rate from AIDS among adults in those regions is expected to increase. By 2010 the total number of children in those regions who will lose one or both parents to AIDS is expected to be approximately 30,000,000.

One-third of children born from an HIV-infected mother develop HIV/AIDS. Few of these children have access to HIV/AIDS medications.

Globally, more than 12,000,000 young people ages 15 to 24 are living with HIV/AIDS, and each day another 6,000 young people become infected with HIV. New estimates indicate that more than 70 percent of new HIV cases among this age group in sub-Saharan Africa are young women and girls.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN), our distinguished colleague and a physician herself.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for yielding me time.

I also rise in strong support of H.R. 1409, to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children in developing countries. I want to commend the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) as well for her commitment to this issue and for sponsoring this bill and for her hard work in getting it to the floor today, and to thank Chairman HYDE and Ranking Member LANTOS for their support.

Mr. Speaker, as the Navhind Times wrote earlier this month, "There are more than 100 million children worldwide who are living hand-to-mouth, bereft from family and homes and are particularly vulnerable to abuse." We have all seen the tragedy of children soldiers, the street children of South America, and children refugees.

As of July 2004, there were more than 143 million children living in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean who were identified as orphans, having lost one or both parents. Of this number, approximately 16.2 million children were identified as double orphans, having lost both parents, the vast majority of whom died of AIDS.

Numerous United States and indigenous private voluntary organizations, including faith-based organizations, in these countries provide assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children.

One such program is the Rx for Child Survival Campaign, a multimedia campaign aimed at raising the awareness of child hunger, disease and the impact of AIDS on their lives. Many of these organizations have applied for grants to the administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development to provide increased levels of assistance for orphans and other vulnerable children in these developing countries.

Mr. Speaker, the plight of the world's children represents both a humanitarian and a security crisis, and it is getting worse with each succeeding

year. It is essential that the United States Government adopt a comprehensive approach for the provision of assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children around the world.

By acting now, Congress can ensure that important services, such as basic care, psychosocial support, school food programs, increased educational opportunities and employment training, the protection and promotion of their inheritance rights, the treatment of orphans and other vulnerable children of HIV and AIDS and other illnesses have more accessible treatment and support efforts that ensure orphans continue to live with their extended families whenever possible, rather than being placed in orphanages.

I urge my colleagues to support the passage of H.R. 1409.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1409, the Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2005. This bipartisan bill will provide assistance to the neediest children in the world's poorest countries, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

AIDS has been so devastating to the developing world, especially sub-Saharan Africa, partly because so many of those killed by AIDS are adults of child-bearing age. These men and women are often the pillars of their communities and families. Most diseases spare at least one parent, but AIDS often kills both mothers and fathers. Sixteen million children in the developing world are "double orphans"—both of their parents are dead—mostly because of AIDS. Unfortunately, their numbers are increasing as AIDS continues to ravage the world. Indeed, in four African countries, one in five children will have lost at least one parent to AIDS by 2010. It is vital that we help these children.

Extended families care for more than 90 percent of orphans in the developing world. Unfortunately, these families often lack the resources to meet the most basic needs of the orphans. These children are less likely than their peers to be enrolled in school. Many orphaned girls in particular are forced into the workforce at an early age. They are more likely than others to go hungry. Because of the stress of losing their parents and coping with the ensuing problems, they are much more likely to suffer from psychological problems.

Many face discrimination both as the children of AIDS victims and as orphans. Orphans and their mothers often have difficulty inheriting the land or other property due to them.

This bill authorizes the President to assist programs in developing nations that benefit orphans and other vulnerable children. USAID will work with an array of groups, including international and non-governmental organizations, to provide needed services to orphans. These services include education, school food, protection of inheritance rights and psychosocial care. When possible, community-based groups will directly provide this care.

H.R. 1409 includes provisions that monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the programs funded, so resources will be channeled to the groups that do the best work and need the most assistance. It also creates the office of the Special Advisor for Assistance to Vulnerable Populations, appointed by the Secretary of State, who will oversee the imple-

mentation of this bill in USAID programs and coordinate U.S. assistance to orphans and other vulnerable children.

Mr. Speaker, this bipartisan bill will ease the suffering of the millions of children who have been orphaned in the developing world, and it is worthy of this House's support.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1409, 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.

MOURNING LOSS OF LIFE CAUSED BY EARTHQUAKE THAT OCCURRED ON OCTOBER 8, 2005, IN PAKISTAN AND INDIA

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 492) mourning the loss of life caused by the earthquake that occurred on October 8, 2005, in Pakistan and India, expressing the condolences of the American people to the families of the victims, and urging assistance to those affected.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 492

Whereas on October 8, 2005, a powerful earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter Scale occurred in Pakistan and India, centered on the city of Muzaffarabad;

Whereas the earthquake caused severe damage in both Pakistan and India;

Whereas the earthquake and continuing aftershocks have caused more than 50,000 deaths, resulted in serious injuries to additional tens of thousands of people, and left between 2.5 and 3 million homeless as winter in the affected mountainous region approaches;

Whereas millions of people throughout the affected region currently lack clean water, food, proper sanitation, basic healthcare, adequate shelter, and other necessities, thereby increasing the risk of additional suffering and death; and

Whereas the United States and donors from at least 30 other countries have, to date, pledged several hundred million dollars in emergency and long-term reconstruction assistance, and have begun to deliver humanitarian supplies to survivors of the earthquake: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) mourns the tragic loss of life and horrendous suffering caused by the earthquake that occurred on October 8, 2005, in Pakistan and India;

(2) expresses the deepest condolences of the American people to the families, communities, and governments of the tens of thousands of individuals who lost their lives in this earthquake;

(3) welcomes and commends the prompt international humanitarian response to the earthquake by the governments of many countries, the United Nations and other international organizations, and nongovernmental organizations;

(4) expresses gratitude and respect for the courageous and committed work of all individuals providing aid, relief and assistance, including United States civilian and military personnel, who are working to save lives and provide relief in the devastated areas; and

(5) supports the actions to assist the victims taken by the President and the Government of the United States to provide all appropriate assistance to the governments and people of the affected region.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HYDE. 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. 492, the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the tragic earthquake in Kashmir reminds us of the uncertain course of nature and the parlous state of humanity as we confront a dangerous and uncertain world.

We are also reminded that globalization, our ability to be instantly affected by events on the other side of the globe, allows us to express our humanity in ways unknown to previous generations. We can respond almost instantly, because we learn almost instantly, about the plight of poor victims in faraway lands.

The areas affected by the earthquake of October 8 are about as far as one can get from our shores. Yet Americans, like others from around the world, were able to share the tragedy of the Pakistani and Indian peoples almost as it unfolded and could then react to it, generously, as is our history, including by dispatching considerable material assistance. We can be proud of the role our government and our private sector have played in making that response possible.

Winter is coming to the affected areas, and there is a great need for shelter for the millions of homeless persons. India and Pakistan are significant countries, and not without considerable resources to devote to their own problems. However, an examination of the level of devastation from the recent earthquake and a consideration of the degree to which even our Nation's

ability to respond to the hurricane's emergencies was strained, means that we need to be mindful of the ongoing and immediate needs of millions of South Asians. Shelter is in especially short supply.

This resolution properly expresses our sense of mourning for the losses suffered, our sympathy to their survivors, commends those who have stepped forward with help, and encourages additional assistance. It is a privilege to bring this before the House today.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express the condolences of the United States Congress and the American people to the people of Pakistan and the people of India who have suffered so grievously from the horrendous earthquake that struck South Asia just 10 days ago.

Mr. Speaker, the day after the earthquake, I received a telephone call from the President of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf. The President requested, in the strongest terms possible, assistance not only from our Nation but from other donors around the globe. I immediately reached out to our own government and to other friendly governments and to nongovernmental organizations, and I am profoundly grateful that additional aid is flowing to the people of Pakistan as we speak.

Each day, the news from Pakistan grows worse. The death toll now seems certain to rise above 55,000. More than 2 million people are homeless in the midst of recent torrential rainstorms, and the freezing cold of winter is fast approaching the mountainous regions most affected.

Landslides and poor weather have hampered relief operations, heightening the misery of the injured and the destitute as they wait for help. Relief supplies still have not reached many remote areas where whole villages have been devastated.

Over 30 nations, led by the United States, have rushed to aid and comfort the victims of the earthquake and its horrible after-effects. With natural disasters such as the South Asia earthquake and the Indian Ocean tsunami, the world has seen the generous heart of the American people.

Our country has committed \$50 million in initial relief supplies only from our government. We have also dedicated eight military helicopters to fly humanitarian missions, and we have transported over 70 tons of relief supplies to the neediest in the most remote areas.

Mr. Speaker, the United States counts Pakistan as a strong ally in the war against terrorism, and it was my great pleasure recently to welcome President Musharraf to New York. Our assistance thus far proves that the

United States is a solid friend of the Pakistani people. I urge our government and this Congress to support additional assistance to the people of Pakistan, India, and Kashmir.

Our resolution offers the condolences of the House of Representatives and of the American people to the families, to the communities, and to the governments of Pakistan and India. It welcomes the humanitarian relief offered by other governments, the United Nations and expresses gratitude for the courageous work being performed by individuals providing aid, relief and assistance, including U.S. civilian and military personnel, under often extremely dangerous conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2¼ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), a distinguished member of our committee.

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

□ 1300

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. I thank the chairman of the committee and the ranking member of the committee for introducing this resolution.

Through this resolution today, the House of Representatives will send the condolences of the American people to those who have been so tragically affected by the October 8 earthquake. I believe this House can do more than just send our condolences, though.

The President has taken the first step with the initial pledge of \$50 million and the USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance activated its disaster assistance relief team quickly to ensure that urgent aid was provided. But the situation in Pakistan, the hardest hit in South Asia, remains critical.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said that weather and lack of access to remote areas is delaying the aid needed to save countless lives. We are also seeing logistical problems in providing the basic needs of the people who were made homeless and without shelter by this quake and, as I mentioned earlier, further impaired by heavy rains and flooding in the earthquake region.

Critical needs such as food, clean water, and shelter are badly needed as the winter is fast approaching in this mountainous region, akin to the Adirondack region in New York State, which this time of year can have snow, and especially during the evening. So far, we have been able to help thousands of people, but that is simply the tip of the iceberg.

Madam Speaker, I represent one of the largest populations of South Asians in the country and over the past week I have been reaching out to my Pakistani community. What I have found is a community doing all that it can to

raise funds to help their families and friends who were so tragically affected by this earthquake. I also had the honor of speaking to a private Muslim school in my district to update them on the U.S. efforts to provide emergency relief. I was sad to learn that several students' families were directly affected, one student losing over 40 members of their family. The students and the community leaders were very grateful that our country is working to help their homeland, but we all agree that more can and needs to be done.

Madam Speaker, I challenge this House to provide for the millions who have been left injured and homeless. This is a chance not only to help people in need, but to change the hearts and minds of Muslim countries' attitude towards the United States.

After the tsunami, the majority of Indonesians changed their view of us because they saw the soft power of the United States. It is time to show that same soft power to the people of Pakistan so that they too can have a change of heart towards the United States and our people.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, before yielding time, I want to recognize my associate, Peter Yeo, who drafted and did the major work on this important legislation.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3½ minutes to my good friend and colleague from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, let me first of all thank the leadership of the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Ranking Member LANTOS) for their quick and compassionate expression that we now have on the floor of the House.

I rise today to join in the support of H.J. Res. 492, and I acknowledge as the cochair of the Pakistan Caucus, newly-founded, to have the pleasure of having both of the members of the Committee on International Relations leadership, the ranking member and chairman, being supportive of this effort, as I co-chaired with my colleague, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON). I can assure my colleagues that we are very grateful for this profound statement, mourning the loss of so many. We do realize that the numbers continue to climb and that the difficulties are rising beyond our understanding.

Just this past Sunday, some 70 members of the South Asian community were convened by my office in Houston, people of different views and political perspectives, but they united, as we did with the tsunami, and we have called ourselves Houston's Solution for Earthquake Relief and Rehabilitation in Pakistan.

The reason I believe is because this picture is worth a thousand words. The impact on children is going to be unbelievable and without expression.

So it is very important as we look to, as my colleagues have said, the relief from the United States, that we do several things. One, we are the coordinator, and I congratulate the administration for designating Afghanistan as the site of the command, and we acknowledge the loss, devastation in Afghanistan, not as much loss of life, and certainly India has been a real partner. I met last week with the ambassadors from India and spoke to both of them and offered my sympathy and also how we can be involved. Obviously, the obvious things that are needed are food and medicine and tents, but, most of all, coordination and dollars.

So I am asking today that we put our heads together in this Congress and find the additional resources beyond the \$50 million, because I can assure my colleagues that we believe these numbers are going to go up, not out of hysteria, of 100,000. We do not know the numbers for sure, but they will be climbing.

The added concern is that it is getting enormously cold. It makes it very difficult for the rescuers to come. The roads are impassable, and many of those who were in that room on Sunday could recount for me the very terrible stories of their relatives, living outdoors, no heating, no addressing of their wounds, and, of course, this picture that shows the children who are orphaned.

So I ask my colleagues to support H.J. Res. 492 and that we spend a moment of mourning, and I would ask that when it is appropriate that we rise in silence. During the time that we are on the floor of the House, I ask the Speaker to convene us in a moment of silence as we mourn for those who have lost their lives.

I finally conclude by saying that we are grateful for what we have been able to do, but we all know that a good Samaritan, no matter what faith you may articulate this philosophy, it is better to give than to receive. We have given and are still giving to our own who are victims and survivors of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. Many who would say who are listening to this debate or discussion that we have our own to take care of, and we realize that America does have the responsibility of her own, but we know also that America has many blessings to count for, and those blessings, I believe, come because we have been willing to give, even until it hurts. These are people who are in desperate need, children by the thousands are suffering, and we hope that we will be able to provide for them as well.

I ask my colleagues to support H.J. Res. 492.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 492, "Mourning the loss of life caused by the earthquake that occurred on October 8, 2005, in Pakistan and India expressing condolences of the American people to the families of the victims, and urging assistance to those affected."

Earlier this month, a disaster occurred on a virtually unimaginable scale when an earth-

quake violently shook Southeast Asia. Over 50,000 people were killed in India and Pakistan, and countless more were seriously injured. Whole cities were razed to the ground, and an estimated 2.5 to 3 million people lost their homes. This winter in Pakistan and India men, women, children, the elderly, the orphaned and the infirmed will be sleeping outside, exposed to the harsh mountain climate. They are lacking the basic necessities for life; in need of food, water, sanitation, basic healthcare, and adequate shelter.

Disasters of this magnitude, no matter where they occur, affect all of us. In the face of this disaster, countries from around the world have joined together in pledging humanitarian aid to the affected regions. The United States can uniquely sympathize with the suffering and devastation felt in the earthquake-ravaged region. We too have felt the bitter sting of a natural disaster this year. Our feeling of loss and suffering gives us only a glimpse, however, of the utter devastation in the affected regions of India and Pakistan. Our shared losses bring the United States closer to our fellow humans on the other side of the globe, and should only serve to strengthen our national resolve to help those in need, rather than give us excuses for not giving the full support of the American people.

The House of Representatives, together with the American people we represent, mourn the horrific loss of life and livelihood experienced in Pakistan and India. We offer them our fullest support in the reconstruction effort of the region, but also understand that no amount of money, goods, and supplies will replace the loss of life in the region. For this, we can only offer our deepest condolences to the people affected by the earthquake, and ask them to find the strength to see their friends, families, and communities through these difficult times.

I support H. Res. 492 for the foregoing reasons, and I appeal to my colleagues to follow suit. The people of Pakistan and India will be in all of our thoughts and our prayers. I yield the remainder of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to my good friend and our distinguished colleague from New York (Mr. OWENS).

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

Mr. OWENS. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this very appropriate resolution. I think that beyond the spirit of this resolution there must be immediate response from the entire apparatus of the United States Government and from the United States people.

Madam Speaker, we are weary, maybe, of disasters. When you add up the tsunami and Katrina and Rita, and now in Pakistan 55,000 have already died, and in the mountains they are freezing cold, without any shelter, twice that number may die before it is over, and one might say, well, we just cannot keep going on. We are donor weary, we are disaster weary. That is ridiculous. When we add up all of these people, maybe we will get 100,000 victims, but the world consists of 6 billion people and more than 200 nations. We can take care of all of these disasters if we put our mind to it.

The United States must provide the leadership. \$50 million is not enough. Speed is very important here. The formalities of waiting will mean that thousands and thousands of people will die unnecessarily.

Madam Speaker, I hope that we will use as many of the helicopters in Afghanistan as we can, send them across the border to Pakistan. Eight helicopters is not enough. That is the only way these areas can be reached in the mountains. The roads are not passable. There are no places to land other kinds of aircraft. Only helicopters can land.

I have one of the largest Pakistani communities in America in my district, and I visited Pakistan 4 years ago. I went to a school, several schools in Kashmir. One of the schools, an all-girls school that was having a test, an eighth grade test, I could see that eighth grade girls were studying quadratic equations. That is one of the schools that was crushed in the earthquake. I hope that the students were not in there. But I saw school after school of eager young people, anxious to learn, in those mountain schools. I went on those roads.

Madam Speaker, if not in humanitarian terms alone, let us stop and think about the diplomacy issues here. Pakistan has long been our ally. Throughout the whole Cold War, they were our ally. We could not have driven the Russians from Afghanistan. We did not have a single soldier involved, but we were behind the sting of missiles and the whole strategy that drove the Russians out of Afghanistan and led to the collapse of the Soviet Union, but they were disappointed we did not honor them more for that. That is in the past. Right now, they are helping us in the war against terrorism. Their government is at risk because of their position with the United States on terrorism.

What we do now with this earthquake, how we respond to this earthquake can determine the nature of our relationship with Pakistan forever. We have an opportunity, it is tragic, but an opportunity to demonstrate how we operate, how we react to help our friends. If they are really a friend, we can do so much more, and I hope that this resolution is just the beginning. I hope all Members will become sensitive to the fact that we can do more. We must do more. God expects us to do more.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am delighted to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), a distinguished member of the Committee on International Relations and the chairman of the Democratic Caucus.

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the distinguished ranking Democrat from California (Mr. LANTOS) not only for his support but also for his leadership along with the

gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) in taking the lead on this important issue and bringing a resolution to the floor, one that I am strongly in support of.

As we learned in September here in the United States, natural disasters strike without warning, destroy our homes and communities, and challenge us to take care of the victims. We also learned that it is only with the help of the world that we can respond to such large-scale natural disasters. Over 90 countries responded after Hurricane Katrina, including both India and Pakistan. Now it is our turn to respond to them.

Current estimates are that over 40,000 people were killed in India and Pakistan, and the number is only expected to rise. We know that the rescue efforts have been difficult, because many of the villages that were hardest hit were in remote mountainous areas which are almost impossible to reach. In fact, the U.N. estimates that only 30 to 40 percent of an estimated 350 to 900 villages damaged by the earthquake have been inspected. Right now, many suffer without food, medicine, or shelter and face the oncoming winter cold with great fear.

I want to commend the international rescue effort that is underway and the U.S. contribution to that effort. As Andrew Macleod, the United Nations Operations Chief in Pakistan, said, the task of responding to this crisis is "bigger than all of us." We have all heard the saying, "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts." When nations contribute to the relief efforts in India and Pakistan, they are working together to create that greater response, that whole which is greater than the sum of its parts.

In response to the United Nations' appeal for \$272 million for emergency aid, over 30 countries have already offered assistance, and the United States has pledged \$50 million. I hope the world and the United States will continue to provide not only immediate, but long-term assistance to those areas that need it most, and I hope our combined efforts can prevent any public health disasters that could result from this tragedy.

Our diversity is our greatest strength and connects us to almost every country in the world. When tragedy strikes anywhere in the world, it is also directly felt in the homes of U.S. citizens who still have family and friends in their countries of origin. So I would like to acknowledge the actions of the U.S. Indian and Pakistani communities who are sending money and aid to help the survivors. I see that in my own home State of New Jersey, which has the third largest population of Indian Americans in the country and a very large Pakistani community as well.

In closing, I want to express my deepest sympathies and condolences to the families and friends of those who perished in last Saturday's earthquake in India and Pakistan. This has been a year of great trials and tribulations, of

enormous disasters followed by unprecedented responses. But as we learned after the tsunami at the start of the year and during the hurricanes last month, and as I am confident we will see again with this earthquake, together we can be greater than the sum of our parts and overcome these grave natural disasters.

I encourage all Members to vote for the resolution.

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Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, let me first of all commend and congratulate the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) not only for their leadership in bringing this resolution, this legislation to the floor, but also for the tremendous leadership that they have consistently provided in dealing with the international affairs and international relationships between our country and how we respond to the needs of many other nations throughout the world. I think that they have both demonstrated exactly what we need in this direction, and I commend them.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation because it is an indication of our leadership responsibility. The Bible says that to those to whom much is given, much is expected in return. We have indeed been a very fortunate Nation, and we are fortunate to be able to provide assistance to others throughout the world.

I have worked very closely with the Indian and Palestinian communities in Chicago and the Chicago area. As a matter of fact, I serve on the board of directors of East-West University, which is a Pakistani-owned-primarily university, and have many close friends there.

So I extend condolences to those who have been adversely affected and again commend our leadership.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support H. Res. 492 of which I am an original cosponsor and join with my colleagues in mourning the loss of life as a result of the earthquake that occurred on October 8, 2005 in Pakistan and India.

It is estimated that the earthquake claimed the lives of 20,000 to 40,000 people and left more than 2.5 million homeless. Millions of people throughout the region now lack clean water, food, proper sanitation, basic healthcare, adequate shelter, and other necessities.

To date, the U.S. and 30 other donor countries have pledged several hundred million dollars in emergency and long-term reconstruction assistance and many are involved in delivering humanitarian supplies.

As the ranking member of the International Relations Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, I express my condolences to the victims and urge continued assistance of those affected. In the case of India, I especially commend the efforts of the Indian American community for mobilizing its forces and working

with Members of Congress to make sure help is rendered.

I urge support of this legislation and I thank Chairman HYDE and Ranking Member LANTOS for their leadership in crafting this important piece of legislation and bringing it before the House for consideration this day.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 492.

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. Madam 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.

SANTA ANA RIVER WATER SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 177) to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the Prado Basin Natural Treatment System Project, to authorize the Secretary to carry out a program to assist agencies in projects to construct regional brine lines in California, to authorize the Secretary to participate in the Lower Chino Dairy Area desalination demonstration and reclamation project, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 177

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Santa Ana River Water Supply Enhancement Act of 2005".

SEC. 2. PRADO BASIN NATURAL TREATMENT SYSTEM PROJECT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (Public Law 102-575, title XVI; 43 U.S.C. 390h et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 1636. PRADO BASIN NATURAL TREATMENT SYSTEM PROJECT.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in cooperation with the Orange County Water District, shall participate in the planning, design, and construction of natural treatment systems and wetlands for the flows of the Santa Ana River, California, and its tributaries into the Prado Basin.

"(b) COST SHARING.—The Federal share of the cost of the project described in subsection (a) shall not exceed 25 percent of the total cost of the project.

"(c) LIMITATION.—Funds provided by the Secretary shall not be used for the operation and maintenance of the project described in subsection (a).

"(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$20,000,000.

"(e) SUNSET OF AUTHORITY.—This section shall have no effect after the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this section."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 2 of Public Law 102-575 is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1634 the following:

"1636. Prado Basin Natural Treatment System Project."

SEC. 3. REGIONAL BRINE LINES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (Public Law 102-575, title XVI; 43 U.S.C. 390h et seq.) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 1637. REGIONAL BRINE LINES.

"(a) SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.—The Secretary, under Federal reclamation laws and in cooperation with units of local government, may assist agencies in projects to construct regional brine lines to export the salinity imported from the Colorado River to the Pacific Ocean as identified in—

"(1) the Salinity Management Study prepared by the Bureau of Reclamation and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California; and

"(2) the Southern California Comprehensive Water Reclamation and Reuse Study prepared by the Bureau of Reclamation.

"(b) AGREEMENTS AND REGULATIONS.—The Secretary may enter into such agreements and promulgate such regulations as are necessary to carry out this section.

"(c) COST SHARING.—The Federal share of the cost of a project to construct regional brine lines described in subsection (a) shall not exceed—

"(1) 25 percent of the total cost of the project; or

"(2) \$40,000,000.

"(d) LIMITATION.—Funds provided by the Secretary shall not be used for operation or maintenance of any project described in subsection (a).

"(e) SUNSET OF AUTHORITY.—This section shall have no effect after the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this section."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 2 of Public Law 102-575 is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1635 the following:

"1637. Regional brine lines."

SEC. 4. LOWER CHINO DAIRY AREA DESALINATION DEMONSTRATION AND RECLAMATION PROJECT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (Public Law 102-575, title XVI; 43 U.S.C. 390h et seq.) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 1638. LOWER CHINO DAIRY AREA DESALINATION DEMONSTRATION AND RECLAMATION PROJECT.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in cooperation with the Chino Basin Watermaster, the Inland Empire Utilities Agency, and the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority and acting under the Federal reclamation laws, shall participate in the design, planning, and construction of the Lower Chino Dairy Area desalination demonstration and reclamation project.

"(b) COST SHARING.—The Federal share of the cost of the project described in subsection (a) shall not exceed—

"(1) 25 percent of the total cost of the project; or

"(2) \$50,000,000.

"(c) LIMITATION.—Funds provided by the Secretary shall not be used for operation or maintenance of the project described in subsection (a).

"(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this section.

"(e) SUNSET OF AUTHORITY.—This section shall have no effect after the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this section."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 2 of Public Law 102-575 is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1636 the following:

"1638. Lower Chino dairy area desalination demonstration and reclamation project."

SEC. 5. CEILING INCREASE ON FEDERAL SHARE OF WATER RECLAMATION PROJECT.

Section 1631(d) of the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act (43 U.S.C. 390h-13(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by striking "paragraph (2)" and inserting "paragraphs (2) and (3)"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(3) The Federal share of the costs of the project authorized by section 1624 shall not exceed the following:

"(A) \$22,000,000 for fiscal year 2007.

"(B) \$24,200,000 for fiscal year 2008.

"(C) \$26,620,000 for fiscal year 2009.

"(D) \$29,282,000 for fiscal year 2010.

"(E) \$32,210,200 for fiscal year 2011.

"(F) \$35,431,220 for fiscal year 2012.

"(G) \$38,974,342 for fiscal year 2013.

"(H) \$42,871,776 for fiscal year 2014.

"(I) \$47,158,953 for fiscal year 2015.

"(J) \$51,874,849 for fiscal year 2016."

SEC. 6. CENTER FOR TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT OF MEMBRANE TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior shall establish at the Orange County Water District located in Orange County, California, a center for the expressed purposes of providing—

(1) assistance in the development and advancement of membrane technologies; and

(2) educational support in the advancement of public understanding and acceptance of membrane produced water supplies.

(b) MANAGEMENT OF CENTER.—

(1) CONTRACTS.—In establishing the center, the Secretary shall enter into contracts with the Orange County Water District for purposes of managing such center.

(2) PLAN.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary, in consultation with the Orange County Water District, shall jointly prepare a plan, updated annually, identifying the goals and objectives of the center.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to carry out subsections (a) and (b), \$2,000,000, for each of fiscal years 2006 through 2011. Such sums shall remain available until expended.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this section and annually thereafter, the Secretary, in consultation with the Orange County Water District, shall provide a report to Congress on the status of the center and its accomplishments.

(e) SUNSET OF AUTHORITY.—This section shall have no effect after the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE) and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE).

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. H.R. 177, introduced by our colleague from California (Mr. GARY G. MILLER) provides Federal assistance for three water projects aimed at drought-proofing Southern California.

The bill will help develop wetlands to naturally clean surface water in the Santa Ana watershed. The bill also authorizes Federal assistance for the design and construction of a regional wastewater pipeline and a desalting plant.

The Federal cost share of these projects will not exceed 25 percent. This legislation promotes the development of new water technologies that create reliable water supplies and help reduce Southern California's dependence on imported water.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

(Mr. UDALL of New Mexico asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, we support passage of H.R. 177, the water recycling and desalting projects authorized in this bill. These projects will be eligible for limited financial assistance under the Bureau of Reclamation's title XVI water recycling program. These projects will reduce Southern California's dependency on imported water from the Sacramento River Delta, and will dramatically improve the reliability of water supplies in Southern California.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. GARY G. MILLER).

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 177, the Santa Ana River Water Supply Enhancement Act of 2005.

I want to thank Resources Chairman POMBO and Water Subcommittee Chairman RADANOVICH for recognizing the importance of this bill, basically providing innovative water solutions to the challenges posed by chronic water shortages in Southern California.

This bill will authorize water resource reliability projects in the Southern California region and dra-

matically improve the water supply reliability of the Santa Ana River watershed and the water basin in San Bernardino, Riverside, and Orange counties.

Water scarcity issues and wastewater treatment are particularly important to my region. If you want to sustain our Nation's economic growth and provide for rapidly increasing population, we must ensure there is an efficient and reliable access to water resources and pursue modernized sanitation infrastructure. It is critical that we find innovative solutions to the challenges posed by chronic water shortages in Southern California.

In Southern California, water supply deficiency discourages economic growth, endangers the environment, and compromises the health and safety of residents. Because of limited supplies and increased demands, Southern California communities continue to seek nontraditional methods to produce reliable, dependable resources, including water through recycling and desalination.

This bill would help reduce Southern California's dependence on imported water supply by constructing the recycling project, desalination demonstration reclamation project, the regional brine line project and will help in the study of technologies of water recycling.

The Federal Government's specific role in water recycling and desalination projects is in title XVI of the reclamation wastewater and groundwater studies in the Facilities Act, which direct the Department of the Interior to award Federal grants to communities developing nontraditional water supplies.

The significant local cost share and minimal Federal share makes these projects attractive to private financing partnerships and encourages regional solutions to complex water problems.

Upon full implementation, these projects will create an estimated 200,000 new acre feet of water for the region, upon full implementation, some 65.2 million gallons of water; and that is significant for our region.

It reduces the impact of water from the Colorado River in Northern California. As this bill moves forward, I ask my colleagues to support this. This is good for the environment, good for people, and good for the region.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the majority and minority staff and especially Steve Lanich.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 177, particularly with regard to Section 5, which will increase the ceiling of the federal share for the Orange County Groundwater Replenishment project. I introduced this section as a stand-alone bill in the 108th Congress, and it was passed by the House last year. I am pleased to see this legislation being passed again in its current form.

Section 5 will increase the authorized Federal share for the Orange County California

Groundwater Replenishment, OCGWR. This will help Orange County to complete this important and much-needed project, which will serve about 2.3 million residents of north and central Orange County, and it will create a new water supply of 72,000 acre-feet per year.

The OCGWR project is not just important to Orange County, California, but also to the entire western United States. By recycling our own water, we in Orange County would not have to rely so heavily on water from the Colorado River Aqueduct or the San Francisco Bay Delta.

Moreover, the OCGWR is a highly innovative recycling project—a pilot project for other future water recycling projects. Experts in public water management systems, from other states and from countries around the world, have come to Orange County to look at the tertiary cleaning system housed there. The project is of national and even international significance.

I am pleased that this project has received strong support from Members on both sides of the aisle. As I mentioned previously, the Committee on Resources very generously allowed this same bill to be considered under Suspension of the Rules last year. I would like to take this opportunity to again thank Chairman POMBO from California, Ranking Member RAHALL from West Virginia, as well as former Subcommittee Chairman CALVERT and Ranking Member NAPOLITANO of California for their overwhelming support of this bill.

I would also like to thank my colleagues from Orange County for their continued support. Mr. MILLER, the former Representative Mr. COX, Mr. ROHRBACHER and Mr. ROYCE are strong supporters of this project. Securing funding for the OCGWR has always been, and will continue to be, a bipartisan effort.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 177 which contains this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam 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 Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 177, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2005

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 55) to adjust the boundary of Rocky Mountain National Park in the State of Colorado.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 55

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Rocky Mountain National Park Boundary Adjustment Act of 2005”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **FEDERAL PARCEL.**—The term “Federal parcel” means the parcel of approximately 70 acres of Federal land near MacGregor Ranch, Larimer County, Colorado, as depicted on the map.

(2) **MAP.**—The term “map” means the map numbered 121/80,154, dated June 2004.

(3) **NON-FEDERAL PARCELS.**—The term “non-Federal parcels” means the 3 parcels of non-Federal land comprising approximately 5.9 acres that are located near MacGregor Ranch, Larimer County, Colorado, as depicted on the map.

(4) **PARK.**—The term “Park” means Rocky Mountain National Park in the State of Colorado.

SEC. 3. ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT.

(a) **EXCHANGE OF LAND.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall accept an offer to convey all right, title, and interest in and to the non-Federal parcels to the United States in exchange for the Federal parcel.

(2) **CONVEYANCE.**—Not later than 60 days after the date on which the Secretary receives an offer under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall convey the Federal parcel in exchange for the non-Federal parcels.

(3) **CONSERVATION EASEMENT.**—As a condition of the exchange of land under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall reserve a perpetual easement to the Federal parcel for the purposes of protecting, preserving, and enhancing the conservation values of the Federal parcel.

(b) **BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT; MANAGEMENT OF LAND.**—On acquisition of the non-Federal parcels under subsection (a)(2), the Secretary shall—

(1) adjust the boundary of the Park to reflect the acquisition of the non-Federal parcels; and

(2) manage the non-Federal parcels as part of the Park, in accordance with any laws (including regulations) applicable to the Park.

The **SPEAKER pro tempore**. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. **MUSGRAVE**) and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. **UDALL**) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. **MUSGRAVE**).

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. **MUSGRAVE**. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, S. 55 is identical to H.R. 774, which I introduced earlier this year. S. 55 would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to accept a conveyance of 5.9 acres and in return convey approximately 70 acres to the MacGregor Ranch Trust in order to consolidate trailheads and improve visitor access in Rocky Mountain National Park.

According to the National Park Service, Rocky Mountain National Park is the fifth most visited park in the system. With the popularity of Rocky Mountain National Park, the park officials must continuously find ways to improve visitor access and enjoyment.

For this reason, Senator **ALLARD** and I introduced the Rocky Mountain National Park Boundary Adjustment Act of 2005. This is a straightforward piece of legislation, and it is legislation that is needed to enhance enjoyment and ease of access to a popular trailhead.

S. 55 would convey three strategic pieces of land to the park system from the MacGregor ranch, a historic working cattle ranch that is located within the boundary of the park. The new parcels of land would be used to build a new parking lot and road to offer improved access for the public, while protecting the historic integrity of the ranch.

The MacGregor ranch would, in turn, receive much-needed grazing land. I believe this is a long-term solution for both the park and the MacGregor ranch.

Madam Speaker, S. 55 is supported by the majority and the minority, and I urge passage of the bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. **UDALL** of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

(Mr. **UDALL** of New Mexico asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. **UDALL** of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, as the majority has explained, S. 55 provides for a land exchange at Rocky Mountain National Park in order to facilitate the relocation of a park trailhead.

Madam Speaker, the proposed exchange will include private property within the park that will further the public use and enjoyment of a popular hiking trail. In addition, the legislation requires that a conservation easement be maintained on Federal land being conveyed in order to protect, preserve, and enhance the conservation values of that land.

Madam Speaker, the terms of the exchange are satisfactory to both parties, and we know of no problems with the legislation. That being the case, we have no objection to the adoption of S. 55 by the House today.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I would like to just thank the majority and minority staff and especially Rick Healy of the Resources Committee.

Mr. **UDALL** of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this bill, which is the companion to a House bill, H.R. 774, introduced by our colleague, Mrs. **MUSGRAVE**, that I have cosponsored with my Colorado colleagues Mr. **BEAUPREZ** and Mr. **TANCREDO**.

It directs the Secretary of Interior to enter into a land exchange to benefit Rocky Mountain National Park, and adjusts the boundary of the park in order to facilitate that exchange.

Rocky Mountain National Park is one of Colorado's outstanding natural treasures. Es-

tablished by Congress in 1915, it includes about 266,000 acres whose spectacular high alpine scenery and abundant wildlife attract over 3 million visitors annually.

Not all the land within the park's boundaries is owned by the United States. One private inholding is the historic McGregor Ranch. Part of that ranch is a private access road that hikers and rock climbers have been using to reach the Twin Owls Trailhead just inside the park boundary and from there to visit various parts of the park.

Over the last 20 years the popularity of the Twin Owls trailhead has grown steadily and in recent years overflow parking from the trailhead has had adverse effects on the ranch while the increase in traffic on the one-lane access road has diminished the historic character of the area.

For several years the National Park Service, NPS, and the McGregor Ranch have been working to find a solution to the traffic and parking problems. In 2003, after a process that involved public participation and an environmental assessment, the NPS decided to relocate the Twin Owls parking lot to the east end of the McGregor Ranch, a location well away from the historic homestead. Construction of a new access road and a larger parking lot for the trailhead is planned at the new location.

In order to enforce NPS regulations on the new access road and at the new trailhead, the land must be located within the park boundary. This legislation is necessary to authorize the land exchange and to adjust the park boundary to include the newly acquired lands.

Under the bill, the McGregor Trust—owner of the ranch—will convey 5.9 acres of land to the NPS to facilitate the construction and management of the new facilities. In exchange, the McGregor Trust will acquire up to 70 acres to be used for the purpose of growing hay and cattle.

The difference in the acreages reflects a difference in market value. The land now held by the ranch, which will be transferred to the United States, is suitable for residential use and therefore of higher per acre value than the grazing land that will be transferred to the ranch. To maintain the character of the land being transferred to the ranch, the National Park Service will retain a conservation easement that will allow grazing but prohibit construction of buildings.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is good for the McGregor Ranch, for Rocky Mountain National Park, and for the public. I urge its approval.

Mr. **UDALL** of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. **MUSGRAVE**. Madam 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 Colorado (Mrs. **MUSGRAVE**) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 55.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

OJITO WILDERNESS ACT

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 156) to designate the Ojito Wilderness Study Area as wilderness, to take certain land into trust for the Pueblo of Zia, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 156

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Ojito Wilderness Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **MAP.**—The term “map” means the map entitled “Ojito Wilderness Act” and dated October 1, 2004.

(2) **PUEBLO.**—The term “Pueblo” means the Pueblo of Zia.

(3) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(4) **STATE.**—The term “State” means the State of New Mexico.

SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF THE OJITO WILDERNESS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In furtherance of the purposes of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), there is hereby designated as wilderness, and, therefore, as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System, certain land in the Albuquerque District-Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico, which comprises approximately 11,183 acres, as generally depicted on the map, and which shall be known as the “Ojito Wilderness”.

(b) **MAP AND LEGAL DESCRIPTION.**—The map and a legal description of the wilderness area designated by this Act shall—

(1) be filed by the Secretary with the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act;

(2) have the same force and effect as if included in this Act, except that the Secretary may correct clerical and typographical errors in the legal description and map; and

(3) be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Bureau of Land Management.

(c) **MANAGEMENT OF WILDERNESS.**—Subject to valid existing rights, the wilderness area designated by this Act shall be managed by the Secretary in accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) and this Act, except that, with respect to the wilderness area designated by this Act, any reference in the Wilderness Act to the effective date of the Wilderness Act shall be deemed to be a reference to the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) **MANAGEMENT OF NEWLY ACQUIRED LAND.**—If acquired by the United States, the following land shall become part of the wilderness area designated by this Act and shall be managed in accordance with this Act and other applicable law:

(1) Section 12 of township 15 north, range 01 west, New Mexico Principal Meridian.

(2) Any land within the boundaries of the wilderness area designated by this Act.

(e) **MANAGEMENT OF LANDS TO BE ADDED.**—The lands generally depicted on the map as “Lands to be Added” shall become part of the wilderness area designated by this Act if the United States acquires, or alternative adequate access is available to, section 12 of township 15 north, range 01 west, New Mexico Principal Meridian.

(f) **RELEASE.**—The Congress hereby finds and directs that the lands generally depicted

on the map as “Lands to be Released” have been adequately studied for wilderness designation pursuant to section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1782) and no longer are subject to the requirement of section 603(c) of such Act (43 U.S.C. 1782(c)) pertaining to the management of wilderness study areas in a manner that does not impair the suitability of such areas for preservation as wilderness.

(g) **GRAZING.**—Grazing of livestock in the wilderness area designated by this Act, where established before the date of enactment of this Act, shall be administered in accordance with the provisions of section 4(d)(4) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1133(d)(4)) and the guidelines set forth in Appendix A of the Report of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs to accompany H.R. 2570 of the One Hundred First Congress (H. Rept. 101-405).

(h) **FISH AND WILDLIFE.**—As provided in section 4(d)(7) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1133(d)(7)), nothing in this section shall be construed as affecting the jurisdiction or responsibilities of the State with respect to fish and wildlife in the State.

(i) **WATER RIGHTS.**—

(1) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds that—

(A) the land designated as wilderness by this Act is arid in nature and is generally not suitable for use or development of new water resource facilities; and

(B) because of the unique nature and hydrology of the desert land designated as wilderness by this Act, it is possible to provide for proper management and protection of the wilderness and other values of lands in ways different from those used in other legislation.

(2) **STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this Act—

(A) shall constitute or be construed to constitute either an express or implied reservation by the United States of any water or water rights with respect to the land designated as wilderness by this Act;

(B) shall affect any water rights in the State existing on the date of enactment of this Act, including any water rights held by the United States;

(C) shall be construed as establishing a precedent with regard to any future wilderness designations;

(D) shall affect the interpretation of, or any designation made pursuant to, any other Act; or

(E) shall be construed as limiting, altering, modifying, or amending any of the interstate compacts or equitable apportionment decrees that apportion water among and between the State and other States.

(3) **STATE WATER LAW.**—The Secretary shall follow the procedural and substantive requirements of the law of the State in order to obtain and hold any water rights not in existence on the date of enactment of this Act with respect to the wilderness area designated by this Act.

(4) **NEW PROJECTS.**—

(A) **WATER RESOURCE FACILITY.**—As used in this subsection, the term “water resource facility”—

(i) means irrigation and pumping facilities, reservoirs, water conservation works, aqueducts, canals, ditches, pipelines, wells, hydropower projects, and transmission and other ancillary facilities, and other water diversion, storage, and carriage structures; and

(ii) does not include wildlife guzzlers.

(B) **RESTRICTION ON NEW WATER RESOURCE FACILITIES.**—Except as otherwise provided in this Act, on and after the date of enactment of this Act, neither the President nor any other officer, employee, or agent of the United States shall fund, assist, authorize, or issue a license or permit for the develop-

ment of any new water resource facility within the wilderness area designated by this Act.

(j) **WITHDRAWAL.**—Subject to valid existing rights, the wilderness area designated by this Act, the lands to be added under subsection (e), and lands identified on the map as the “BLM Lands Authorized to be Acquired by the Pueblo of Zia” are withdrawn from—

(1) all forms of entry, appropriation, and disposal under the public land laws;

(2) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and

(3) operation of the mineral leasing, mineral materials, and geothermal leasing laws.

(k) **EXCHANGE.**—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall seek to complete an exchange for State land within the boundaries of the wilderness area designated by this Act.

SEC. 4. LAND HELD IN TRUST.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to valid existing rights and the conditions under subsection (d), all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the lands (including improvements, appurtenances, and mineral rights to the lands) generally depicted on the map as “BLM Lands Authorized to be Acquired by the Pueblo of Zia” shall, on receipt of consideration under subsection (c) and adoption and approval of regulations under subsection (d), be declared by the Secretary to be held in trust by the United States for the Pueblo and shall be part of the Pueblo’s Reservation.

(b) **DESCRIPTION OF LANDS.**—The boundary of the lands authorized by this section for acquisition by the Pueblo where generally depicted on the map as immediately adjacent to CR906, CR923, and Cucho Arroyo Road shall be 100 feet from the center line of the road.

(c) **CONSIDERATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In consideration for the conveyance authorized under subsection (a), the Pueblo shall pay to the Secretary the amount that is equal to the fair market value of the land conveyed, as subject to the terms and conditions in subsection (d), as determined by an independent appraisal.

(2) **APPRAISAL.**—To determine the fair market value, the Secretary shall conduct an appraisal paid for by the Pueblo that is performed in accordance with the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions and the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice.

(3) **AVAILABILITY.**—Any amounts paid under paragraph (1) shall be available to the Secretary, without further appropriation and until expended, for the acquisition from willing sellers of land or interests in land in the State.

(d) **PUBLIC ACCESS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to paragraph (2), the declaration of trust and conveyance under subsection (a) shall be subject to the continuing right of the public to access the land for recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, paleontological, and conservation uses, subject to any regulations for land management and the preservation, protection, and enjoyment of the natural characteristics of the land that are adopted by the Pueblo and approved by the Secretary: *Provided*, That the Secretary shall ensure that the rights provided for in this paragraph are protected and that a process for resolving any complaints by an aggrieved party is established.

(2) **CONDITIONS.**—Except as provided in subsection (e)—

(A) the land conveyed under subsection (a) shall be maintained as open space and the natural characteristics of the land shall be preserved in perpetuity; and

(B) the use of motorized vehicles (except on existing roads or as is necessary for the maintenance and repair of facilities used in connection with grazing operations), mineral extraction, housing, gaming, and other commercial enterprises shall be prohibited within the boundaries of the land conveyed under subsection (a).

(e) RIGHTS OF WAY.—

(1) EXISTING RIGHTS OF WAY.—Nothing in this section shall affect—

(A) any validly issued right-of-way or the renewal thereof; or

(B) the access for customary construction, operation, maintenance, repair, and replacement activities in any right-of-way issued, granted, or permitted by the Secretary.

(2) NEW RIGHTS OF WAY AND RENEWALS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Pueblo shall grant any reasonable request for rights-of-way for utilities and pipelines over the land acquired under subsection (a) that is designated as the “Rights-of-Way corridor #1” in the Rio Puerco Resource Management Plan that is in effect on the date of the grant.

(B) ADMINISTRATION.—Any right-of-way issued or renewed after the date of enactment of this Act located on land authorized to be acquired under this section shall be administered in accordance with the rules, regulations, and fee payment schedules of the Department of the Interior, including the Rio Puerco Resources Management Plan that is in effect on the date of issuance or renewal of the right-of-way.

(f) JUDICIAL RELIEF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To enforce subsection (d), any person may bring a civil action in the United States District Court for the District of New Mexico seeking declaratory or injunctive relief.

(2) SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY.—The Pueblo shall not assert sovereign immunity as a defense or bar to a civil action brought under paragraph (1).

(3) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section—

(A) authorizes a civil action against the Pueblo for money damages, costs, or attorneys fees; or

(B) except as provided in paragraph (2), abrogates the sovereign immunity of the Pueblo.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE) and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE).

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

□ 1330

Madam Speaker, S. 156, introduced by Senator BINGAMAN of New Mexico, and a companion to H.R. 362 sponsored by the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) would designate approximately the 11,000-acre Ojito Wilderness Area in Sandoval County, New Mexico,

as wilderness. This Federal land was determined by the Bureau of Land Management in 1991 as suitable for wilderness designation. This bill would also take certain land into trust for the Pueblo of Zia to protect its religious and cultural sites in Zia.

Madam Speaker, S. 156 is supported by the majority and the minority of the administration. I urge adoption of the bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. UDALL of New Mexico asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, we support passage of S. 156, the Ojito Wilderness Act. This bill designates the Ojito Wilderness Study Area, an area totaling approximately 11,000 acres, as a permanent wilderness to be protected pursuant to the 1964 Wilderness Act. The bill also provides for the purchase and transfer of adjacent Bureau of Land Management lands to the Pueblo of Zia. These lands, totaling approximately 13,000 acres, are contiguous to the current boundaries of the Pueblo. This area will be taken into trust and held for the benefit of the Pueblo by the Secretary of the Interior, and will be managed in perpetuity by the Pueblo as wilderness.

As the lead co-sponsor in the House, I would like to take this opportunity to greatly acknowledge my colleague from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) and fellow co-sponsor. I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL), the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Resources, for bringing the Ojito Wilderness Act to the floor. This bipartisan, bicameral legislation is the result of good-faith collaboration and cooperation among many people in New Mexico and among many of us here in the United States Congress. This is truly a compromise bill. I encourage my colleagues to support it.

I am proud to say that New Mexicans recognize how vitally important it is to protect natural areas, to encourage the sustainable use of our State's natural resources, and to honor the role land plays in the lives of Native Americans. As this Ojito legislation demonstrates, with creativity and cooperation, we can find solutions compatible with all of these necessities.

This proposal has been under consideration for many years. In 1991 Manuel Lujan, the Secretary of the Interior in the former President Bush's Cabinet, recommended the Ojito area to Congress for wilderness designation. The BLM has evaluated this area and found it qualifies for full wilderness status and protection.

The legislation has the explicit support of the Governor of New Mexico, the counties of Sandoval and Bernalillo, individual members of the

State government, including our State Land Commissioner Patrick Lyons, the Pueblo of Zia and its members, the adjacent private land owners and ranchers who graze their cattle on the land, numerous environmental groups, and business owners and private citizens living and working nearby.

The Ojito Wilderness Study Area is characterized by pristine and dramatic landforms and rock structures and by several rare plant populations that are indigenous to the area. Ojito is also recognized for its high density of cultural and archeological sites, including sites that have religious significance to Pueblo Indians.

This legislation is of particular importance for the Pueblo of Zia. The Pueblo's reservation lands currently lie in two noncontiguous sections. Zia has made a concerted effort over years to adjoin its reservation lands. This legislation will help make that long-standing goal a reality. The Pueblo has consistently and openly worked in cooperation with other interested parties to reach a mutually satisfactory arrangement for the protection of these important lands as undeveloped open space with continued public access. And, in an additional gesture of good faith, the Pueblo has waived its sovereign immunity from suit for matters arising under the provisions of this bill.

Considering the above, I think this bill does the right thing by ensuring the preservation, protection, and public accessibility of this special area of New Mexico for future generations of Americans. Allow me to express a special thanks to New Mexico Senators BINGAMAN and DOMENICI, the sponsors of this bill in the Senate. Let me further express my gratitude to the Governor of Zia, Zia Pueblo, Teofilo Pino, and to the Pueblo's former Governor and current Tribal Administrator Peter Pino, and also to Martin Heinrich, Albuquerque City Councilor and long-time volunteer for the Coalition for New Mexico's Wilderness for their strong and fair efforts in reaching a meaningful and positive compromise.

I would also like to fondly acknowledge my Senior Legislative Assistant Johanna Polsenberg and my field representative Sarah Cobb as well as Rick Healy and Rob Howarth on the Committee on Resources for their tireless and dedicated work on this important and far-sighted legislation.

Finally, I would like to thank my father, Stewart Udall, for his work over 40 years ago on the enactment of the Wilderness Act during his tenure as Secretary of the Interior. It is with the deepest respect and awe in the warp and weft of history that I might find myself on the floor of the House today honoring my father's legacy and his tremendous dedication to ensuring the preservation of wilderness, as stated in the act itself, lands “in contrast to those areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, where the Earth and its communities of life are untrammelled by man.”

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON).

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, in the 108th Congress the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) introduced and we passed through this House legislation almost identical to this and we reintroduced it in this Congress. It has had a companion bill in the Senate which has now passed the Senate. And after conferring with the committee and with the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) we decided to take up the Senate version of the bill in this House rather than passing the House bill because that means that the next stop for this legislation is the President's desk.

The bill that the gentleman and I pass today will not have the gentleman's name on it, but it certainly is a result of his leadership that was brought here to the floor of the House, and I want to commend the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL).

I also wanted to commend Johanna Polsenberg for her work on this piece of legislation. It has been a real joy to work with her. And my staff member, Colin Hunter, I think also deserves some credit. Without the two of them, all of the little things that had to get done would have been left to others and might not have gotten done. So they have had a tremendous impact. I also thank the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) very much for his leadership.

This legislation is locally developed and locally supported. It is the result of a decade of work by the BLM and the Zia Pueblo and the State office working out all the little details of rights-of-way and lands transfers and where the fences go and who has what rights where. It is a very balanced bill that puts into law the Ojito Wilderness, an 11,000-acre piece of land, that will be protected 40 miles northwest of Albuquerque, New Mexico.

As the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) mentioned, Manuel Lujan was the one who was the Secretary of the Interior when he recommended to the Congress that this piece of land should be set aside as an appropriate area for wilderness. The other thing that it does that I think is very important and has become important to all of us is that it allows for the purchase and transfer of BLM lands to Zia Pueblo. These lands will continue to have public access under the statute and remain undeveloped, but it will allow the Pueblo of Zia to unify its Pueblo and to connect the two noncontiguous areas of lands that are now part of its Pueblo.

I think one of the things that is wonderful about these jobs that we have the honor to hold is the opportunity to work with interesting people who are committed to different projects around our States and around the Nation.

There are a lot of people who deserve thanks for making this legislation a reality today, certainly the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) and the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH) for their support and their staff support in getting this worked out and worked through, and of course our staffs and the gentleman from New Mexico's leadership on this.

I think I would also like to recognize some New Mexicans. As I mentioned, this was locally developed and locally supported. Successive Governors and Tribal Council members of Zia Pueblo took a leadership role early on, including the current Governor, Teofilo Pino, and his predecessor and long-time Tribal Administrator Governor Peter Pino and their Counsel, David Mielke.

I think we would probably agree that one of the most colorful, interesting characters in New Mexico is Peter Pino. I could sit and listen to stories from him for a long time. He has taught us so very much.

Additionally, I would like to thank Oscar Simpson of the New Mexico Wildlife Federations, Stephen Capra of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, Melyssa Watson of the Wilderness Support Center, and former and current Chair of the Coalition for New Mexico Wilderness, Jim Scarantino and Arturo Sandoval, and former Sandoval County Commissioner Daymon Ely. Linda Rundell and Lisa Morrison from the BLM and Patrick Lyons, the State Land Commissioner, were also very, very helpful in this legislation.

Finally, I would also like to thank Albuquerque City Councilor Martin Heinrich, who from the very beginning has been instrumental in ironing out the little problems that come up, working through issues associated with this legislation, and making things happen.

I think, as you can see, when things are successful there are a lot of people involved behind the scenes making them happen, and without them this legislation would not be here on the floor of the House today. I am very pleased that the Ojito Wilderness is going to get the permanent wilderness designation that it deserves and the Pueblo of Zia is going to achieve its long-sought transfer of important and ancestral lands that will unite two noncontiguous areas of its reservation.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 156.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXTENDING THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2007, AUTHORITY OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY TO ACCEPT AND EXPEND FUNDS CONTRIBUTED BY NON-FEDERAL PUBLIC ENTITIES TO EXPEDITE THE PROCESSING OF PERMITS

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 3765) to extend through December 31, 2007, the authority of the Secretary of the Army to accept and expend funds contributed by non-Federal public entities to expedite the processing of permits.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendments: Page 2, line 10, strike "December 31, 2007" and insert: "March 31, 2006".

Amend the title so as to read: "An Act to extend through March 31, 2006, the authority of the Secretary of the Army to accept and expend funds contributed by non-Federal public entities and to expedite the processing of permits."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN).

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, on September 20 of 2005, the House passed H.R. 3765, which provided a 2-year extension of the authority of the Corps of Engineers to accept funds to help process permit applications. This program, which has broad bipartisan support, expired on September 30 of this year. Unless it is extended, some regulatory personnel will have to be reassigned or let go, reducing the Corps' ability to process permits in a timely manner.

On October 7 of 2005 the Senate passed H.R. 3765 with an amendment to extend this program for only 6 months, until March 31, 2006. To prevent a reduction in the Corps' ability to process permits, Congressional action is urgently needed. For that reason, I ask Members to agree to the Senate amendment.

This issue of how long the authority to accept funds to process permits should be extended will be revisited in the House-Senate Conference on the Water Resources Development Act, after the other body passes their WRDA bill.

This is an important thing for the Army Corps of Engineers. This is very helpful to them and it is important

particularly to the west coast. It is limited to public entities such as ports and highway departments and other similar public entities. It is available throughout the Nation but it is used primarily on the west coast because it is important to them.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I support passage of H.R. 3765, as amended by the Senate. This bill extends through March 31 of 2006 the authority of the Secretary of the Army to accept and extends funding contributed by the non-Federal public entities to expedite the processing of permits under the Clean Water Act and Rivers and Harbor Acts of 1899. This program is popular and well-received, particularly in the northwestern part of our country.

I congratulate my colleague from Washington (Mr. BAIRD) for his attention to this issue and for securing consideration of this bill. Thanks to the tireless efforts of the gentleman from Washington State, this short-term extension should quickly move to the President's desk for signature.

□ 1345

I can think of no other Member of Congress who has served his local and regional issues with more enthusiasm and effectiveness.

The language of H.R. 3765 is modeled after language in H.R. 2864, the Water Resources Development Act of 2005, which was passed by this House on July 14 by an overwhelming vote of 406 to 14.

As a freestanding bill, H.R. 3765 was approved by the House under suspension on September 20 in a voice vote. Although the length of authorization contained in this bill was shortened slightly by the Senate, even as modified this bill would continue to receive strong support.

Madam Speaker, despite concerns expressed by the other body, the Senate, on this legislation today, today's consideration of one of the provisions of the larger Water Resources Development Act should not be viewed as an indication that the larger bill will not be enacted later this year.

I remain optimistic that the other House of Congress will soon consider this vital legislation, particularly in light of the vital role of flood damage reduction, navigation and other storm damage reduction projects in protecting lives and properties and enhancing economic well-being. The tragic events associated with Hurricane Katrina indicate how important our water infrastructure truly is.

I would like to thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN), our chairman of the subcommittee, for helping us on this issue. I urge support for this bill.

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, I would also like to commend the gen-

tleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD), a member of our subcommittee, a very active member, for his work on this legislation; and as I mentioned earlier, it has broad bipartisan support, so I urge its passage.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the bill, H.R. 3765.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WILLIAM F. CLINGER, JR. POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3549) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 210 West 3rd Avenue in Warren, Pennsylvania, as the "William F. Clinger, Jr. Post Office Building".

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3549

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

SECTION 1. WILLIAM F. CLINGER, JR. POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 210 West 3rd Avenue in Warren, Pennsylvania, shall be known and designated as the "William F. Clinger, Jr. Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "William F. Clinger, Jr. Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill now under consideration, H.R. 3549.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3549, authored by the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH). This bill would designate the post office in Warren, Pennsylvania, as the William F. Clinger, Jr.

Post Office Building. All Members of the Pennsylvania delegation have co-sponsored this legislation.

Former Representative Bill Clinger was born and raised in Warren, Pennsylvania, where he attended local public schools and graduated from Hill High School in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. Bill Clinger was admitted to the Pennsylvania bar in 1965, and then enjoyed a career in private law practice. On January 3, 1979, Bill Clinger was elected to the 96th Congress and was reelected to eight succeeding Congresses.

During this time, Mr. Clinger showed his perseverance in serving the citizens of Warren, Pennsylvania, by working towards accountability in government during his time as a member of the Committee on Government Reform. As a distinguished long-time member of the committee, Clinger served as the ranking member during the 103rd Congress as well as the chairman during the 104th Congress. One of his many accomplishments in Congress was the passage of the Clinger-Cohen Act, which transformed the way the Federal Government plans for, acquires, and manages information technology.

When Chairman Clinger left Congress, he continued contributing to his community. He is a senior fellow at the Center For the Study of American Government at Johns Hopkins University where he lectures frequently and works with students on their master's theses. Further, he spends his summers in Chautauqua, New York, where he is the chair of the Board of Trustees of the Chautauqua Institution. William Clinger was an example and an inspiration to all as he demonstrated his strong and respected leadership abilities during his time in the U.S. House of Representatives.

I join the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH) in recognizing the accomplishments of former Representative Clinger and I urge all Members to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleague in consideration of H.R. 3549, legislation naming a postal facility in Warren, Pennsylvania, after William F. Clinger, Jr. This measure, which was introduced by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH) on July 28, 2005, and unanimously reported by our committee on September 29, 2005, enjoys the support and cosponsorship of the entire Pennsylvania delegation.

A native of Warren County, Pennsylvania, Mr. Clinger graduated from Johns Hopkins University, served in the United States Navy, and obtained a law degree from the University of Virginia before practicing law. He was elected to represent Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District in 1979,

erving until 1997. While in Congress, Representative Clinger served as chairman of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, vice chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and ranking member on the Subcommittee on Aviation.

Since retiring from Congress, former Representative Clinger has served on a number of boards and been involved with Johns Hopkins University as a senior fellow with the Political Science Department and Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. I commend my colleagues for naming a post office after former Representative William Clinger, and I urge swift passage of this bill.

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

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to my distinguished colleague from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH).

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and giving me the opportunity to rise here today to advocate a piece of legislation that is symbolic, but it is important symbolism; and it is particularly important to the residents of a community of mine, Warren County, that I have acquired since the last reapportionment. I share that area with my colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON) who is with us here today and who has cosponsored this bill.

We rise to honor the distinguished former chairman of the Committee on Government Reform, Congressman Bill Clinger. You have heard from some of our other colleagues how Bill Clinger has been a major leader in the House of Representatives, how he served nine terms, how he came to Congress with a background in economic development and became a very powerful advocate of rural concerns, how he was born and raised in Warren, Pennsylvania, and it is our intention to name the post office in Warren after him.

For a generation of political leaders in northwestern Pennsylvania, Bill Clinger has been an inspiration to us, someone who has brought a profound sense of civic responsibility to everything he has done, prior to coming to Congress, in Congress, and since he left Congress, particularly with his service to the Chautauqua Institution.

His chairmanship of the House Committee on Government Reform allowed him to help establish concrete reforms to ensure government accountability, gaining the respect of Members from both sides of the aisle. Chairman Clinger helped usher through historic legislation, such as a measured curb on Federally funded mandates, line item veto authority, and a bill to reduce the paperwork burden that the Federal Government imposes on governments, individuals, and private businesses.

For those of us who had the privilege of working with Bill Clinger, he has al-

ways been an inspiration to us, and we thought it was appropriate to take perhaps the signal Federal building in the community in which he grew up and name it after him, so that everyone in Warren could remember how Warren and northwestern Pennsylvania has produced leadership of the first order in Congress.

It is my privilege to submit the bulk of my remarks for the RECORD, but I am proud to be here with my colleague from Pennsylvania, with the gentleman from Nevada, and the gentleman from the other side of the aisle to provide a manifestation of how much Bill Clinger has meant to this institution, to the community that he grew up in, and how it is worth our while to take a few minutes out in the House business to acknowledge those who have really made a difference.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished former Chairman of the Government Reform Committee, Congressman Bill Clinger.

Chairman Clinger was a major leader in the House of Representatives, having acquired the reputation as a strong voice for government reform during his nine illustrious terms. Clinger represented what is now Pennsylvania's 5th Congressional District from 1979 to 1997—the seat now held by my distinguished colleague JOHN PETERSON.

Chairman Clinger was born and raised in Warren, Pennsylvania, where he attended the local public schools and graduated from the Hill High School in Pottstown.

After being admitted to the Pennsylvania bar in 1965, Clinger ran a private law practice in Warren before being elected to the 96th Congress in 1978.

An inspiration to many in the House, he exemplified excellence in civic duty, championing rural interests and rural economic development.

After ascending to Chairman of the House Government Reform Committee, he helped establish concrete reforms to ensure government accountability, gaining the respect of members from both sides of the aisle. Chairman Clinger helped usher through historic legislation such as a measure to curb unfunded Federal mandates, line-item veto authority and a bill to reduce the paperwork burden that the Federal Government imposes on governments, individuals, and private businesses.

I had the honor of serving with Chairman Clinger during my freshman term in Congress. He was an important figure in my early political career, providing an example of dignified leadership throughout a demanding and tumultuous period of Congressional oversight.

Since his retirement from the House, Chairman Clinger has continued his dedication to public service. He has shared his expertise in oversight through his teachings at Johns Hopkins University and while serving on boards for organizations such as Council on Excellence in Government, Citizens Against Government Waste and many others.

One of Chairman Clinger's most notable accomplishments in recent years has been his service as Chairman of the Board of Trustees to the renowned Chautauqua Institution, located in southwestern New York State. The historic Chautauqua Institution is a tremendously valuable organization, providing a na-

tional forum for open discussions that probe contemporary political, religious and community issues.

I believe this undertaking is reflective of my good friend's character—displaying his commitment to the competent and thoughtful pursuit of understanding. He has shown a continued dedication to excellence and integrity at all levels of government and tirelessly fights on behalf of representative accountability. His decorated service to the community is held in high regard by many.

I believe that naming the post office at 210 West 3rd Avenue in Warren, Pennsylvania is a modest tribute to a true public servant. I urge the support of my colleagues and the swift passage of this legislation.

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to my distinguished colleague from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Mr. PETERSON).

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I rise today with affection for my knowledge and memory of Bill Clinger and working with Bill Clinger. I want to thank my colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH) for his leadership in putting this together and which I am just so glad to cosponsor.

I have known Bill Clinger for a long time. I was thinking back on Memory Lane this morning of when I first met him. I got to know him in Warren. And I remember when I first ran for the State House in 1977, I went to his office and sat down, and he was one of the first to reach in his drawer and pull out a check and help me with my campaign and wished me well and said he hoped in another year or two I would help him because he was planning to run for Congress, and so we worked together the whole time.

I also remember Bill Clinger and his lovely wife, Judy. Judy was a great attribute to him. She was someone who everybody loved and just served him so wonderfully as his closest friend and helper. Also, his great love of his family, Vijou, Willie, Jimmy, and Julia. His first love was his family. Everybody knew that from his weekends and time with them.

Also his love of the Chautauqua Institution. Fortunately for Bill, I believe he is chairman of the board there, at least he was last year, that is running the institution. That is a bright spot in southern New York State that serves Pennsylvania and New York as well, bringing culture and entertainment and all kinds of wonderful things to a rural area that does not always have those luxuries.

I remember back vividly that Bill put together a wonderful staff. It was just a great group of young men. Ric Peltz was my best friend. Out in the field we worked together nearly every day. He was the field guy. Most of his Washington staff went on and were leaders in the Ridge administration in Pennsylvania, and many are running associations here in Washington now. They were just a bright young group that

has really made a difference. And you have to give Bill the credit for picking this kind of talent and giving them an opportunity.

I also remember he was chief counsel for EDA under the Ford administration. That may be where I first met him and where he really developed a knowledge of our economic development system. One of his legacies was the Clinger-Cohen bill, which put the Government Responsibility Act in place, which held government agencies responsible.

During his time and tenure, one of the problems that faced Pennsylvania, and I as a Senator and he as a Congressman, was the abandonment of railroads. He and his staff just led that fight. Pennsylvania now, in my district, has the most regional railroads, and it is thanks to Bill Clinger. He saved many of those lines from being totally abandoned and helped form the regional railroads. One that I remember was the Allegheny Railroad that connected Erie and Emporia, Pennsylvania, which the wood industry used exclusively. The Oil Creek, Titusville Railroad, which is a scenic railroad through a beautiful park, and the oil heritage region that is now there was one of the first real successful scenic lines in Pennsylvania. The Nittany and Bald Eagle lines, which became part of the Seda Cog Rail System, which is now serving that region well. The Tioga County, Wellsville into New York line. These were all lines that Bill Clinger and his staff and his efforts preserved and are now serving this area well.

The 219 passing lane was an issue where he got funding numerous times to take a crooked road and get passing lanes on the hill. They all wanted a four-lane highway, which probably will never happen; but he did a lot of improvements to that.

Another area where he really excelled was bringing the use of our waste coal piles in Pennsylvania into making energy. He was the one that helped put together the scrubgrass plant in Venango County, and the Ringgold plant over in Clarion County, and was very helpful in bringing the Allegheny Particle Board plant that makes particle board using wastewood into our region.

□ 1400

He brought the FCI McKean Prison, which now employs hundreds of people in my district; and those are legacy issues that he and his staff were directly involved in and responsible for.

He also was one of those who created the revolving loan programs that our EDA and Appalachia Regional Commissions use now to help small communities with small grants that they continue to use over and over by reloading them to small businesses. Some of those revolving loan programs are quite large now and are very much a part of our economic development system. In fact, his legacy recently in this

administration, Ric Peltz, who was the one I worked with, is now the co-director of the Appalachian Regional Commission, and has just continued the legacy of Bill Clinger back here in Washington. In fact, I want to say this before I conclude. I had lunch with Bill this summer over at the La Colline, one of his favorite eating places, and he is just doing well. He is mentally sharp and in good spirits and happy with what his life is allowing him to teach and be a part of the leadership of the Chautauqua Institution, and he and Judy are doing just fine, and I want to publicly thank them for their friendship to me and the legacy they left in Pennsylvania and in Washington.

One of the toughest issues he worked on was a compromise on wilderness. We had a Congressman in Pennsylvania who wanted to make the Allegheny National Forest all wilderness, and he cut out a compromise and got that passed. Also the wild and scenic rivers, those were a little more controversial issues, he took some heat for those, but I think they were good decisions. He was wise in how he handled them in taking on those tough issues, and I think when he was here he chaired the Wednesday Group, which now may be the Tuesday Group or I think may even have another name.

But Bill was a leader. If you knew Bill, you liked him. If you knew Bill, you knew he was smart and you respected him. Today, I think it is a delight to honor him by naming the Warren post office the William Clinger Post Office. I had a Senate office for years right around the corner, and great traffic in that part of town. People will see it and remember, as they should, that Bill Clinger was their Congressman and he served them admirably.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3549, a bill to designate a post office in Warren, Pennsylvania, as the "William F. Clinger, Jr. Post Office Building."

Mr. Clinger was the distinguished chairman of the Government Reform and Oversight Committee when I first came to Congress in 1995. I became one of his subcommittee chairmen, and I will be forever grateful to him for showing me the ropes on this Committee.

Many of my colleagues are probably familiar with the Clinger-Cohen Act, which transformed the way the Federal Government plans for, acquires and manages information technology investments.

I was proud to have worked with Chairman Clinger on this important law that will be celebrating its 10th anniversary early next year.

Anyone who knows Bill Clinger would not be surprised with his response upon learning that a post office would be named in his honor. He told us he considered it a major success when a dog run in Punxsatawny and a sewage treatment plant in Dubois, Pennsylvania were named for him—having a post office named after him was beyond his wildest dreams.

Mr. Clinger's graciousness and respect for others set an example for all Members who served with him.

I am proud to be here today to express my strong support for H.R. 3549, a lasting tribute to the life and work of William F. Clinger.

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I urge all Members to support the passage of H.R. 3549, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. Biggert). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3549.

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. PORTER. Madam 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.

U.S. CLEVELAND POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3830) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 130 East Marion Avenue in Punta Gorda, Florida, as the "U.S. Cleveland Post Office Building".

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3830

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

SECTION 1. U.S. CLEVELAND POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 130 East Marion Avenue in Punta Gorda, Florida, shall be known and designated as the "U.S. Cleveland Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "U.S. Cleveland Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3830.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 3830, introduced by the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY). This bill will designate this post office in Punta

Gorda, Florida as the U.S. Cleveland Post Office Building. All members of the Florida delegation have co-sponsored this legislation.

Ulysses Samuel Cleveland was born September 7, 1919, in Boca Grande, Florida, to Cleve and Jean Cleveland. At the age of 2, Cleveland moved to Charlotte County's Punta Gorda with his family, the town that he would later dedicate a lifetime to preserving its history.

In 1941, U.S. Cleveland was drafted and was later commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army. He oversaw 20 radio crews with the 3103 Signal Service Battalion. He was a part of the secret disinformation campaign that misled the Nazis and helped contribute to the success of the Normandy invasion. Mr. Cleveland and his unit were credited by Supreme Commander General Dwight Eisenhower with saving the D-Day landing.

After World War II, Cleveland returned to Punta Gorda and became the assistant postmaster. He worked for the U.S. Post Office for nearly four decades. During that time he devoted much of his life to archiving old photos, newspaper clippings, and all kinds of Charlotte County records. With all of his historical records he co-authored two volumes of local history entitled "Our Fascinating Past."

Besides being a well-known historian, U.S. Cleveland also dedicated much of his time to various charities within the community. He produced monthly newsletters for the American Legion Post in Punta Gorda and provided and managed sound systems for various community events, including the Florida International Air Show. He was also the treasurer for the Punta Gorda Historical Society, historian for the Kiwanis Club, and a charter member of the Punta Gorda and Charlotte County Historic Preservation boards.

Although U.S. Cleveland passed away this year at the age of 85, his legacy of public service lives on in Charlotte County, Florida. His vast historic collection, now in storage, will be added to by his fellow historians in time to come. I urge all members to join me in honoring this fine man and his quest to preserve the history of his hometown of Punta Gorda, Florida.

Madam Speaker, I support H.R. 3830, and I salute the sponsor, the gentleman from Florida, for his work on this measure.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

As a member of the House Government Reform Committee, I am pleased to join with my colleague, the chairman of our subcommittee, the gentleman from Nevada, in consideration of H.R. 3830, legislation naming the postal facility in Punta Gorda, Florida, after the late Ulysses Samuel Cleveland. This measure, which was introduced by Representative MARK FOLEY

on September 20, 2005, and unanimously reported by our committee on September 29, 2005, enjoys the support and co-sponsorship of the entire Florida delegation.

Mr. Cleveland, or U.S. as he liked to be called, was a native of Punta Gorda, Florida. After serving in the Army, he returned to his hometown where he became the assistant postmaster for Charlotte County. Mr. Cleveland later became the historian for the Punta Gorda Kiwanis Club and charter member for the Punta Gorda and Charlotte County Historic Preservation boards, authoring books on local history.

Unfortunately, his home was destroyed during Hurricane Charley in August of 2004. He lost his collection of photographs and historical artifacts. U.S. Cleveland passed away on April 22, 2005, a great citizen, a great historian, a person who is deserving of this honor. I commend my colleague for naming the post after the late Ulysses Samuel Cleveland, and I urge swift passage of this bill.

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

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY).

Mr. FOLEY. Madam Speaker, let me thank the gentleman from Nevada and thank the gentleman from Illinois for their kind introduction of our good friend and dear former citizen and resident, Ulysses Samuel Cleveland. Many of those listening to the testimony may recognize the name and they are struggling to remember where they heard the term Punta Gorda, Florida; but I can tell you August 13 was a startling day in Punta Gorda when Hurricane Charley approached landfall and did significant damage to our constituents. U.S. Cleveland was one of those who suffered the loss of his home. He was in the process of rehabilitating it and retrofitting it, because one of the unique features of U.S. was the fact that he made a lifetime commitment out of caring for his son Dallas who has Down's Syndrome from birth.

So not only was he a native of the region, not only was he a veteran of our Nation, not only was he the assistant postmaster of our community, not only had he spent 83 long years as an active member of our community. He also showed the full measure of devotion to the children, his own particularly, who had been brought into this world with a challenge, a challenge so many other families face.

This past weekend I happened to be in Palm Beach County where they were having the Down's Syndrome Walk, families celebrating the lives of their children who have been challenged, but with the support and strength of their family they have been able to overcome that adversity. U.S. was a father and a principled citizen who gave his devotion to both family, community, and always above self, which was the hallmark of American patriots.

It was noted that Supreme Commander General Dwight Eisenhower credited his unit with saving the D-Day landing at Normandy. We mentioned him coming back home. One of the great things about Florida, and of course it is a State now with 16 million people, but the year of his birth there were very few. Florida was an emerging little area in the south of the United States, and our population was not what it is near today, and certainly he was part of that beautiful community, Punta Gorda, in Charlotte County.

And so today we do rise as we do so often to commend the life's work of citizens who are deserving of this high honor. We do not name post offices after everyone, and it is not always the fact that they may have been postal employees. But this significance to Mr. Cleveland was the fact of his devotion to family, devotion to community, devotion to Nation, and of course being a historian for Punta Gorda.

Those in southwest Florida know this beautiful community of ours, and they know full well of his devotion to that community. By cataloging the photos of early days, he was able to, as was mentioned, co-author two volumes of a local history book called "Our Fascinating Past." These are the hallmarks of a great and giant man.

Unfortunately, he passed away this spring due to complications from pneumonia. He was married to Yvonne Cleveland who preceded him in death, and he is survived by three sons, Max, Keith, and Dallas.

I thank the members of the committee, my colleagues, for allowing us to present this bill to the floor and for their expedition in bringing it to the floor. I would like to thank my district director, Dick Keene, who lives in the Punta Gorda area for his work on this bill and also Jeffrey Ostermayer for helping us bring about this tribute to a fine American. I would like to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS), the chairman of the committee, for bringing this bill to the House floor so quickly.

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I urge all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3830.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WILLIE VAUGHN POST OFFICE

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3853) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 208 South Main Street in Parkdale, Arkansas, as the Willie Vaughn Post Office.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3853

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

SECTION 1. WILLIE VAUGHN POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 208 South Main Street in Parkdale, Arkansas, shall be known and designated as the “Willie Vaughn Post Office”.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the “Willie Vaughn Post Office”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3853.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 3853, introduced by the distinguished gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS). This bill will designate this post office in Parkdale, Arkansas, as the Willie Vaughn Post Office Building.

Willie Vaughn was born in 1904 in Thomasville, Alabama. He later moved to the State of Arkansas where he spent the better part of his life. Although Mr. Vaughn has little formal education, his dedication and perseverance in bettering his community earned him the undying respect and admiration of his peers. As a farmer who raised hogs, chickens, and cattle, he provided for his family, as well as anyone in need. He was always willing to lend a hand whether it be listening to and counseling members of the community or helping grieving friends plan funerals.

Mr. Vaughn was active in his local church and held various positions within the congregation. As a delegate to the 1945 CME convention, he led the church from the Colored Methodist Church to the Christian Methodist Church. At 101 years of age, Willie Vaughn has experienced life-changing periods such as segregation, reconstruction, the stock market crash, the Great Depression, the civil rights movement, and much more. He is truly a man that has contributed to his community by his commitment to humanity and family and has become an icon in Parkdale, Arkansas. I urge all Members to come together and honor the life of this dedicated humanitarian.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS).

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Chicago for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3853, legislation which would designate the postal facility in Parkdale, Arkansas, which is located in Arkansas' Fourth Congressional District, the “Willie Vaughn Post Office.” This bill has the unanimous support of the Parkdale City Council and its mayor, and I would like to personally thank them for their help with this: Mayor Glenda Wells, and to the City Council, Louis Mitchell, Mark Hawkins, Paula Files, and Evora Parker.

Willie Vaughn, known to friends and family as “Uncle Dude,” spent most of his life giving back to this small town located near the Ashley and Chicot County line in southeast Arkansas, just a few miles north of Louisiana. Mr. Vaughn is an active member of his local church, helping not only to build the church but also serving in many leadership positions over the years.

I can think of no person more deserving of this prestigious honor than Willie Vaughn. Mr. Vaughn embodies the definition of “giving back to your community.” At 101 years of age, Mr. Vaughn has spent a lifetime, or one might say over a century, working to improve Parkdale through dedication to the CME Church, as a civil rights leader working to remove racial barriers, lending an ear to friends and family throughout the community, throughout southeast Arkansas, and, yes, throughout America. He did so as a school bus driver, as a farmer, as a devoted husband and father. It is evident that Mr. Vaughn's commitment and dedication to his church, to civil justice, and to community service has made a lasting impact on the Parkdale community and its people.

Willie Vaughn has served as a role model to many young people who grew up in this small town of 377 people, people like the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), who now resides in Chicago but grew up in Parkdale, people like the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), who have gone on to do great things all across America because of the way their lives were shaped and influenced by Mr. Willie Vaughn.

The Willie Vaughn Post Office will stand for decades and generations to come as a testament to Mr. Vaughn's life and the influence, the impact he has made on so many people from all across this great country that spent a little bit of time growing up in that southeast Arkansas community that we call the town of Parkdale.

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

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution to rename the U.S. Post Office in Parkdale, Arkansas the Willie Vaughn Post Office, and I want to first express my heartfelt appreciation to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) for sponsoring this renaming legislation. I also want to thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY), the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. SNYDER) for their cosponsorships. It is also my pleasure to extend thanks to the honorable mayor and members of the Parkdale Arkansas City Council for their concurrence in the renaming of their town's post office: Ms. Glenda Wells, mayor; Louis Mitchell, alderman; Mark Hawkins, alderman; Paula Files, alderman; and Evora Parker, all whose families I knew and in some instances grew up with.

Madam Speaker, I stand here this afternoon with a tremendous amount of pride in being able to participate in passing this legislation.

First of all, I was born and grew up in Parkdale, Arkansas and lived there until I graduated from college. The man for whom we are renaming this post office, Mr. Willie Vaughn, whom we fondly called Uncle Dude and who is now 101 years old, was one of my primary mentors and role models and the most outstanding African American figure in that area for many years. Uncle Dude, who technically was not my uncle, he and my mother were stepbrothers, as they would be called, and sisters because their parents got married after his father's wife had died, and yet our families blended so close together until we were much closer than many blood relatives. As a matter of fact, as a result of the blending, my mother ended up with about 25 brothers and sisters.

In addition, Uncle Dude and my father were close associates and the best of friends, and I spent many a Sunday afternoon in their home eating Aunt L.C.'s famous egg pies.

Uncle Dude never had much formal education. My cousin Cora said that he finished the second grade, and yet he has always been one of the smartest and wisest persons that I have ever known. He had what we call a degree in CSTA; that is, common sense, talent, and ambition.

Legend of Folklore has it that Willie as a little boy did not take kindly to farm work, did not practice it, and did not act as though he wanted to learn. Therefore, he was called “Dude” and it stuck. However, Mr. Vaughn became self-taught and in many ways self-educated. He could do almost anything on and off the farm. He, like most of his peers, was a sharecropper, but he also owned the molasses mill and made syrup. He was a tailor and measured me for my first tailored suit, which another uncle of mine sent to me from St. Louis when I was graduating from elementary school, and, I might add, it was one of the few tailored suits that I have ever owned.

He was the chief lay person at our church, the Penny's Chapel CME Church, for more than 50 years, drove the school bus after we got one because we did not always have one, and was oftentimes the bridge between the black and white factions of the community in a small, rural southern town. Mr. Vaughn worked hard, acquired property, was a leading advocate for education, and commanded the respect of all segments of the town and of the area.

Uncle Dude was the Sunday school superintendent at our church for decades, and I shall never forget that, as a teenager, he gave me the opportunity to teach Sunday school, which may have been the reason that I eventually became a schoolteacher. Even in our small semi-isolated town, and he and other adults expressed and conveyed a strong appreciation for education, and I remember my cousin Aubry graduating from high school as the only person in his class.

As an avid church leader, Uncle Dude became a member of the general board of the CME Church and expressed great pride in the fact that he was able to vote to change the name from Colored Methodist Episcopal Church to Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

He was born the son of former slaves. Mr. Willie Vaughn epitomizes progress that this country has made. He is indeed a living legend who is still alive, alert, and spiritually as well as intellectually engaged. I would not be surprised to find out that he is watching these proceedings on C-SPAN. And if he is, I say congratulations, Uncle Dude, on a life well spent, a Nation well served, a family well loved, and a faith in God well preserved.

Madam Speaker, it is indeed with great pride that I urge passage of this bill and again thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) for introducing it.

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

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I urge all Members to support the passage of H.R. 3853. I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3853.

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. PORTER. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING THE SOUTH CAROLINA FARM BUREAU MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 300) recognizing the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company on the occasion of its 50th anniversary and saluting the outstanding service of the Company to the people of South Carolina.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 300

Whereas the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company was organized on December 19, 1955, to provide members of the Farm Bureau Federation with insurance coverage that was difficult to obtain and to assist such members with safety programs and loss control measures;

Whereas the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company is the largest domestic property and casualty insurer in the State of South Carolina;

Whereas the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company has 245 employees and 250 exclusive licensed agents throughout South Carolina that offer various insurance and financial services;

Whereas the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company provides a diverse line of products, including auto, homeowners, and other insurance coverage with sales exceeding \$190,000,000 on more than 344,000 policies;

Whereas in 1999, after Hurricane Floyd struck the coast of South Carolina, 90 percent of reported claims made with the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company were settled within one week; and

Whereas the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company serves families of farmers and non-farmers in rural and urban communities and the slogan of the Company is, "Helping you is what we do best": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives recognizes the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company on the occasion of its 50th anniversary and salutes the outstanding service of the Company to the people of South Carolina.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BARRETT) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BARRETT).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to include extraneous material thereon.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from my home State of South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) for introducing this measure.

The South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company motto is

"Helping you is what we do best." They have been committed to that motto for the past five decades. During that time, the company has grown from serving South Carolina's agricultural community to becoming the State's largest domestic insurer. Today we recognize the company's accomplishment of providing outstanding service to the people of South Carolina for the past 50 years.

As a coastal State, South Carolina has received its fair share of severe storms. When Hurricane Hugo devastating our State in 1989, the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company was there to pick up the pieces, paying out more than \$71 million in claims. Ten years later Hurricane Floyd slammed into our coast, and the company once again did a remarkable job helping us recover, settling 90 percent of its reported claims within 1 week.

Madam Speaker, the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company has helped many South Carolinians through difficult times. It is no wonder the company received an excellent rating from the world's leading insurance rating agency.

Again let me thank the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) for introducing this measure on behalf of the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I too join with my colleagues, especially the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) in introducing House Resolution 300, in recognition of the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company.

Madam Speaker, as a member of the Committee on Financial Services, I want to join with all of my colleagues in supporting this legislation that gives due recognition to the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company on its 50th anniversary.

□ 1430

I recognize the mutual insurance company both as a member of the Committee on Financial Services and as a member of the Committee on Agriculture, but Madam Speaker, even more so, I recognize South Carolina's Farm Bureau because I am a native of South Carolina, having been born on a farm in Aynor, South Carolina, raised in an agricultural community in the tobacco farming area. I have now fond memories, as I serve in Washington, often remembering my days of cropping and suckering and dragging and curing tobacco and then taking it to market in some of the areas around Mullins and Marion and Conway, South Carolina.

On December 19, 1955, the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company was organized and began

selling greatly needed insurance products to farmers; and, today, the company is the largest domestic insurer in the State serving South Carolinians from many, many walks of life.

The South Carolina Farm Bureau Insurance Company came along at a time when South Carolina farmers were looking for better options in the way of obtaining good insurance coverage that was also affordable. Five decades later, the company supplies a diversity of insurance products to South Carolinians from all walks of life.

The weather-related disasters affecting the gulf coast, and now the new England area, gives us all evidence that mutual insurance companies are essential in helping communities rebuild. The South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company faced a similar tragedy in 1989.

That year, a category 4 hurricane named Hugo created over \$7 billion in damage to the Palmetto State of South Carolina; and at the time, Hugo was the costliest hurricane in United States history. The mutual insurance company's staff worked days and worked nights, 24 hours a day, to help make sure its policyholders were dealt with and served correctly; and they settled over 16,264 claims.

In 1999, Hurricane Floyd struck the coast of South Carolina. The South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company settled 90 percent of the reported claims within 1 week.

Today, the South Carolina Farm Bureau Insurance Company has a presence in every county in the State of South Carolina, which is one reason why they are able to provide such timely and quality service.

As its motto, "Helping you is what we do best," suggests, the South Carolina Farm Bureau Insurance Company has provided a wide range of financial services to the people of South Carolina for a half a century. Five decades of growth and successful development is a wonderful milestone that should be recognized not only by South Carolinians but by all of us throughout this entire Nation as well.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), the author of the resolution and a genuine friend of the farm bureau.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BARRETT) for the time.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to speak on behalf of H. Res. 300. I appreciate the leadership of the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BARRETT), my neighbor and long-time friend, for coordinating this resolution, along with the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT), our South Carolina-born friend.

Henry Ford once said that "quality means doing it right when no one is looking."

Today, I am honored to recognize a South Carolina company that epitomizes Mr. Ford's definition of quality service. For over 50 years, the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company has quietly built a distinguished record of providing quality products and excellent customer service to thousands of families across my home State.

The company's story began in the 1950s when many residents of South Carolina simply could not have access to affordable insurance coverage. When disaster struck their homes or vehicles, they were unable to pay for the damages and often found themselves facing a financial crisis.

On December 10, 1955, a group of innovative South Carolinians responded to the needs of citizens by establishing the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company.

Today, South Carolina families have come to trust and rely upon the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company, led today by chief executive officer Phillip Love, for a diverse line of auto, homeowners and other insurance coverage.

As the largest domestic property and casualty insurer in South Carolina, this company now employs almost 500 people and administers over 344,000 policies.

After Hurricane Floyd devastated parts of our State in 1999, the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company settled 90 percent of reported claims in 1 week. The company's excellent track record continues to prove that it epitomizes quality customer service.

Today, I am honored to congratulate the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company on over 50 years of great accomplishment and wish the company continued success.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 300.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may require to the distinguished gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT).

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

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

Madam Speaker, I want to commend the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BARRETT) for taking this initiative, and I want to join my other colleague from South Carolina in recognizing the South Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company on its 50th anniversary. Its motto is "Helping you is what we do best," and as that motto suggests, the South Carolina Farm Bureau Insurance Company has provided a wide range of financial services, insurance services to the people of our State for nearly a half century now.

The South Carolina Farm Bureau Insurance Company came along at a time when farmers in our State were look-

ing for better options in the way of obtaining good insurance coverage that was also affordable. Recognizing that need, the organizers of the South Carolina Farm Bureau Federation went to work and secured a charter from the South Carolina Secretary of State on December 1, 1955. The result, five decades later, is a company that supplies a whole diversity of insurance products to South Carolinians from all walks of life, not just farmers. Among some of the services they provide are auto insurance, homeowners insurance, life insurance, as well as financial services such as banking, individual retirement accounts and credit cards.

I was here in 1989, and I recall well the bedlam in our State after Hurricane Hugo struck in Charleston and then moved inward, coming all the way to Charlotte, North Carolina. The South Carolina Farm Bureau Insurance faced probably the biggest natural disaster in the history of our State except for the Charleston earthquake, and it faced the test of its ability to handle such a massive amount of claims, but it rose to the occasion. It settled some 16,000 claims and paid out more than \$71 million.

Then, in 1999, the South Carolina Farm Bureau Insurance Company was tested again. Hurricane Floyd struck our coast, and 90 percent of the reported claims were settled within 1 week, which would set a model, if not a record, for fast and expeditious claims management. It is no surprise then that this company has prospered and succeeded over the years.

Today, the South Carolina Farm Bureau Insurance Company has a presence in every county in our State, and that is one reason they are able to provide such timely and quality service. Theirs has become a name that folks trust and know and feel comfortable with. I am proud of their service to our State. I rise to salute them, and I wish them the best as they celebrate their 50th anniversary and look to the future.

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

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I want to close in saying I thank the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) for being the author of the resolution. There is no doubt that the South Carolina Farm Bureau Insurance Corporation has had a fantastic effect on every segment of South Carolina life. I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 300.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BARRETT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 300.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S. 397, PROTECTION OF LAWFUL COMMERCE IN ARMS ACT

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 493 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 493

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the bill (S. 397) to prohibit civil liability actions from being brought or continued against manufacturers, distributors, dealers, or importers of firearms or ammunition for damages, injunctive or other relief resulting from the misuse of their products by others. The bill shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Madam Speaker, House Resolution 493 is a closed rule. It provides 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. It waives all points of order against consideration of the bill, and it provides one motion to recommit.

Madam Speaker, before we open debate on the rule for S. 397, the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act prohibiting frivolous lawsuits against the firearm industry, I would like to say that our Nation's judicial system is out of control. If a group or a person does not like what someone else does or believes, they try to sue them out of existence. This seems to be the case for the firearms industry.

Our Founding Fathers designed our second amendment rights to be absolute rights that shall not be infringed. However, those who find the second amendment offensive have made a concerted effort to sue out of existence those who lawfully and legally facilitate a constitutionally guaranteed right. America's firearm companies are directly connected to and span our national history, but they are currently threatened by a lawsuit-friendly culture.

Addressing the burden of frivolous lawsuits has become a necessity for free enterprise. It seems that for some individuals lawsuits have become the

latest get-rich scheme. Frivolous lawsuits drive up the cost of goods and services, and they put law-abiding companies out of business.

The passage of this legislation is time-sensitive. Every day without this legislation puts more stress on firearm manufacturers, their customers, and their employees. Indeed, some lawsuits are motivated by ideology and a distaste for the firearm industry and guns in general. They will simply keep suing until either the firearm companies are out of business or the guns are too expensive to purchase.

This form of gun control will not only compromise one of our constitutional rights but, Madam Speaker, it threatens the jobs of many Americans.

So it is important to note that S. 397, the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, does allow the following types of lawsuits to be filed: number 1, an action against a person who transfers a firearm or ammunition, knowing that it will be used to commit a crime of violence, or drug trafficking crime or comparable or identical State felony law; secondly, an action brought against the seller for negligent entrustment; third, actions in which a manufacturer or seller of a qualified product violates a State or Federal statute applicable to sales or marketing when such violation was a proximate cause of the harm for which relief is sought.

□ 1445

This exception would specifically allow lawsuits against firearms dealers such as the dealer whose firearm ended up in the hands of the D.C. snipers who failed to maintain a required inventory list necessary to ensure that they are alerted to any firearm thefts.

Fourth, actions for breach of contract or warranty in connection with the purchase of a firearm or ammunition; and fifth, actions for damages resulting directly from a defect in design or manufacture of a firearm or ammunition.

So, under this legislation, manufacturers and sellers must operate entirely within Federal and State law. More than half our States have passed similar legislation, and I encourage passage of this rule and consideration of the underlying legislation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) for yielding me this time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to this closed rule and the underlying legislation. My friends in the majority are again bringing to the floor a rule that blocks debate in the body before it begins. Under this rule not one Member of the House, Republican or Democrat, is permitted to offer an amendment. Under this rule and under this bill, the gun lobby is rewarded while public safety is thwarted.

A few examples: The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) and the

gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) offered an amendment last night that prohibits suspected and known terrorists from purchasing firearms. That was not made in order. The gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY), my good friend who will speak on this issue later, had an amendment that expands existing prohibitions on armor-piercing bullets to include those bullets capable of piercing body armor. And the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA SANCHEZ) offered an amendment that permits courts to hear suits based on the sale of weapons to persons with domestic convictions.

Under this rule, however, not one of these amendments, or any of the five other commonsense amendments offered by Democrats in the Committee on Rules last night, will be given any consideration by the full House.

Madam Speaker, our government was built on the foundation of an open and transparent participatory process. Yet, since 1994, when Republicans regained control of the House; I might add, Republicans that argued against closed rules, participation has been limited to only those who share their beliefs.

The underlying legislation, which dismisses existing lawsuits against gun manufacturers and dealers and prohibits the filing of future suits, is not sound public policy. On the contrary, it is outright political grandstanding.

During the last 3 years, more than 34 government entities have filed valid lawsuits against gun manufacturers, distributors, and trade associations. At the beginning of 2005, 18 of those suits had won favorable rulings, while only a handful had been dismissed. The remaining cases are still in court, and I gather that this legislation contemplates eliminating those citizens' rights to be in court.

In fact, several State appeals and supreme courts have also ruled that gun manufacturers and dealers can be held liable for the reasonably foreseeable use of firearms for criminal purposes. Settlements from these cases have forced gun manufacturers to make necessary safety modifications that the industry had previously refused to do. How many times do we have to see a baby with a gun in its hand or at its head or killing some member of the family before we get to safety modifications?

The ruling in the D.C. sniper case forced the gun manufacturer Bushmaster to inform its dealers of safer sales practices that will prevent other criminals from obtaining guns, something that Bushmaster had never done before. Other rulings have resulted in major crackdowns on "straw purchases," where legally purchased guns are resold to individuals unable to lawfully purchase a weapon on their own. In each of these instances, it is beyond fair to say that they were not frivolous lawsuits. Yet, if the underlying legislation becomes law, when the cases are heard then none of them would have even been filed.

Perhaps my friends in the majority can help me understand what is so unreasonable in requiring an industry that produces a product with the sole purpose of killing to take the necessary precautions to protect public safety, and is it our belief that the American judicial system is incapable of properly dismissing lawsuits that are both unreasonable and overzealous? They do it all the time.

Let us be honest and call this bill and this debate what they really are: legislative abuse, with closed rules and a political charade. Republicans are using the legislative process in an attempt to penalize attorneys and trial lawyers, historically supporters of Democrats, who hold the gun lobby, a major campaign contributor to my friends in the majority, accountable for its actions.

The majority's reckless disregard for judicial integrity mocks our Constitution's separation of powers doctrine. Dangerously, it does so at the expense of American safety.

I implore my colleagues to reject this rule and the underlying legislation, and I would say to my good friend, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY), that I know of nothing in my makeup that would cause me at any point in time to want to do anything in derogation of the rights of American citizens under the United States Constitution. The second amendment, the right to own a gun, is everybody's right. But manufacturers ought not be manufacturing guns that are not safe and are poorly manufactured, and nobody should be protecting them at all.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume before calling on the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania.

I want to point out, Madam Speaker, to the gentleman from Florida, my good friend, regarding this particular legislation, S. 397, we have in this body, not just in the 109th this year, passed very, very similar, almost identical legislation, and there were some 11 amendments I think offered during the markup in the Committee on the Judiciary. Those were defeated. In fact, at least one member of the committee from the other party, from the minority party, voted against most of those amendments and voted in favor of favorably reporting this bill. This bill also was passed in the 108th Congress, H.R. 1036. I think the vote on that particular bill was 285 to 140.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART), a member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

Ms. HART. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me this time.

I rise in support of the rule. This rule gets us to the point of this issue. My area of western Pennsylvania has a strong sportsman heritage, as does this Nation. Hunting has been a tradition,

bringing generations of families together. As such, second amendment rights are crucial. I am a cosponsor and I strongly support Senate bill 397.

Since 1998, dozens of municipalities and cities have filed suits against America's firearms industry, somehow alleging that the manufacturer of a firearm can be responsible for the acts of criminals. These suits, following the model of the tobacco litigation, attempt to push the gun manufacturers into court to force a settlement, a large cash award, or cessation of a business. In Pennsylvania, Philadelphia attempted to claim public nuisance violations of firearm manufacturers, but a reasonable court dismissed the claim, stating that the city's charges were a "theory in search of a case."

Firearm manufacturers have a time-honored tradition of acting responsibly. They therefore should not be subjected to these frivolous suits. Such suits are anti-freedom, they are anti-employer, not to mention that they seek to protect the irresponsible.

In addition, the gun industry plays a large role in my State of Pennsylvania in our economy. Pennsylvania is home to 277 gun manufacturers, and the impact of sportsmen-related activity to our economy brings more than \$900 million to our State. It also brings generations of family tradition. That is also good for our economy.

Senate bill 397 prohibits illegitimate lawsuits against licensed and law-abiding manufacturers and dealers. These lawsuits, which attempt to blame the firearms industry for crimes committed by criminals who misuse their products, have already cost this industry more than \$100 million in attorneys' fees and a suit against the industry has yet to win.

This bill seeks to end the abuse of our judicial system by the coordinated strategy of filing endless predatory lawsuits designed to drive law-abiding gun manufacturers into bankruptcy.

Senators SANTORUM and SPECTER have both cosponsored the Senate version of this bill which passed the Senate in July. President Bush has indicated his support for this legislation, and I look forward to this bill coming to the floor so that we can pass it in the House and its being signed and becoming law, so that our American firearms industry will not be subjected to potentially bankrupting lawsuits.

As we know, there is a way to control gun crime and protect the gun industry. We need to enforce the many gun laws that are currently on the books. Not only does this law protect lawful gun owners, but enforcing gun crime works. A study by the ATF in June of 2000 documented 1,700 Federal and State gun law prosecutions and 1,000 verdicts from July 1996 to December of 1999, while there were nearly 500,000 gun crimes committed annually. The way to combat gun crimes is not through ridiculous lawsuits, but through the prosecution of gun crimes.

Forcing the gun industry into court ignores a city's inability to control gun crime.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I am pleased and privileged at this time to yield 3½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), my colleague on the Committee on Rules.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, I oppose this closed rule and the underlying bill. This bill demonstrates how much of a stranglehold that the NRA and gun industry lobbyists have over the majority party. This bill is not being considered today because it is good policy; it is being considered because the majority leadership is bowing down to special interests.

While the proponents of this bill claim that the intent of this legislation is to protect jobs at mom-and-pop gun stores from reckless lawsuits, the truth is that the bill is all about protecting profits for the gun industry. Ensuring its yearly profits, not protecting jobs nor safeguarding gun sales, is atop the priorities of the gun industry.

This bill protects any gun manufacturer, distributor, or seller from any claim of negligence. Any lawsuit, current or future, would not be considered by the courts if this bill were signed into law.

Madam Speaker, on Christmas Eve in 1999, in my hometown of Worcester, Massachusetts, 26-year-old Danny Guzman was shot and killed. A week later, police recovered the 9 millimeter Kahr Arms handgun used to kill young Danny. Through ballistics, the police determined that the gun was one of several stolen from Kahr Arms by Kahr employees with criminal records. According to the police, one of the employees had been hired by Kahr to work in its Worcester manufacturing facility, despite the fact that he had a long history of drug addiction, theft to support that addiction, alcohol abuse and violence, including several assault and battery charges.

Police determined that the guns were stolen from Kahr before the weapons had serial numbers stamped on them and were then resold to criminals in exchange for money and drugs. In March 2000, police arrested a man who pled guilty to the gun thefts. The investigation also led to the arrest of a Kahr employee, a man with a criminal history who pled guilty to stealing from Kahr a pistol and a slide for another weapon.

Now, Kahr did not conduct any criminal or general background checks on its employees. The company did not even have any metal detectors or x-ray machines or security cameras or other similar devices to monitor the facility or to determine if employees were stealing, nor were there guards to check employees at the end of their shifts.

□ 1500

Mr. Speaker, anybody with half a brain has to understand that this company was negligent. Now, if this bill becomes law, gun manufacturers like Kahr Arms would be shielded from negligence. And the Guzman family's suit would be dismissed.

This is just one of the many stories that illustrate the reckless and irresponsible nature of many, not all, but many in the gun industry. And this bill will only further shield them from accountability.

Now, do not be fooled. The NRA and the gun industry want this bill not because jobs are threatened. They want this bill because they fear their precious profits will be affected should they be forced to change some of their irresponsible and reckless practices.

To my colleagues who support this bill, tell the Guzman family that they have no right to be angry at the Worcester-based manufacturer. Tell them that the death of their beloved Danny Guzman was just bad luck and could not have been prevented. The fact of the matter is, it could have been prevented by more responsible practices by Kahr Arms.

I have to believe that gun owners all across this country would not object to ensuring that gun manufacturers allow for more responsible practices in terms of protecting what they manufacture. This is not about taking people's guns away. This is about protecting people. Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the rule and the underlying legislation.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, in response to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) I want to point out that this bill prohibits lawsuits against a manufacturer or seller of a firearm or ammunition or not-for-profit trade association for damages resulting from the criminal or unlawful misuse of a firearm or ammunition.

But it provides, as I said in my opening remarks, Mr. Speaker, five exceptions to this liability protection, including, and I will just mention one in response to my good friend from Massachusetts. An exception would be for an action against a seller for negligent entrustment or negligence, per se, for example supplying a gun or ammunition to a person when the seller knows or reasonably should know that the buyer possesses an unacceptable risk of physical injury to himself or others.

As an example again, the D.C. snipers were successful in court on these grounds.

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

Mr. GINGREY. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, the exception that he just cited would not cover the example that I just gave. The bottom line is that it was an employee who worked for Kahr Arms that stole these weapons and that sold them to criminals for drug money.

As a result, a young man was killed. And it is our understanding, based on

my conversations with members of the Judiciary Committee, that in fact this would not be covered. So having said that, I would urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this bill.

Mr. GINGREY. Reclaiming my time, I would again point out to the gentleman that it also would be an exception if a vendor knowingly did not keep an inventory so that they would have knowledge that dangerous weapons or firearms were actually stolen from their place of business. And that also is one of the exceptions.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the debate that we are having today on this issue. I rise in support of the rule.

Mr. Speaker, when drafting the Bill of Rights to our Constitution, our Founding Fathers guaranteed the right of the people to keep and to bear arms in the second amendment, and for 217 years the second amendment has protected our freedom.

But for years we have seen a nonstop onslaught of individuals and groups trying to erode this basic right. Now, unable to accomplish their goals at the ballot box, they are targeting arms makers in the courts for the illegal use of their product.

Their attempt to force U.S. arms producers out of business would have a serious impact not only on our freedoms but on our national security as well. Let us for a moment just look at three of the companies that are targeted by lawsuits by the antigun fanatics.

The Colt Company is a sole provider of the M-16 rifle carried by the men and women of our armed services. Beretta USA supplies the standard sidearm for all branches of the Armed Forces and law enforcement agencies across the country.

The Sig Arms Company manufactures the sidearm carried by the Secret Service and the Navy SEALs. And if these companies are destroyed, where will our military and our law enforcement get the arms that they need to keep our Nation safe? From France, perhaps. Maybe we can buy them from China.

This is why the Pentagon took the extraordinary step in sending a letter to each Member of this House urging the passage of this important legislation. The aim of these lawsuits is to deny law-abiding Americans from exercising their Constitutional rights to keep and to bear arms. This must be stopped.

Instead, we should severely punish criminals, not law-abiding companies or citizens. And if we do not do so, what is next? Are we going to sue the Louisville Slugger Company if a criminal hits somebody with a baseball bat?

Enough is enough. It is time for common sense. It is time to protect the jobs of the workers of American firms. It is time to protect our rights under the second amendment of the Constitu-

tion, and it is time to ensure that the men and women of the armed services and our law enforcement have access to the best possible firearms to protect our Nation.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleague that just spoke that the many people that I know, and they are numerous in my State and elsewhere that were killed by guns and are advocates against guns, are not fanatics. They are people who are victims of murder.

Additionally, I thought I made it clear, I wish to make it clear again, that insofar as the second amendment is concerned, everyone that I know in this body is protective of a person's right to own a gun.

The fact of the matter is that manufacturers who act irresponsibly should be sued by persons if they so choose when that harm comes to them.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY).

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for giving me this opportunity to speak out against this rule. I have been here about 8½ years now, and I came here without any political experience.

But history had taught me that we, as Americans, certainly fight for our democracy all of the time. Yet over the years, I have seen democracy, especially in this great House, deteriorate continuously.

I have seen where we go up to the Rules Committee continuously, because I always thought that when you came down to this great House, the whole idea was to have debate. And yet I see debate being challenged constantly.

Important issues that come on to this floor, the minority is not allowed to debate them, nor are we allowed to offer any kind of amendments to hopefully make a bill better. Our voices are being shut constantly. This is not the democracy that I learned about when I was in school or the democracy that I believed in as I became an adult.

Last night in the Rules Committee, the majority voted against protecting police officers and voted to make it easier for felons to get guns. The committee rejected my amendment that would ban all armor-piercing ammunition. Let me tell you about armor-piercing ammunition. That was used in the shooting back in 1993 that killed my husband and wounded my son.

And it is only by the grace of God that my son survived. I can go into how many millions of dollars have been spent to make sure that my son could have a productive life. I can talk about his hand that was operated on, because once the bullet hit it, it shattered.

We were lucky that we had anything to work with. And because he raised his hand, it only took off a little bit of his head. And these are bullets that we want to have on our streets? But that amendment was not allowed.

You cannot even hunt with them. Come on. I am hearing this debate on

the second amendment. I believe in the second amendment. I will protect the second amendment. But that does not mean that we cannot enforce the laws that are already on the books.

You know, I have the bill, that would be the NICS system, that would bring the National Instant Checks System up to where it should. You know, this is the month that we are supposed to be talking about domestic violence.

And yet because of the way the States do not keep records, we have people that are not in the NICS system. So if you want to talk about let us enforce the laws on the books, then let us pass a good NICS system that would enforce the laws that are already on the books.

Too many of our felons are slipping through the cracks of the NICS system. What I want to do is make sure that every State can come to the speed that they should be, when someone is found guilty in court, and they are being adjudicated to prison, that their rights of being able to buy a gun are taken away.

You want to talk about that we have terrorists in this country, and we have a terrorist list, but they are allowed to buy guns. Now, again, we keep hearing the rhetoric that goes back and forth in this Hall all of the time that we are trying to take away the right of people to own guns. That is nonsense.

But we can have gun safety issues put out into place so that we can bring down the number of 30,000 people killed in this country every year, so we can bring down the \$100 billion that is spent every year on health care, loss of productivity, and using our police. Think about what this Hall and what this great House could do with \$100 billion.

Maybe we could protect Social Security. Maybe we could protect our health care system. Maybe we can improve our educational system. You know, again, I am disappointed because I came here as an average citizen, honestly believing that a debate was good, whether people agreed or disagreed, made no difference. You had a debate and hopefully people would then make up their minds.

Let us not think that this bill is going to solve the problems that they are talking about. In a decade we have had over 15 million lawsuits. Fifty-seven of them were against gun manufacturers. Fifty-seven of them. And for this, and every other issue that we are taking away the right of victims to be able to have their day in court.

Our court system is working. Our court system is set up the way the Constitution wanted. And yet this body, with our Republican friends, wants to take away the rights of people to have their day in court.

I ask my colleagues to vote against this rule, to protect the integrity of this House, and not to protect the NRA.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that this bill on the House

side, H.R. 800, which was passed, as I mentioned earlier by the House Judiciary Committee, this bill actually had 257 cosponsors, Mr. Speaker. So this is certainly not a Republican bill.

You can do the math. My colleagues certainly can do the math on the other side of the aisle. But clearly, this bill had strong, strong bipartisan support.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS), a member of the Energy and Commerce and Veterans' Affairs Committees.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule and in support of the underlying bill. It was my bill, H.R. 800. I authored the House version. Then the Senate passed S. 397, and I am pleased that we are taking action on this important piece of legislation today.

This is a bill, frankly, my colleagues, that promotes legal responsibility. It respects, in my opinion, the legislative process, saves taxpayers dollars, protects legitimate law-abiding businesses, and strengthens our commitment to the second amendment.

□ 1515

This is an effort that has taken several years and at least three sessions of Congress to get where we are today. It has not been easy, but it has been heartening to see how much bipartisan support this bill has slowly garnered over the years.

When I first introduced this bill in 2001, it had 231 co-sponsors, but never received a vote. The next session we had 250 co-sponsors and an overwhelming 285 to 140 vote on the floor, but then the bill just died in the other body. Now we have 257 co-sponsors on my bill. The Senate overwhelmingly passed their version, and we are poised to pass this historic piece of legislation today.

But when we started debating this issue, there were only a handful of States that had their own laws prohibiting these junk lawsuits. Today there are 33 States that have laws prohibiting these frivolous lawsuits. So not only is this bill bipartisan in the House and in the Senate; it is bipartisan in this Nation with 33 States, both Democrats and Republicans in the State legislatures and Governors signing on to the bills that ultimately became laws.

And just a few years ago polls showed anywhere from 61 to 70 percent of the American people believed that the gun industry should not be held liable for damages caused by violent criminals. Today, that already solid majority has risen even more, to an astounding 79 percent of the American people, according to a March 2005 survey.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bill and an issue whose time has obviously come. I urge my colleagues to support the rule and, obviously, to support the underlying bill.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, just in case people think that it is only those of us who

believe in our legal system that are opposed to this particular measure, I have in hand a letter from law enforcement's opposition to H.R. 800, and here is what it says:

"Dear Representative: As active and retired law enforcement officers, we are writing to urge your strong opposition to any legislation granting the gun industry special legal immunity. The bill would strip away the legal rights of gun violence victims, including law enforcement officers and their families, to seek redress against irresponsible gun dealers and manufacturers. The impact of this bill on the law enforcement community is well illustrated by the lawsuit brought by former Orange New Jersey police officers Ken McGuire and David Lemongello."

I gather that their lawsuit would be dismissed as frivolous.

"On January 12, 2001, Officers McGuire and Lemongello were shot in the line of duty with a trafficked gun negligently sold by a West Virginia dealer. The dealer had sold the gun, along with 11 other guns, in a cash sale to a straw buyer for a gun trafficker. In June of 2004, the officers obtained a \$1 million settlement from the dealer. The dealer, as well as two other area pawn shops also, have implemented safer practices to prevent sales to traffickers, including a new policy of ending large volume sales of handguns. These reforms go beyond the requirement of current law and are not imposed by any manufacturers or distributors.

"If immunity," this is what the law enforcement community, some of them say, "if immunity for the gun industry had been enacted, the officers' case would have been thrown out of court and justice would have been denied. Police officers like Officers McGuire and Lemongello put their lives on the line every day to protect the public. Instead of honoring them for their service, legislation granting immunity to the gun industry would deprive them of their basic rights as American citizens to prove their case in a court of law. We stand with Officers McGuire and Lemongello in urging you to oppose this legislation."

It is signed by the International Brotherhood of Police Officers, the Major Cities Chiefs Association, the Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association, The Police Foundation, the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, chiefs of police from New Jersey, Ohio, Massachusetts, Nevada, California, New York, North Carolina, Maine, Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri, Rhode Island, and Kansas and Virginia and countless others that time will not permit me to add.

If police officers who are out there protecting us cannot find the protection in this House of Representatives from bullets or armor-piercing bullets, and we are going to protect people who manufacture that stuff from having legal suits brought against them, some

that may be dismissed, some that may be won, some that may be lost but it is an American right, just like that second amendment is an American right that I will go to my grave believing in, but I will go with these police officers in believing that it is wrong to deny people an opportunity to take their matter to court and have it decided appropriately by a court of law and juries of their peers who are all 435 of our constituents.

In addition to what is wrong is this system is wrong. When you close out amendments that would allow people to have an opportunity to come down here on the floor of the House of Representatives and represent their constituents, this is a closed rule; and I urge my colleagues to vote against this closed rule.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. BASS), a member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Mr. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I would only point out that this bill, with the exception of one and maybe two changes, has already been debated by this House. I appreciate the fact that my friend from Florida would be concerned about it being a closed rule, but this is certainly not the first time that we have considered this bill. I think I have voted on it a number of times in the past.

The fact of the matter is all this bill does is the same thing the last version did that we voted on before and the one we voted on before that: it protects licensed and law abiding firearms and ammunition manufacturers and sellers from lawsuits that seek to hold them responsible for the crimes that third-party criminals commit. It does not hold harmless unlawful, non-law-abiding arms manufacturers and sellers; but it simply allows for some immunity from the frivolous lawsuits that gun manufacturers have faced now for many years. Thirty-three States, including my home State of New Hampshire, have passed similar legislation at the State level.

Indeed, the argument is brought up that this does set a precedent of providing special protection to a segment of the industry; and I say, you are right. You are absolutely right about that. And sad to say, I wish this bill was not necessary. I wish that there were not adventurous trial lawyers that see deep pockets as a new way to line theirs. I wish we had not reached the day that we have to protect, as we may later on this week, restaurants and public schools from frivolous lawsuits related to obesity claims; but the fact of the matter is we need to do that. We need to do that because there is no direct connection now between gun manufacturers and crimes that are committed with guns unless there is negligence of one sort or another.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill because it is a sad reality that le-

gitimate industries in this country need special protection against entities that are looking to make money, to provide new sources of revenue outside of the tax base, and other ways of looking for people that can afford to settle on cases that they would never ever settle on under any other circumstance.

This bill has been debated. This is a good bill, and I urge the Congress to adopt it when it comes up on the floor.

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, despite their best arguments against free enterprise, personal responsibility and the protection of lawful commerce, critics fail to provide an alternative solution to the problem without compromising our liberties and second amendment rights.

Just as a car is a tool for transportation, an ax is a tool for cutting trees and shrubs, prescription drugs are tools for better health, a firearm is a tool for hunting and self-defense and protection of our citizens. Any of these tools used in an irresponsible manner and used contrary to their attending purpose can hurt and, yes, even kill others. But a gun by itself, Mr. Speaker, cannot commit a crime. It takes an individual to use the product illegally and irresponsibly.

The protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act is a bill to curb our lawsuit-friendly and, yes, sometimes abusive society and to protect law-abiding citizens from individuals who avoid responsibility and undermine the good faith of our legal system.

Frivolous lawsuits against gun manufacturers threaten the survival of the gun industry, the jobs it creates, and our constitutional right to purchase, keep and bear arms. While many cases are dismissed, it only takes one bad ruling to sink a company and to send ripple effects across an entire industry. Although America's first gun manufacturer, Springfield Armory, went out of business in 1968, we still have to protect America's remaining law-abiding companies who conduct business in a responsible and in a lawful manner.

It would be a tragedy for a Nation with such a rich and innovative history in manufacturing to have our police and military carry over foreign-engineered firearms. We need to protect the American firearm industry. We need to restore responsibility and end these frivolous lawsuits.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage passage of this rule and passage of the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 554, PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN FOOD CONSUMPTION ACT OF 2005

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 494 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 494

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 554) to prevent legislative and regulatory functions from being usurped by civil liability actions brought or continued against food manufacturers, marketers, distributors, advertisers, sellers, and trade associations for claims of injury relating to a person's weight gain, obesity, or any health condition associated with weight gain or obesity. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions.

□ 1530

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 494 is a structured rule. It provides 1 hour of general debate, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. It waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. It provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary and now printed in the bill shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment. This resolution makes in order only those amendments printed in the Committee on Rules report accompanying the resolution, and it provides that the amendments printed in the report may be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or the Committee of the Whole. It waives all points of order against the amendments printed in the report, and it provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of House Resolution 494 and the underlying bill, H.R. 554, the Personal Responsibility in Food Consumption Act. First, I want to take this opportunity to thank the distinguished chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), and additionally I want to commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER), a member of the Committee on the Judiciary, for authoring the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, today the House will consider H.R. 554, the Personal Responsibility in Food Consumption Act, a common sense piece of legislation that passed this House in the last Congress by a substantial bipartisan vote of 276 to 139. I might further add that 55 Democrats joined with 221 Republicans supporting this bill in an effort to help rein in this mentality of jackpot justice that has plagued our judicial system and cluttered the dockets to a virtual standstill. This legislation would require courts to dismiss any lawsuits that seek damages for injury resulting from weight gain, obesity, or any health condition associated with obesity filed against manufacturers, distributors, sellers, marketers, or advertisers of any food product, in addition to trade associations that represent them.

Of course, support of this bill is not limited to Capitol Hill, Mr. Speaker. A recent Gallup poll found that approximately 9 in 10 Americans, a number of whom are themselves in the ranks of overweight or even obese, opposed holding the fast food industry legally responsible for diet-related health problems of people who eat that kind of food on a regular basis.

Without question, Mr. Speaker, obesity is a problem in our society. Having practiced medicine for nearly 30 years, I am well aware of the habit and complications that obesity can wreak on a person's health, especially over a long term. Like most other Americans, I am also well aware that obesity is on the rise in our country, and particularly among our children. However, the root of the problem is not the existence of fast food or the presence of a local fast food restaurant, but rather the root of the problem lies in the choices of consumers. I have never heard of anyone pulling up to the drive-through window with a hamburger sitting in the passenger seat forcing someone to buy just one more Big Mac.

Mr. Speaker, allowing an individual to sue a restaurant because the consumer chose to eat there often or chose to eat too much is simply ridiculous and, frankly, it is a dangerous waste of the court's time. For every frivolous case that takes up a spot on the docket, a legitimate case where an individual is truly harmed and truly needs expeditious judicial review gets pushed farther and farther down the line. And as we all know, justice delayed is justice denied.

The title of this bill emphasizes the type of solution needed to address the underlying problem. It is called personal responsibility. It is not just a catch phrase. Individuals have to take control of their own lives. They have to make wise decisions, especially when it comes to their health. And when an individual does make a poor decision, he or she should not be able to abuse the courts so as to shift responsibility to someone else in order to cash in.

Mr. Speaker, while H.R. 544 prohibits certain types of lawsuits, it does make various reasonable exceptions to ensure the protection of a consumer's legitimate claim for legitimate harm. An individual, for example, can still sue in those instances where a contract or a warranty is breached, as long as the basis for the lawsuit is not related to weight gain, obesity or a health condition associated with either. Additionally, a manufacturer or seller is still liable if they knowingly violate a Federal or State statute concerning the marketing, the advertising, or the labeling of a product.

Mr. Speaker, this bill would still allow individuals to bring obesity or weight gain related matters before the FTC, the Federal Trade Commission, or the FDA, the Food and Drug Administration, for consideration and appropriate action. Obviously, individuals can still sue in accordance with applicable State laws protecting against deceptive trade practices and if a person becomes sick from a tainted food product.

In closing, I just want to emphasize that this legislation is common sense and it includes exemptions to ensure legitimate claims still make it to court while abusive lawsuits are stopped at the courthouse door.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the consideration of this rule, and I ask my colleagues to support the rule and the underlying bill.

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

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me this time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. MATSUI asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, this rule, House Resolution 494, will allow the House to take up a bill limiting civil liability for the food and restaurant industry from obesity lawsuits.

We have already debated this legislation once. We now have precious few legislative days left on the calendar and an ever-expanding list of legislative priorities, yet the majority leadership has decided to take up a bill that preempts a handful of obesity lawsuits that are already being effectively handled in the courts. Given that, is this really the most pressing issue facing the American people? The courts are working fine. This bill is simply unnecessary.

Here is just a short list of issues we might be addressing today: The debt, the trade deficit, Iraq, housing for Katrina victims, the bird flu, port security, border security, nuclear plant security, and energy independence. I am sure the American people would appreciate a debate on any of those issues over what we are doing today.

In touting the merits of H.R. 554, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have cited the need for American people to take responsibility for what they eat and how they live. I very much agree. However, I would respectfully submit that maybe it is also time that Congress starts taking some responsibility for the challenges facing the American people. The disconnect between the content of this legislation and the concerns of our constituents would be humorous if it were not so disturbing.

Mr. Speaker, obesity is one of the great health epidemics in the United States, and as today's debate will show, it continues to go ignored. If you talk to any health professional in the country, whether it be the Director of the National Institutes of Health or a nurse at a local clinic, they will tell you that our health care system is on an unsustainable path, especially when it comes to obesity.

Obesity is the number one preventable cause of death in America. According to the RAND Corporation, obesity will account for 20 percent of all health care costs by 2020 if we do not change course. This challenge demands responsible, forward-looking leadership.

As Members of Congress, we need to take personal responsibility for the trajectory of the health care system in the United States. It would be cheaper to prevent this train wreck now than

to wait for obesity to overwhelm the capacity of our health care system. Our citizens are hungry for leadership, and they are not getting any.

The obesity epidemic in the United States should spur this Congress into action. Since 1980, childhood obesity rates have more than doubled among preschoolers and adolescents. Obesity among children ages 6 to 11 has more than tripled. Overweight children have a 70 percent chance of being overweight as adults, facing higher risks for many diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes.

I recently visited a dialysis center in my hometown of Sacramento, California, earlier this year. Many patients there had diabetes. Mr. Speaker, diabetes is a terrible disease. In its late stages it limits terribly one's quality of life. We need to be doing more to prevent it. We just do not need another cheeseburger bill. What we need is a debate about health care, about prevention, and about our priorities.

Two-thirds of all Americans are obese. According to the Centers for Disease Control, health care costs related to obesity are costing us more than \$117 billion annually and much more in damage to our citizens' quality of life. We should not accept this fate for so many of our Nation's children. Dealing with obesity by talking about tort reform does just that, it says that Congress is more concerned about the industry than it is about the long-term health of our Nation and of our children.

No serious policymaker believes that we can turn this tide with a few half-hearted calls for Americans to exercise more. This is going to take real leadership, real investment. It will take a relentless campaign to educate our citizens, along with public pressure to recognize the importance of this issue. It will mean taking a hard look at whether our public schools are up to the test in terms of offering nutritious meals and physical education classes for everyone. It means asking whether industry advertisers are targeting children and, if so, setting strict marketing guidelines.

In the short-term, the easy path is to dodge this whole debate, to pass this tort reform measure and walk away from the discussion. The harder path and the more responsible one would be to deal with the crisis that is here today and the even bigger crisis we all know is coming. I for one am ready for that discussion. I hope my colleagues are.

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, following which I will yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, the Personal Responsibility in Food Consumption Act, H.R. 554, is all about, again, personal responsibility and to point out how ludicrous it would be if we allowed personal injury lawsuits against the

food industry or any other company that makes a legitimate product.

We just talked earlier in the afternoon, Mr. Speaker, in regard to gun manufacturers.

□ 1545

Mr. Speaker, let me just give an example, if I might. This is a belt, an alligator belt. In fact, it is my belt. Size 36. I have a size 36 waist. This belt, I am proud to say, is hand-finished, American alligator, produced right here in the good old U.S.A. This alligator skin was obtained from a Louisiana hunt, it says on this belt, 1993, manufactured by the Trafalgar Limited Belt Company, a good company. And the belt has served me very well. Size 36 fits me well.

Mr. Speaker, let us suppose now that I decided, it is unlikely that I would do this, but let us suppose I decided I wanted to wear a size 42 and I punched a few extra holes in this belt, which is a size 36, so I could wear it and buckle it with a size 42 pair of trousers. These trousers fell right to my knees in a public place. I do not think I should have the right to sue the belt company because I used its product in a manner that it was not designed to use. I could go out and buy myself a size 42 belt.

Let me give another example, and this is more likely. Let us suppose I really felt like my waist was a size 34, and so I cinched this belt up really good so I could proudly say I am not a 36, I have a 34 inch waist at my age. I would feel pretty good about myself.

But, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, there is a nerve at my waist called the lateral femoral cutaneous nerve. If someone puts too much pressure around their waist by wearing a belt inappropriately, by cinching it up too tightly, they put compression on that nerve, that lateral femoral cutaneous nerve, and I speak from knowledge on this from 30 years as a practicing physician. That condition, my colleagues can look it up, but I will share it with them, it is called meralgia paresthetica. If Members do not believe me, look it up. It creates tremendous numbness and loss of feeling in the anterior part of the thigh.

Let us suppose someone misused this belt and wore it as a size 34 and decided for that reason to sue this Trafalgar Company, this good, solid American company that makes this belt, for damages. That is totally ridiculous and ludicrous, and that is why this bill is so important. That is why it is called personal responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I want to applaud him for maintaining a size 36 over the years; and I will decline to share my dress size with the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the rule and the underlying bill, H.R. 554, also known as the Personal Responsi-

bility in Food Consumption Act, and sometimes fondly referred to, as the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI) said, the Cheeseburger Bill.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation is a Nation of freedom. Liberty, individuality, and personal choice are all critical ingredients. A recipe for self-reliance, individual responsibility, and choice has been handed down from generation to generation.

That is why it is so distasteful to see a handful of greedy people trying to strike it rich by attacking the American food industry. The blame-obsessed legal system has increasingly tried to poison the restaurant business with frivolous lawsuits.

Our food industry actually employs about 12 million people. It is the Nation's largest single private sector provider. It provides a legal product, and it provides it in a legal way. And now, because of the avarice of a few, it has become a huge target with a huge bull's-eye on its back.

Mr. Speaker, most restaurants are small businesses that contribute to their community in literally countless ways. What is more, many of them are too small to defend themselves against out-of-control, deep-pocketed trial attorneys who want to file lawsuits against them, who see them as just another target, perhaps see them as just another ATM machine.

I am proud to support this rule and proud to support H.R. 554, which prohibits profiteering from groundless claims about weight gain, to protect our vital food and restaurant industry, to help defend our economy and American jobs, and to support the fundamental tenets of our Nation: personal choice, liberty, and freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I am obviously a pretty good customer of the restaurant industry, but I also recognize that with democracy comes responsibility, the responsibility of citizens to make the right decisions for themselves and the responsibility of a government to stop those who seek to hurt fine American businesses for a drive-thru, fast windfall. I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying bill.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that today's legislation is not the answer. Certainly it is not about addressing the larger issue, obesity, and its impact on the American health care system.

This legislation demonstrates the blind eye the majority leadership is turning to the very real challenges Americans are facing today. Regardless of what happens with this legislation today, America's health care system will still be in dire need of responsible leadership. The American people deserve an honest discussion.

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by thanking my colleagues for a productive discussion on the rule and the underlying bill. Today, this House has an

opportunity to again pass meaningful reform to not only promote personal accountability but also to strengthen the opportunities for legitimate claims to be heard and adjudicated. Let us take one more step to turn back the tide of so-called "jackpot justice."

While runaway juries and frivolous lawsuits might make a few individuals and certain ambulance-chasing lawyers rich, the American people ultimately pay the price both economically and socially.

Mr. Speaker, discouraging individuals from taking personal responsibility does not help anyone. In fact, it will only make matters worse. Encouraging healthy lifestyles and wise dietary choices should always trump rewarding poor decisions by shifting the blame to innocent bystanders.

The Personal Responsibility in Food Consumption Act of 2005 is a good bill, and I look forward to further discussing its merits on the House floor today.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, a strong bipartisan majority passed this bill in the last Congress; and I have no reason to doubt that we should be able to pass it again by a similar, maybe even a stronger, margin; and I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying bill.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join many of my colleagues in strongly opposing the restrictive rule set forth on H.R. 554, the "The Personal Responsibility In Food Consumption Act of 2005." As you know, in light of the world we live and the importance of nutrition, this is a very important piece of legislation. Having such a restrictive rule truly goes too far and limits the protections of the American people. It goes without saying; this bill is drafted so broadly, it would immunize defendants for negligent and reckless behavior, including mislabeling of food products. I also object to the fact that the legislation applies retroactively, and is written for the benefit of a single special interest—the fast food industry. Third, I believe the legislation constitutes an unwarranted and hastily considered affront on our system of federalism. Finally, I oppose the bill because there are far preferable ways to respond to this issue than by rushing to judgment to pass a one-size-fits-all Federal law preempting all 50 states. Despite my concerns, I am pleased to see that a few very important amendments were ruled into order. If adopted, I believe these amendments will make major improvements to the bill.

In closing, let me note that while this issue may be important, there are far more urgent issues we need to be focusing on at this time. The aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, where thousands lost their homes and hundreds lost their lives. Unfortunately, those who were impacted the most were children. For example, many children lost 1 or both parents or a guardian as a result of Hurricane Katrina and Rita. This is where our thoughts and legislative actions need to be. In addition, the earthquake registering 7.6 in magnitude that struck Pakistan has caused major devastation in the region. While the numbers are still coming in, it has been estimated that 23,000 have died and at least 47,000 have been injured. There have also been a historical number of

children impacted by this massive earthquake. Those impacted have no access to clean drinking water, making them more vulnerable to disease and other infections.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. GINGREY. 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 question will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 54 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1730

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE) at 5 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on H. Res. 494 and on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H. Res. 494, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 1409, by the yeas and nays;

H. Res. 492, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 3549, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 3853, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 554, PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN FOOD CONSUMPTION ACT OF 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the vote on adoption of House Resolution 494 on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 310, nays 114, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 524]

YEAS—310

Aderholt	Fortenberry	Melancon
Akin	Fossella	Menendez
Alexander	Foxa	Mica
Baca	Frank (MA)	Michaud
Bachus	Franks (AZ)	Miller (FL)
Baker	Frelinghuysen	Miller (MI)
Barrett (SC)	Gallely	Miller, Gary
Barrow	Garrett (NJ)	Moore (KS)
Bartlett (MD)	Gerlach	Moran (KS)
Barton (TX)	Gibbons	Moran (VA)
Bass	Gilchrest	Murphy
Bean	Gillmor	Musgrave
Beauprez	Gingrey	Myrick
Berkley	Gohmert	Neal (MA)
Berry	Gonzalez	Neugebauer
Biggert	Goode	Ney
Bilirakis	Goodlatte	Northup
Bishop (GA)	Gordon	Norwood
Bishop (NY)	Granger	Nunes
Bishop (UT)	Graves	Nussle
Blackburn	Green (WI)	Ortiz
Blunt	Green, Gene	Osborne
Boehlert	Gutierrez	Otter
Boehner	Gutknecht	Oxley
Bonilla	Hall	Paul
Bonner	Harman	Pearce
Bono	Harris	Pelosi
Boozman	Hart	Pence
Boren	Hastings (WA)	Peterson (MN)
Boucher	Hayes	Peterson (PA)
Boustany	Hayworth	Petri
Boyd	Hefley	Pickering
Bradley (NH)	Hensarling	Pitts
Brady (TX)	Herger	Platts
Brown (SC)	Herseth	Poe
Brown-Waite,	Higgins	Pombo
Ginny	Hinojosa	Pomeroy
Burgess	Hobson	Porter
Burton (IN)	Hoekstra	Price (GA)
Buyer	Hoolley	Pryce (OH)
Calvert	Hostettler	Putnam
Camp	Hoyer	Radanovich
Cannon	Hulshof	Ramstad
Cantor	Hunter	Rangel
Capito	Hyde	Regula
Carson	Inglis (SC)	Rehberg
Carter	Israel	Reichert
Case	Issa	Renzi
Castle	Istook	Reyes
Chabot	Jackson-Lee	Reynolds
Chandler	(TX)	Rogers (AL)
Chocola	Jenkins	Rogers (KY)
Coble	Jindal	Rogers (MI)
Cole (OK)	Johnson (CT)	Rohrabacher
Conaway	Johnson (IL)	Ros-Lehtinen
Conyers	Johnson, Sam	Ross
Cooper	Jones (NC)	Royce
Costa	Kelly	Ruppersberger
Cramer	Kennedy (MN)	Ryan (WI)
Crenshaw	Kennedy (RI)	Ryun (KS)
Cubin	Kildee	Salazar
Cuellar	Kind	Sanchez, Linda
Culberson	King (IA)	T.
Cunningham	King (NY)	Sanchez, Loretta
Davis (AL)	Kirk	Sanders
Davis (CA)	Kline	Saxton
Davis (KY)	Knollenberg	Schmidt
Davis (TN)	Kolbe	Schwartz (PA)
Davis, Jo Ann	Kuhl (NY)	Schwarz (MI)
Davis, Tom	LaHood	Scott (GA)
Deal (GA)	Langevin	Scott (VA)
DeFazio	Larsen (WA)	Sensenbrenner
DeGette	Latham	Serrano
DeLay	LaTourette	Sessions
Dent	Leach	Shadegg
Diaz-Balart, L.	Lewis (CA)	Shaw
Diaz-Balart, M.	Lewis (KY)	Shays
Dicks	Linder	Sherwood
Dingell	LoBiondo	Shimkus
Doolittle	Lucas	Shuster
Doyle	Lungren, Daniel	Simmons
Drake	E.	Simpson
Dreier	Lynch	Skelton
Duncan	Mack	Smith (NJ)
Edwards	Manzullo	Smith (TX)
Ehlers	Marchant	Smith (WA)
Emanuel	Marshall	Snyder
Emerson	Matheson	Soderl
English (PA)	McCaul (TX)	Souder
Everett	McCotter	Stearns
Feeney	McCrery	Sullivan
Ferguson	McHenry	Sweeney
Fitzpatrick (PA)	McHugh	Tancredo
Flake	McIntyre	Tanner
Foley	McKeon	Taylor (MS)
Forbes	McMorris	Taylor (NC)

Terry Walden (OR)
 Thomas Walsh
 Thompson (CA) Wamp
 Thornberry Wasserman
 Tiahrt Schultz
 Tiberi Weldon (FL)
 Turner Weldon (PA)
 Upton Weller
 Van Hollen Westmoreland

Whitfield
 Wicker
 Wilson (NM)
 Wilson (SC)
 Wolf
 Wu
 Wynn
 Young (AK)
 Young (FL)

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 415, nays 9, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 525]

YEAS—415

NAYS—114

Abercrombie Holt
 Ackerman Honda
 Allen Inslee
 Baird Jackson (IL)
 Baldwin Jefferson
 Becerra Johnson, E. B.
 Berman Jones (OH)
 Blumenauer Kanjorski
 Brady (PA) Kaptur
 Brown (OH) Kilpatrick (MI)
 Brown, Corrine Kucinich
 Butterfield Lantos
 Capps Larson (CT)
 Capuano Lee
 Cardin Levin
 Cardoza Lipinski
 Carnahan Lofgren, Zoe
 Clay Lowey
 Cleaver Maloney
 Clyburn Markey
 Costello Matsui
 Crowley McCarthy
 Cummings McCollum (MN)
 Davis (IL) McDermost
 Delahunt McGovern
 DeLauro McKinney
 Doggett McNulty
 Engel Meehan
 Eshoo Meek (FL)
 Etheridge Meeks (NY)
 Evans Millender
 Farr McDonald
 Fattah Miller (NC)
 Filner Miller, George
 Ford Mollohan
 Green, Al Moore (WI)
 Hastings (FL) Murtha
 Hinchey Nadler
 Holden Napolitano

NOT VOTING—9

Andrews Grijalva
 Boswell Keller
 Davis (FL) Kingston

□ 1753

Mr. BERMAN, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. LOWEY, Mrs. MCCARTHY, Mr. OWENS, and Mr. WAXMAN changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Messrs. GONZALEZ, THOMPSON of California, KENNEDY of Rhode Island, VAN HOLLEN, and LANGEVIN changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ASSISTANCE FOR ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ACT OF 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 1409, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1409, as amended, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

Abercrombie Deal (GA)
 Ackerman DeFazio
 Aderholt DeGette
 Akin Delahunt
 Alexander DeLauro
 Allen DeLay
 Baca Dent
 Bachus Diaz-Balart, L.
 Baird Diaz-Balart, M.
 Baker Dicks
 Baldwin Dingell
 Barrett (SC) Doggett
 Barrow Doolittle
 Bartlett (MD) Doyle
 Barton (TX) Drake
 Bass Dreier
 Bean Duncan
 Beauprez Edwards
 Becerra Ehlers
 Berkley Emanuel
 Berman Emerson
 Berry Engel
 Biggert English (PA)
 Bilirakis Eshoo
 Bishop (GA) Etheridge
 Bishop (NY) Evans
 Bishop (UT) Everett
 Blackburn Farr
 Blumenauer Fattah
 Blunt Feeney
 Boehlert Ferguson
 Boehner Filner
 Bonilla Fitzpatrick (PA)
 Bonner Foley
 Bono Forbes
 Boozman Ford
 Boren Fortenberry
 Boucher Fossella
 Boustany Foxx
 Boyd Frank (MA)
 Bradley (NH) Franks (AZ)
 Brady (PA) Frelinghuysen
 Brady (TX) Gallegly
 Brown (OH) Garrett (NJ)
 Brown (SC) Gerlach
 Brown, Corrine Gibbons
 Burgess Gilchrist
 Burton (IN) Gillmor
 Butterfield Gingrey
 Buyer Gonzalez
 Calvert Goode
 Camp Goodlatte
 Cannon Gordon
 Cantor Granger
 Capito Graves
 Capps Green (WI)
 Capuano Green, Al
 Cardin Green, Gene
 Cardoza Gutierrez
 Carnahan Gutknecht
 Carson Hall
 Carter Harman
 Case Harris
 Castle Hart
 Chabot Hastings (FL)
 Chandler Hastings (WA)
 Chocola Hayes
 Clay Hayworth
 Cleaver Hefley
 Clyburn Hensarling
 Coble Herger
 Cole (OK) Herseht
 Conaway Higgins
 Conyers Hinchey
 Cooper Hinojosa
 Costa Hobson
 Costello Hoekstra
 Cramer Holden
 Crenshaw Holt
 Crowley Honda
 Cubin Hooley
 Cuellar Hostettler
 Culberson Hoyer
 Cummings Hulshof
 Cunningham Hunter
 Davis (AL) Hyde
 Davis (CA) Inglis (SC)
 Davis (IL) Inslee
 Davis (KY) Israel
 Davis (TN) Issa
 Davis, Jo Ann Istook
 Davis, Tom Jackson (IL)

Nadler
 Napolitano
 Neal (MA)
 Neugebauer
 Ney
 Northup
 Norwood
 Nunes
 Nussle
 Oberstar
 Obey
 Olver
 Ortiz
 Osborne
 Otter
 Owens
 Oxley
 Pallone
 Pascrell
 Pastor
 Payne
 Pearce
 Pelosi
 Pence
 Peterson (MN)
 Peterson (PA)
 Petri
 Pickering
 Pitts
 Platts
 Poe
 Pombo
 Pomeroy
 Porter
 Price (GA)
 Price (NC)
 Pryce (OH)
 Putnam
 Radanovich
 Rahall
 Ramstad
 Rangel
 Regula
 Rehberg
 Reichert
 Renzi
 Reyes
 Reynolds

Rogers (AL)
 Rogers (KY)
 Rogers (MI)
 Rohrabacher
 Ros-Lehtinen
 Ross
 Rothman
 Royce
 Ruppertsberger
 Rush
 Ryan (OH)
 Ryan (WI)
 Ryun (KS)
 Sabo
 Salazar
 Sanchez, Linda
 T.
 Sanchez, Loretta
 Sanders
 Saxton
 Schakowsky
 Schmidt
 Schwartz (PA)
 Schwarz (MI)
 Scott (GA)
 Scott (VA)
 Sensenbrenner
 Serrano
 Sessions
 Shaw
 Shays
 Sherman
 Sherwood
 Shimkus
 Simmons
 Simpson
 Skelton
 Slaughter
 Smith (NJ)
 Smith (TX)
 Smith (WA)
 Snyder
 Sodrel
 Solis
 Souder
 Spratt
 Stark
 Strickland

Stupak
 Sullivan
 Sweeney
 Tancred
 Tanner
 Tauscher
 Taylor (MS)
 Taylor (NC)
 Terry
 Thomas
 Thompson (CA)
 Thompson (MS)
 Thornberry
 Tiahrt
 Tiberi
 Tierney
 Towns
 Turner
 Udall (CO)
 Udall (NM)
 Upton
 Van Hollen
 Velázquez
 Vislosky
 Walden (OR)
 Walsh
 Wamp
 Wasserman
 Schultz
 Waters
 Watson
 Watt
 Waxman
 Weiner
 Weldon (FL)
 Weldon (PA)
 Weller
 Wexler
 Whitfield
 Wicker
 Wilson (NM)
 Wilson (SC)
 Wolf
 Woolsey
 Wu
 Wynn
 Young (AK)
 Young (FL)

NAYS—9

Brown-Waite,
 Ginny
 Flake
 Gohmert

Johnson, Sam
 Paul
 Shadegg
 Shuster

NOT VOTING—9

Andrews
 Boswell
 Davis (FL)

Grijalva
 Keller
 Kingston

Lewis (GA)
 Roybal-Allard
 Schiff

□ 1803

Mr. STEARNS changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MOURNING LOSS OF LIFE CAUSED BY EARTHQUAKE THAT OCCURRED ON OCTOBER 8, 2005, IN PAKISTAN AND INDIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 492.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 492, 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 423, nays 0, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 526]

YEAS—423

Abercrombie	Davis, Jo Ann	Issa	Murphy	Reyes	Stearns	Baldwin	Dreier	King (NY)
Ackerman	Davis, Tom	Istook	Murtha	Reynolds	Strickland	Barrett (SC)	Duncan	Kirk
Aderholt	Deal (GA)	Jackson (IL)	Musgrave	Rogers (AL)	Stupak	Barrow	Edwards	Kline
Akin	DeFazio	Jackson-Lee	Myrick	Rogers (KY)	Sullivan	Bartlett (MD)	Ehlers	Knollenberg
Alexander	DeGette	(TX)	Nadler	Rogers (MI)	Sweeney	Barton (TX)	Emanuel	Kolbe
Allen	DeLahunt	Jefferson	Napolitano	Rohrabacher	Tancredro	Bass	Emerson	Kucinich
Baca	DeLauro	Jenkins	Neal (MA)	Ros-Lehtinen	Tanner	Bean	Engel	Kuhl (NY)
Bachus	DeLay	Jindal	Neugebauer	Ross	Tauscher	Beauprez	English (PA)	LaHood
Baird	Dent	Johnson (CT)	Ney	Rothman	Taylor (MS)	Becerra	Eshoo	Langevin
Baker	Diaz-Balart, L.	Johnson (IL)	Northup	Royce	Taylor (NC)	Berkley	Etheridge	Lantos
Baldwin	Diaz-Balart, M.	Johnson, E. B.	Norwood	Ruppersberger	Terry	Berman	Evans	Larsen (WA)
Barrett (SC)	Dicks	Johnson, Sam	Nunes	Rush	Thomas	Berry	Everett	Larson (CT)
Barrow	Dingell	Jones (NC)	Nussle	Ryan (OH)	Thompson (CA)	Biggert	Farr	Latham
Bartlett (MD)	Doggett	Jones (OH)	Oberstar	Ryan (WI)	Thompson (MS)	Bilirakis	Fattah	Latham
Barton (TX)	Doyle	Kanjorski	Obey	Ryan (KS)	Thornberry	Bilirakis	Fattah	LaTourette
Bass	Drake	Kaptur	Oliver	Sabó	Tiahrt	Bishop (GA)	Feeney	Leach
Bean	Dreier	Kelly	Ortiz	Salazar	Tiberi	Bishop (NY)	Ferguson	Lee
Beauprez	Duncan	Kennedy (MN)	Osborne	Sánchez, Linda	Tierney	Bishop (UT)	Filner	Levin
Becerra	Edwards	Kennedy (RI)	Otter	T. Sanchez, Loretta	Towns	Blackburn	Fitzpatrick (PA)	Lewis (CA)
Berkley	Ehlers	Kildee	Owens	Sanders	Turner	Blumenauer	Flake	Lewis (KY)
Berman	Emanuel	Kilpatrick (MI)	Oxley	Saxton	Udall (CO)	Blunt	Foley	Linder
Berry	Emerson	Kind	Pallone	Schakowsky	Udall (NM)	Boehler	Forbes	Lipinski
Biggert	Engel	King (IA)	Pascrell	Schmidt	Upton	Boehner	Ford	LoBiondo
Bilirakis	English (PA)	King (NY)	Pastor	Schwartz (PA)	Van Hollen	Bonilla	Fortenberry	Lofgren, Zoe
Bishop (GA)	Eshoo	Kirk	Paul	Schwarz (MD)	Velázquez	Bonner	Fossella	Lowe
Bishop (NY)	Etheridge	Kline	Payne	Scott (GA)	Visclosky	Bono	Fox	Lucas
Bishop (UT)	Evans	Knollenberg	Pearce	Scott (VA)	Walsh	Boozman	Frank (MA)	Lungren, Daniel
Blackburn	Everett	Kolbe	Pelosi	Sensenbrenner	Wamp	Boren	Franks (AZ)	E.
Blumenauer	Farr	Kucinich	Pence	Serrano	Wasserman	Boucher	Frelinghuysen	Lynch
Blunt	Fattah	Kuhl (NY)	Peterson (MN)	Sessions	Schultz	Boustany	Gallely	Mack
Boehler	Feeney	LaHood	Peterson (PA)	Shadegg	Waters	Boyd	Garrett (NJ)	Maloney
Boehner	Ferguson	Langevin	Petri	Shaw	Watson	Bradley (NH)	Gerlach	Manzullo
Bonilla	Filner	Lantos	Pickering	Shays	Watt	Brady (PA)	Gibbons	Marchant
Bonner	Fitzpatrick (PA)	Larsen (WA)	Pitts	Sherman	Waxman	Brady (TX)	Gilchrest	Markey
Bono	Flake	Larson (CT)	Platts	Sherwood	Weiner	Brown (OH)	Gillmor	Marshall
Boozman	Foley	Latham	Poe	Shimkus	Weldon (FL)	Brown (SC)	Gingrey	Matheson
Boren	Forbes	LaTourette	Pomero	Shuster	Weldon (PA)	Brown, Corrine	Gohmert	Matsui
Boucher	Ford	Leach	Pomeroy	Simmons	Weller	Brown-Waite,	Gonzalez	McCarthy
Boustany	Fortenberry	Lee	Porter	Simpson	Westmoreland	Ginny	Goode	McCaul (TX)
Boyd	Fossella	Levin	Price (GA)	Skelton	Wexler	Burgess	Goodlatte	McCullum (MN)
Bradley (NH)	Fox	Lewis (CA)	Price (NC)	Slaughter	Whitfield	Burton (IN)	Gordon	McCotter
Brady (PA)	Frank (MA)	Lewis (KY)	Price (OH)	Smith (NJ)	Wicker	Butterfield	Granger	McCery
Brady (TX)	Franks (AZ)	Linder	Putnam	Smith (TX)	Wilson (NM)	Buyer	Graves	McDermott
Brown (OH)	Frelinghuysen	Lipinski	Radanovich	Smith (WA)	Wilson (SC)	Calvert	Green (WI)	McGovern
Brown (SC)	Gallely	LoBiondo	Rahall	Snyder	Wolf	Camp	Green, Al	McHenry
Brown, Corrine	Garrett (NJ)	Lofgren, Zoe	Ramstad	Sodrel	Woolsey	Cannon	Green, Gene	McHugh
Brown-Waite,	Ginny	Lowe	Rangel	Solis	Wu	Cantor	Gutierrez	McIntyre
Ginny	Gibbons	Lucas	Regula	Souder	Wynn	Capito	Gutknecht	McKeon
Burgess	Gilchrest	Lungren, Daniel	Rehberg	Spratt	Young (AK)	Capps	Hall	McKinney
Burton (IN)	Gillmor	E.	Reichert	Stark	Young (FL)	Capuano	Harman	McMorris
Butterfield	Gingrey	Lynch	Doollittle			Cardin	Harris	McNulty
Buyer	Gohmert	Mack				Cardoza	Hart	Meehan
Calvert	Gonzalez	Maloney				Carnahan	Hastings (FL)	Meek (FL)
Camp	Goode	Manzullo				Carson	Hastings (WA)	Meeks (NY)
Cannon	Goodlatte	Marchant				Carter	Hayes	Melancon
Cantor	Gordon	Markey				Case	Hayworth	Menendez
Capito	Granger	Marshall				Castle	Hefley	Mica
Capps	Graves	Matheson				Chabot	Hensarling	Michaud
Capuano	Green (WI)	Matsui				Chandler	Herger	Millender-
Cardin	Green, Al	McCarthy				Chocola	Herseth	McDonald
Cardoza	Green, Gene	McCaul (TX)				Clay	Higgins	Miller (FL)
Carnahan	Gutierrez	McCullum (MN)				Cleaver	Hinche	Miller (MI)
Carson	Gutknecht	McCotter				Clyburn	Hinojosa	Miller (NC)
Carter	Hall	McCrery				Coble	Hobson	Miller, Gary
Case	Harman	McDermott				Cole (OK)	Hoekstra	Miller, George
Castle	Harris	McGovern				Cole (OK)	Holden	Mollohan
Chabot	Hart	McHenry				Conaway	Holt	Moore (KS)
Chandler	Hastings (FL)	McHugh				Conyers	Honda	Moore (WI)
Chocola	Hastings (WA)	McIntyre				Cooper	Hooey	Moran (KS)
Clay	Hayes	McKeon				Costa	Hostettler	Moran (VA)
Cleaver	Hayworth	McKinney				Costello	Hoyer	Murphy
Clyburn	Hefley	McMorris				Cramer	Hulshof	Murtha
Coble	Hensarling	McNulty				Crenshaw	Hunter	Musgrave
Cole (OK)	Herger	Meehan				Crowley	Hyde	Myrick
Conaway	Herseth	Meek (FL)				Cuellar	Inglis (SC)	Nadler
Conyers	Higgins	Meeks (NY)				Culberson	Inlee	Napolitano
Cooper	Hinche	Melancon				Cummings	Israel	Neal (MA)
Costa	Hinojosa	Menendez				Cunningham	Issa	Neugebauer
Costello	Hobson	Mica				Davis (AL)	Istook	Ney
Cramer	Hoekstra	Michaud				Davis (CA)	Jackson (IL)	Northup
Crenshaw	Holden	Millender-				Davis (IL)	Jackson-Lee	Norwood
Crowley	Holt	McDonald				Davis (KY)	(TX)	Nunes
Cubin	Honda	Miller (FL)				Davis (TN)	Jefferson	Nussle
Cuellar	Hooey	Miller (MI)				Davis, Jo Ann	Jenkins	Oberstar
Culberson	Hostettler	Miller (NC)				Davis, Tom	Jindal	Obey
Cummings	Hoyer	Miller, Gary				Deal (GA)	Johnson (CT)	Oliver
Cunningham	Hulshof	Miller, George				DeFazio	Johnson (IL)	Ortiz
Davis (AL)	Hunter	Mollohan				DeGette	Johnson, E. B.	Osborne
Davis (CA)	Hyde	Moore (KS)				DeLahunt	Johnson, Sam	Oxley
Davis (IL)	Inglis (SC)	Moore (KS)				DeLauro	Jones (NC)	Owens
Davis (KY)	Inslee	Moran (KS)				Dent	Jones (OH)	Oxley
Davis (TN)	Israel	Moran (VA)				Diaz-Balart, L.	Kanjorski	Pallone
						Diaz-Balart, M.	Kaptur	Pascrell
						Dicks	Kelly	Pastor
						Dingell	Kennedy (MN)	Paul
						Doggett	Kennedy (RI)	Payne
						Doollittle	Kildee	Pearce
						Doyle	Kilpatrick (MI)	Pelosi
						Drake	Kind	Pence
							King (IA)	Peterson (MN)

NOT VOTING—10

Andrews	Grijalva	Roybal-Allard
Boswell	Keller	Schiff
Davis (FL)	Kingston	
Doollittle	Lewis (GA)	

□ 1811

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.

WILLIAM F. CLINGER, JR. POST OFFICE BUILDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 3549.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3549, 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 422, nays 1, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 527]

YEAS—422

Ackerman	Alexander	Bachus
Aderholt	Allen	Baird
Akin	Baca	Baker

Peterson (PA)	Sanders	Thomas	Bono	Frank (MA)	Lungren, Daniel	Rohrabacher	Simmons	Udall (CO)
Petri	Saxton	Thompson (CA)	Boozman	Franks (AZ)	E.	Ros-Lehtinen	Simpson	Udall (NM)
Pickering	Schakowsky	Thompson (MS)	Boren	Frelinghuysen	Lynch	Ross	Skelton	Upton
Pitts	Schmidt	Thornberry	Boucher	Gallegly	Mack	Rothman	Slaughter	Van Hollen
Platts	Schwartz (PA)	Tiahrt	Boustany	Garrett (NJ)	Maloney	Royce	Smith (NJ)	Velázquez
Poe	Schwarz (MI)	Tiberi	Boyd	Gerlach	Manzullo	Ruppersberger	Smith (TX)	Visclosky
Pombo	Scott (GA)	Tierney	Bradley (NH)	Gibbons	Marchant	Rush	Smith (WA)	Walden (OR)
Pomeroy	Scott (VA)	Towns	Brady (PA)	Gilchrest	Markey	Ryan (OH)	Snyder	Walsh
Porter	Sensenbrenner	Turner	Brady (TX)	Gillmor	Marshall	Ryan (WI)	Sodrel	Wamp
Price (GA)	Serrano	Udall (CO)	Brown (OH)	Gingrey	Matheson	Ryun (KS)	Solis	Wasserman
Price (NC)	Sessions	Udall (NM)	Brown (SC)	Gohmert	Matsui	Sabo	Souder	Schultz
Pryce (OH)	Shadegg	Upton	Brown, Corrine	Gonzalez	McCarthy	Salazar	Spratt	Waters
Putnam	Shaw	Van Hollen	Brown-Waite,	Goode	McCaul (TX)	Sánchez, Linda	Stark	Watson
Radanovich	Shays	Velázquez	Ginny	Goodlatte	McCollum (MN)	T.	Stearns	Watt
Rahall	Sherman	Visclosky	Burgess	Gordon	McCotter	Sanchez, Loretta	Strickland	Waxman
Ramstad	Sherwood	Walden (OR)	Burton (IN)	Granger	McCrery	Sanders	Stupak	Weiner
Rangel	Shimkus	Walsh	Butterfield	Graves	McDermott	Saxton	Sullivan	Weldon (FL)
Regula	Shuster	Wamp	Buyer	Green (WI)	McGovern	Schakowsky	Sweeney	Weldon (PA)
Rehberg	Simmons	Wasserman	Calvert	Green, Al	McHenry	Schmidt	Tancredo	Weller
Reichert	Simpson	Schultz	Calvert	Green, Gene	McHugh	Schwartz (PA)	Tanner	Westmoreland
Renzi	Skelton	Waters	Cannon	Camp	McIntyre	Schwarz (MI)	Tauscher	Wexler
Reyes	Slaughter	Watson	Cantor	Gutierrez	McKeon	Scott (GA)	Taylor (MS)	Whitfield
Reynolds	Smith (NJ)	Watt	Capito	Gutknecht	McKinney	Scott (VA)	Taylor (NC)	Terry
Rogers (AL)	Smith (TX)	Waxman	Capps	Hall	McMorris	Sensenbrenner	Thomas	Wicker
Rogers (KY)	Smith (WA)	Weiner	Capuano	Harman	McNulty	Serrano	Thompson (CA)	Wilson (NM)
Rogers (MI)	Snyder	Weldon (FL)	Cardin	Harris	Meehan	Sessions	Thompson (MS)	Wilson (SC)
Rohrabacher	Sodrel	Weldon (PA)	Cardoza	Hart	Meek (FL)	Shadegg	Thornberry	Wolf
Ros-Lehtinen	Solis	Weller	Carnahan	Hastings (FL)	Meeks (NY)	Shaw	Tiahrt	Woolsey
Ross	Souder	Westmoreland	Carson	Hastings (WA)	Melancon	Shays	Tiberi	Wu
Rothman	Spratt	Wexler	Carter	Hayes	Menendez	Sherman	Tierney	Wynn
Royce	Stearns	Whitfield	Case	Hayworth	Mica	Sherwood	Towns	Young (AK)
Ruppersberger	Strickland	Wicker	Castle	Hefley	Michaud	Shimkus	Turner	Young (FL)
Rush	Stupak	Wilson (NM)	Chabot	Hensarling	Millender-	Shuster		
Ryan (OH)	Sullivan	Wilson (SC)	Chandler	Herger	McDonald			
Ryan (WI)	Sweeney	Wolf	Chocoma	Herseth	Miller (FL)			
Ryun (KS)	Tancredo	Woolsey	Clay	Higgins	Miller (MI)			
Sabo	Tanner	Wu	Cleaver	Hinchee	Miller (NC)			
Salazar	Tauscher	Wynn	Clyburn	Hinojosa	Miller (NY)			
Sánchez, Linda	Taylor (MS)	Young (AK)	Coble	Hobson	Miller, Gary			
T.	Taylor (NC)	Young (FL)	Cole (OK)	Hoekstra	Miller, George			
Sanchez, Loretta	Terry		Conaway	Holden	Mollohan			

NAYS—1

Abercrombie
NOT VOTING—10

Andrews	Keller	Schiff
Boswell	Kingston	Stark
Davis (FL)	Lewis (GA)	
Grijalva	Royal-Allard	

□ 1819

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WILLIE VAUGHN POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 3853.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. PORTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3853, 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 421, nays 0, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 528]

YEAS—421

Abercrombie	Barrett (SC)	Biggart
Ackerman	Barrow	Bilirakis
Aderholt	Bartlett (MD)	Bishop (GA)
Akin	Barton (TX)	Bishop (NY)
Alexander	Bass	Bishop (UT)
Allen	Bean	Blackburn
Baca	Beauprez	Blumenauer
Bachus	Becerra	Boehlert
Baird	Berkley	Boehner
Baker	Berman	Bonilla
Baldwin	Berry	Bonner

Bono	Boozman	Frank (MA)
Boren	Boucher	Franks (AZ)
Boustany	Boucher	Frelinghuysen
Boyd	Boustany	Gallegly
Bradley (NH)	Boyd	Garrett (NJ)
Brady (PA)	Bradley (NH)	Gerlach
Brady (TX)	Brady (PA)	Gibbons
Brown (OH)	Brady (TX)	Gilchrest
Brown (SC)	Brown (OH)	Gillmor
Brown, Corrine	Brown (SC)	Gingrey
Brown-Waite,	Brown, Corrine	Gohmert
Ginny	Brown-Waite,	Gonzalez
Burgess	Ginny	Goode
Burton (IN)	Burgess	Goodlatte
Butterfield	Burton (IN)	Gordon
Buyer	Butterfield	Granger
Calvert	Buyer	Graves
Camp	Calvert	Green (WI)
Cannon	Camp	Green, Al
Cantor	Cannon	Green, Gene
Capito	Cantor	Gutierrez
Capps	Capito	Gutknecht
Capuano	Capps	Hall
Cardin	Capuano	Harman
Cardoza	Cardin	Harris
Carnahan	Cardoza	Hart
Carson	Carnahan	Hastings (FL)
Carter	Carson	Hastings (WA)
Case	Carter	Hayes
Castle	Case	Hayworth
Chabot	Castle	Hefley
Chandler	Chabot	Hensarling
Chocoma	Chandler	Herger
Clay	Chocoma	Herseth
Cleaver	Clay	Higgins
Clyburn	Cleaver	Hinchee
Coble	Clyburn	Hinojosa
Cole (OK)	Coble	Hobson
Conaway	Cole (OK)	Hoekstra
Conyers	Conaway	Holden
Cooper	Conyers	Holt
Costa	Cooper	Honda
Costello	Costa	Hooley
Cramer	Costello	Hostettler
Crenshaw	Cramer	Hoyer
Crowley	Crenshaw	Hulshof
Cubin	Crowley	Hunter
Cuellar	Cubin	Hyde
Culberson	Cuellar	Inglis (SC)
Cummings	Culberson	Inslee
Cunningham	Cummings	Israel
Davis (AL)	Cunningham	Issa
Davis (CA)	Davis (AL)	Istook
Davis (IL)	Davis (CA)	Jackson (IL)
Davis (KY)	Davis (IL)	Jackson-Lee
Davis (TN)	Davis (KY)	(TX)
Davis, Jo Ann	Davis (TN)	Jefferson
Davis, Tom	Davis, Jo Ann	Jenkins
Deal (GA)	Davis, Tom	Jindal
DeFazio	Deal (GA)	Johnson (CT)
DeGette	DeFazio	Johnson (IL)
DeLahunt	DeGette	Johnson, E. B.
DeLauro	DeLahunt	Johnson, Sam
DeLay	DeLauro	Jones (NC)
Dent	DeLay	Jones (OH)
Diaz-Balart, L.	Dent	Kanjorski
Diaz-Balart, M.	Diaz-Balart, L.	Kaptur
Dicks	Diaz-Balart, M.	Kelly
Dingell	Dicks	Kennedy (MN)
Doggett	Dingell	Kennedy (RI)
Doolittle	Doggett	Kildee
Doyle	Doolittle	Kilpatrick (MI)
Drake	Doyle	Kind
Dreier	Drake	King (IA)
Duncan	Dreier	King (NY)
Edwards	Duncan	Kirk
Ehlers	Edwards	Kline
Emanuel	Ehlers	Knollenberg
Emerson	Emanuel	Kolbe
Engel	Emmanuel	Kucinich
English (PA)	Emerson	Kuhl (NY)
Eshoo	Engel	LaHood
Etheridge	English (PA)	Langevin
Evans	Eshoo	Lantos
Everett	Etheridge	Larsen (WA)
Farr	Evans	Larson (CT)
Feehey	Everett	Latham
Ferguson	Farr	LaTourrette
Finler	Feehey	Leach
Fitzpatrick (PA)	Ferguson	Lee
Flake	Finler	Levin
Foley	Fitzpatrick (PA)	Lewis (CA)
Forbes	Flake	Lewis (KY)
Ford	Foley	Linder
Fortenberry	Forbes	Lipinski
Fossella	Ford	LoBiondo
Fox	Fortenberry	Lofgren, Zoe
	Fossella	Lowey
	Fox	Lucas

Rohrabacher	Simmons	Udall (CO)
Ros-Lehtinen	Simpson	Udall (NM)
Ross	Skelton	Upton
Rothman	Slaughter	Van Hollen
Royce	Smith (NJ)	Velázquez
Ruppersberger	Smith (TX)	Visclosky
Rush	Smith (WA)	Walden (OR)
Ryan (OH)	Snyder	Walsh
Ryan (WI)	Sodrel	Wamp
Ryun (KS)	Solis	Wasserman
Sabo	Souder	Schultz
Salazar	Spratt	Waters
Sánchez, Linda	Stark	Watson
T.	Stearns	Watt
Sanchez, Loretta	Strickland	Weiner
Sanders	Stupak	Weldon (FL)
Saxton	Sullivan	Weldon (PA)
Schakowsky	Sweeney	Weller
Schmidt	Tancredo	Westmoreland
Schwartz (PA)	Tanner	Wexler
Schwarz (MI)	Tauscher	Whitfield
Scott (GA)	Taylor (MS)	Terry
Scott (VA)	Taylor (NC)	Thomas
Sensenbrenner	Thompson (CA)	Thompson (MS)
Serrano	Thompson (MS)	Thornberry
Sessions	Thornberry	Tiahrt
Shadegg	Tiahrt	Tiberi
Shaw	Tiberi	Tierney
Shays	Tierney	Towns
Sherman	Towns	Turner
Sherwood	Turner	
Shimkus		
Shuster		

NOT VOTING—12

Andrews	Fattah	Lewis (GA)
Blunt	Grijalva	Murtha
Boswell	Keller	Royal-Allard
Davis (FL)	Kingston	Schiff

□ 1827

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, due to a previous commitment, I was absent from legislative business on Monday, October 17, 2005 and Tuesday, October 18, 2005. Had I been present, I would have voted accordingly: On rollcall No. 521, approving the Journal, I would have voted "nay". On rollcall No. 522, passage of H. Res. 457, I would have voted "yea". On rollcall No. 523, passage of H. Res. 491, I would have voted "yea". On rollcall No. 524, passage of H. Res. 494, I would have voted "nay". On rollcall No. 525, passage of H.R. 1409, I would have voted "yea". On rollcall No. 526, passage of H. Res. 492, I would have voted "yea". On rollcall No. 527, passage of H.R. 3549, I would have voted "yea". On rollcall No. 528, passage of H.R. 3853, I would have voted "yea".

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I missed five votes on October 18th, 2005. Had I been present I would have voted "yes" on rollcall Nos. 525, 526, 527 and 528. I would have voted "no" on rollcall No. 524.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2290

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 2290.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1830

SALUTING THE HOUSTON ASTROS

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I know that we have spent the day on some very serious and very important issues.

Coming from Houston, Texas, however, I wanted to salute my team, even as they make their way to St. Louis to begin their journey and their trek that we hope will be a successful run at the World Series. The Houston Astros have given us a good run this season. It is not over. We had a challenging game last evening.

But I thought it was always appropriate to thank a team when it is on its way to making good. The Astros have played their hearts out. To Drayton McLane and family and to the Astros and their leadership, their coaches, their corporate office and all of the players and their families and all of the Houston fans, hold on and be strong.

Because we know that a good run and a strong play and the right kind of spirit will give us the opportunity to look down at Wednesday and Thursday for a better day. So thank you, Astros, for a season already done. And we look forward to a new day on Wednesday and Thursday.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted, "aye" on rollcall vote 521, "aye" on rollcall vote 522 and "aye" on rollcall vote 523.

IRAQI ELECTIONS

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my enthusiasm about what the future holds for Iraq's women. This past weekend marked yet another courageous showing of women who are eager to live in a democracy, first in Afghanistan and now in Iraq.

The message is very, very clear that these individuals are ready, willing, and able to vote for a change. President Bush stated that our fight in Iraq includes promoting the rights of women everywhere. This fight is a very important one. Our society proves that when women are given the same rights and opportunities as men, the entire nation benefits greatly.

The constitutional referendum specifies equality regardless of sex and actually reserves 25 percent of the national assembly for women. Because of this provision, for the first time in Iraq's

history, women will have a voice in their country.

Currently, two-thirds of all Iraqi women are illiterate. Since our presence in Iraq, 2,400 schools have been renovated, 3,000 teachers trained. And this is resulting in 2 million girls back in school.

The progress that has been made for the women of Iraq is exceptional. During Saddam Hussein's reign, women were imprisoned, tortured and raped; and their attackers faced no recourse. There was no justice under this dictator of terror.

Today, injustice no longer is the rule. Iraqi women will no longer have to fear the terribly cruelty of their past because they will have control of their future.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). 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.

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

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order for 5 minutes.

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

There was no objection.

BRING OUR TROOPS HOME FROM IRAQ

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I did not see any purple fingers in this Chamber so far this week. We all remember how the Iraqi elections in January were hailed by the President's supporters as the turning point in Iraq.

Well, now there has been another election, a referendum on the Constitution. And what we are hearing from the pro-war forces is that we are still in for a long and deadly occupation in Iraq.

It was all going to be so simple, remember? We would march into Baghdad and depose Saddam Hussein. The grateful Iraqis would embrace the American presence, and a glorious democracy would spontaneously bloom. The Iraq situation was often compared to Germany and Japan after World War II where we were able to quickly fashion functioning democracy.

The New York Times cites Richard Armitage, Bush's former deputy Sec-

retary of State, who notes that those were homogeneous societies, whereas Iraq is a patchwork of rival ethnic groups. Armitage also points out that Germany and Japan, in 1945, were cowed populations, exhausted and deeply shocked by the war.

Iraqis, however, were unshocked and unawed. They simply want their country back. So 2½ years and 2,000 body bags later, we are spinning our wheels and the President who drove us into this ditch in the first place has no plan for getting us out.

Instead, according to a New York Times article on Monday, he seems to be preparing us for, and I quote, "a struggle of Cold War proportions." Does that mean we can look forward to a half century of American boots on the ground in Iraq?

One of the President's aids says in the article that this is a struggle of ideologies that is not going to end with one election or one constitution, or even a string of elections. Is this what the American people signed up for, a titanic ideological struggle with no end in sight? No, they were told Saddam Hussein had to be removed because he had deadly weapons pointed at American cities.

As he has repeated over the last few years, the President is mixing apples and oranges. The President is saying that there is a threat of Islamic terrorism which is real and must be addressed, and that is true. Though I would argue we need to use more diplomatic and fewer military tools in that struggle.

Then there is the war in Iraq, which is and was not a country of Islamic terrorists until we actually invaded that area and actually inflamed Muslim extremists and served as a recruiting tool for al Qaeda.

In a twisted way it turns out that the Bush administration was right. You cannot separate Iraq from the war on terrorism. What they did not tell us is that invading Iraq has helped the wrong side of the war on terrorism.

That same Times article quotes Kenneth Pollack, a scholar who initially supported the Iraq invasion. Pollack now says, and I quote him, "The theory that democracy is the antidote to insurgency gets disproven on the ground every day."

So if we cannot defeat the insurgents by continuing to hold elections, what can we do? There is only one answer. We can take away the one thing that animates the insurgency in the first place, that is, our perceived military occupation of Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I traveled to Iraq a few weeks ago to meet with our military and to learn more about their mission. I cannot tell you how impressed I was with their courage, their loyalty, their intelligence. From the officers down to the citizen soldiers of the National Guard, they are indeed the best America has to offer.

Unfortunately, they have been let down by their civilian superiors who

sent them to Iraq on false pretenses, on a poorly defined mission, without all of the tools they needed, and without a plan to get them out of there.

Our soldiers deserve better. They deserve a clear strategy from their President. They deserve a one-way ticket back home.

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

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order for 5 minutes.

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

There was no objection.

THE IRAQ WAR

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

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, supporters of the preemptive war against Iraq say it was justified by the unprovoked 9/11 attacks. They claim that Muslim hatred for our democracy, freedom, Western values, and prosperity inspired the 19 suicide terrorists who attacked us on that dreadful day.

Opponents of the war argue that al Qaeda radicals who planned the attacks were not allies of Saddam Hussein, and that Iraq posed no threat to our national security. They further argue that our occupation of Iraq now inspires a growing number of radical Islamists to join the ranks of al Qaeda and support its war against U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

But proponents of the war insist that our presence in Iraq is not what motivates al Qaeda to attack us, since we had no troops on Iraqi soil on 9/11; and yet al Qaeda attacked us anyway.

The enemy, they claim, is simply a group of radical Islamic fundamentalists who have hijacked the Muslim religion and declared war against our values for no legitimate or logical reason.

We should look at the facts if we want to understand why a growing number of Iraqis and Muslims worldwide are now motivated to join the insurgents in a guerrilla resistance that includes suicide terrorism. It is true that there were no U.S. troops in Iraq on 9/11, but it is also true that Saddam Hussein and Iraq had nothing to do with that attack.

In addition, we have been bombing Iraq since 1991, more than 10 years, on a regular basis. Stiff economic sanctions imposed on Iraq for over a decade by the U.S. and Britain caused extreme suffering and death of hundreds of

thousands of innocent Iraqis, many of them children.

Most military experts consider an economic blockade an act of war. We insulted and provoked millions of Muslims, especially fundamentalists, by keeping a military base in Saudi Arabia after the Persian Gulf War.

Osama bin Laden specifically expressed outrage at this policy in his writings. Throughout the 1980s, we allied ourselves with Saddam Hussein, a secularist in his fight against Iran and other Shiite fundamentalists.

We involved ourselves in this civil struggle within the Muslim community. For decades, we supported various secular Arab governments throughout the region, always in opposition to religious fundamentalists. The U.S. never wavered in its enthusiastic support of Israel over Arab-Muslim interests.

For decades Muslim fundamentalists have viewed U.S. policy as being driven by religious zealots because of the strong vocal support from many fundamentalist Christian leaders.

For literally hundreds of years, Europe has continually challenged Muslim and Arab domination of the Middle East. We have never, Europe or the United States, denied our interest in controlling Middle East oil. From Woodrow Wilson to the current neoconservative brand of foreign policy, the zeal for spreading democracy and Western values through force of arms has antagonized most Muslims.

□ 1845

If we continue to insist that our policy of foreign intervention has nothing to do with the ongoing war against an enemy we refuse to understand, we guarantee that this war will not soon end.

My suggestion is to change our foreign policy. Stop the war, bring our troops home, and stop the wasteful spending overseas. If we do not, the real security of our homeland will continue to be in jeopardy and the economic consequences will get worse and our freedoms at home will be further reduced.

It is time to say no to undeclared wars. It is time to say no to political and U.N. wars. It is time to say no to preemptive war. It is time to say no to nation building. It is time to say no to assuming it is our duty to make the world safe for democracy. It is time to say no to meddling in the affairs of others. It is time to say no to fighting countries that have never threatened our national security. It is time to stop financing extravagant war spending by printing more money. It is time to say yes to more sensible diplomacy.

The senseless death and suffering of so many with nothing to show for it must end. Peace is a far better goal to strive for than an undefined victory in a war that has no end.

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

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

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN).

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

There was no objection.

MAKE WISE BUDGET CHOICES

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, since the year 2000 this Congress has racked up more than \$3 trillion in new debt. Mind you, at a time in which in 2000 the American budget was running a surplus, but in that time we have run deficits on average a little north of \$400 billion and we have added \$3 trillion to the Nation's debt.

How did we do it? We have tried to fight two wars with four tax cuts; and this Congress has served as an ATM to the special interests, showering them with billions in tax breaks and handouts. The prescription drug bill is a classic example where we are now adding close to what the American people were once told would be a \$400 billion prescription drug bill, is now worth \$800 billion and \$139 billion in extra profits to the pharmaceutical companies over 10 years.

Yet, all of the sudden when it comes to rebuilding the lives of our fellow citizens in New Orleans and on the coast, we are talking about cutting education, health care, areas of environment and energy for the rest of America, \$50 billion; and all the while we are trying to do that this Congress under a Republican majority wants to shower the wealthiest 1 percent, those who earn over \$200,000, with more tax cuts and more debt. Yet, what are we saying to the rest of America? You are going to get cuts in education, health care, environment, energy, national security areas, homeland in the area of police.

Yet the interesting thing, while all of this is happening here in the United States we are trying to turn ourselves into a pretzel, trying to cut \$50 billion from our education and health care. What are we doing in Iraq at this time? What are we doing in Iraq?

We are actually renovating and building 110 primary health care centers, vaccinating 3.2 million Iraqi children, rehabilitating 2,700 schools, training 36,000 secondary school teachers in Iraq. We fund 3,120 community development projects in Iraq, and we have provided housing for tens of thousands of Iraqis. And what do we tell the American people in the same area,

health care and education? We are going to cut in America.

This is the only time in American history. When you look back to it, Abraham Lincoln thought of the land grant colleges and the transcontinental railroad system. Eisenhower at the end of the Korean War thought of the interstate highway system. President Kennedy at the ending days of Vietnam was thinking of putting a man on the moon.

At this time when we are thinking about, as we have always thought towards the end of the war, every President—Roosevelt had the G.I. bill—every President said, how do we bring this peace home to America and how do we make sure we invest in America so we reap the benefits as a country? Only this President at this time in this war is thinking about rebuilding another country while cutting back in the United States.

President Lincoln thought of the land grant colleges. We are going to cut Pell grants. President Eisenhower thought of the interstate highway system. President Kennedy thought of putting a man on the moon. What are we going to do? We are going to cut Amtrak in this country.

This is not the way to invest in America. You want to make the 21st century the American century like the 20th century? You have to invest in America. What have you done? You have turned the budget into a pretzel all to protect tax cuts for the wealthiest of Americans.

They are patriots too. When it comes to America's future, every American must have skin in the game. When it comes to rebuilding the coast, that is the families and the communities of New Orleans, Mississippi and Alabama. The choice should not be cutting Pell grants and college loans, cutting student nutrition programs, cutting health care for our elderly and most vulnerable as a way to pay for that.

Yet at the same time this Congress has allocated \$445 billion to Iraq and it is going to go north to \$600 billion unaccounted for, unpaid for, all debt the American taxpayer has to pay for. And what are the Americans going to get for it? Cuts in education, cuts in the students loan programs, cuts in health care clinics. Our senior citizens are going to get cuts in health care.

That is the budget you have presented to the American people. The American people deserve better. We can build a stronger America. We do not and America does not deserve gas prices at \$3 a gallon. Energy prices this winter are going up by 50 percent. Inflation is increasing at its fastest rate, 15 percent.

What are you providing Americans? You are providing them protection for those who earn \$200,000 or more and the rest of America gets cuts in its investment for its future. Yet you have told the Iraqis. Why do we not give Iraq some cuts in their investments and provide America the schools we are talking about in Iraq?

I have no problem investing in Iraq's future. What I have a problem with is the cuts in America's future that you want to make here. We can do better for America. We can definitely do better. A stronger America around the world begins at home.

You are making the wrong choices for America's future. I hope as we deal with this budget and the time coming up for this budget that we understand that writing \$445 billion of hot checks for Iraq's future and cutting education and health care in America is not the right choice.

UNRECOVERED GOLD IN THE GULF

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, down in the depths of the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico lies some old Spanish galleon with unrecovered gold, but there is another type of gold in the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico, black gold. We call it crude oil. There is also white gold there as well. We call it natural gas.

These natural gold reserves are energy for today's Americans and we need to drill for these gold reserves. According to the Department of Energy, families across the United States will experience winter heating bills that will be up to 50 percent higher for those who heat with natural gas. This alarming data is yet another reason for us to open up the Outer Continental Shelf and begin drilling for more natural gas and oil off our own coastlines.

The so-called global warming will not keep Americans warm this winter. We have got to become more self-sufficient when it comes to energy, natural gas and crude oil. It borders on the absurd to continue to be held hostage by foreign countries and foreign oil and ignore the billions of barrels that have yet to be drilled off the United States coastline.

Mr. Speaker, I have introduced H.R. 3811 to help relieve our energy woes and help stop U.S. dependence on foreign oil. This legislation will allow for safe oil and natural gas exploration along the Outer Continental Shelf. This bill would do away with all the moratoriums and executive orders that limit leasing activities while maintaining environmental.

Right now 90 percent of our coastline is off limits to drilling because the Federal Government prohibits it. In this chart, Mr. Speaker, I show the three places off the coast of Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi where we drill. All the red here, these are sacred places where we cannot drill for oil. Maybe Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi ought to join OPEC.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, we have got to drill off these other areas because there is oil and there is natural gas in these areas off our Outer Continental Shelf.

It is a myth, Mr. Speaker, that we cannot drill offshore safely. The best

experts in the world are from the United States and they know how to drill safely. It is a myth perpetrated on the American people by environmental extremists. No one wants polluted waters. I certainly do not, but we can have both safe drilling and environmentally correct drilling as well.

Let us look at some of the facts, Mr. Speaker. This chart shows pollution from oil, crude oil. Most of the pollution that is in our oceans comes from nature itself, from seepage on the bottom of the ocean. About 63 percent comes from nature; 32 percent comes from jet skis and oil runoff from American soil; 3 percent comes from those tankers that are bringing crude oil in from the Middle East; and way down here 2 percent of the pollution of crude oil comes from offshore drilling. It is a myth to think that we cannot drill offshore in a correct, an environmentally correct way.

The National Academy For Sciences has furnished this information. The American public needs to know the truth about offshore drilling. If coastlines like Florida are worried about the environmental threats, maybe they should stop people from using jet skis and boating because more than a quarter of the spills come from just that. But maybe we should do some research.

According to the Department of Interior, since 1985 more than 7 billion barrels of oil were produced in Federal offshore waters, with less than .001 percent spilled. That is a 99.99 percent record for clean operations. My Jeep leaks more oil than this.

Katrina and Rita hit the coastline very hard, Mr. Speaker. There were high winds, billions of dollars in damages, refineries were closed, but we did not hear anything about oil spills from offshore rigs that were damaged. Why? Because it cannot occur. Even those violent ladies of the gulf could not get a good oil spill to happen.

People in these coastal States want cheap gasoline. They want natural gas, but they say do not drill off our coastlines. Mr. Speaker, this is hypocritical and it violates common sense. Plus, leasing these reserves will bring money to the United States Treasury and to State governments.

If Americans expect to continue driving and heating their homes at low prices, we must begin safe drilling in other places besides the gulf. Economies on the coast rely heavily on tourism and they voice concerns about the so-called environmental impact. Mr. Speaker, if fuel costs continue to rise, the planes and automobiles will be used less and these tourists will never show up at these coastal places. It seems like the consequences of higher gas prices could have a worse impact than an innocent oil rig that is 100 miles off the coast.

Around the world nearly every other major country with oil and gas reserves is promoting investment and developing their offshore capacity. They

even drill in the North Sea, the roughest waters in the world, and they do so safely.

Mr. Speaker, we need to continue to explore the Outer Continental Shelf or we will suffer the consequences. Someone has said we will freeze in the dark and end up riding bicycles if we do not use common sense. Mr. Speaker, that is just the way it is.

NATIONAL OCEAN INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION
BASIC FACTS ABOUT OFFSHORE OIL AND
NATURAL GAS

U.S. offshore energy production is an essential component of the nation's energy and economic security. U.S. offshore development accounts for more than 25 percent of the country's natural gas and more than 30 percent of its oil. Each year, offshore energy development contributes between \$4 and 6 billion in revenues to the federal Treasury. Millions are also paid to states and local communities. The federal offshore produces approximately 600 million barrels of oil and about 4.5 trillion cubic feet of natural gas annually.

The U.S. offshore industry leads the world in developing and commercializing advanced technologies that protect sensitive environments and improve the quality of life for all Americans. The U.S. offshore energy industry operates in accordance with the world's most stringent standards for human safety and environmental protection.

Since 1985, more than 7 billion barrels of oil were produced in federal offshore waters with less than 0.001 percent spilled—a 99.999 percent record for clean operations. Government statistics show that the injury and illness rate for offshore workers is about 70 percent lower than for all of private industry. Thirty percent of the 15 million fish caught by recreational fishermen annually off the coasts of Texas and Louisiana are caught near platforms. Conservative estimates show annual catches of approximately 450,000 pounds of reef fish annually, valued at approximately \$2 million.

NATIONAL BENEFITS

Producing America's Energy

The submerged lands of the outer continental shelf (OCS) of the United States have proved to be one of the most bountiful sources of offshore oil and natural gas in the world. On a per-day basis, the OCS currently produces about 13.9 billion cubic feet of natural gas and about 1.3 million barrels of oil. The federally managed OCS provides the bulk—about 89 percent—of all U.S. offshore production. Five coastal states—Alaska, Alabama, California, Louisiana and Texas—make up the remaining 11 percent.

Offshore Energy Revenues Enrich the Nation

Between 1953 and 2002, the offshore energy industry has contributed more than \$145 billion to federal revenues. Most of these revenues were derived from royalty payments that are assessed on oil and natural gas produced from federal lands—typically one-eighth or one-sixth of oil and natural gas' market value. Royalties, rents and bonus payments are collected by the Minerals Management Service (MMS)—which often results in that agency serving as the second largest collector of federal revenues after the Internal Revenue Service.

Although most the revenues derived from offshore energy activity are deposited directly into the federal Treasury, these revenues are also the source of funds for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the National Historic Preservation Fund. State and federal agencies use the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act to buy parks and

recreation areas. Annually nearly \$1 billion dollars in OCS revenues flow to this program.

Likewise, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has received more than \$2.5 billion in offshore energy proceeds to help preserve historic legacies since 1982. Like the Land and Water Conservation Fund, money from the National Historic Preservation Fund is distributed to states whether or not they have any offshore leasing or production seaward of their coasts.

Coastal states in producing areas also have a direct claim on OCS revenues under Section 8(g) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act. For leases on the submerged lands lying outside the 3-mile state zone and as far as 10 miles offshore, 27 percent of the royalty, rent and bonus revenues are paid directly to the adjacent states.

States have used these funds for a variety of programs. Alabama established the "Forever Wild Program" with offshore leasing and production money to acquire, maintain, and protect unique habitats. Mississippi has a similar "Gulf and Wildlife Protection Fund" and Louisiana uses its money for education.

Employment

The Gulf coast of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama is the birthplace of offshore prospecting for oil and natural gas, and the economic benefits of that development continues to accrue to that region to the present day. There are more than 85,000 jobs that are directly related to the industry, and an equal number of workers employed in supporting jobs indirectly related to OCS activity.

The average salary and benefits for workers of producing companies employed as a direct result of activity in the Gulf of Mexico was estimated to be \$52,580 in 1992. (The last year for which statistics are available.) Since then, a shortage of skilled labor due to the recent boom in industry activity has pushed earnings even higher. In addition to payroll expenditures, producers pay several billion dollars each year to vendors and contractors who support OCS activities.

SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

The National Academy of Science's National Research Council recently released the results of a comprehensive study entitled, *Oil in the Sea III: Inputs, Fates, and Effects*. The report finds that although the amount of oil produced and transported on the sea continues to rise, improved production technology and safety training of personnel have significantly reduced both blowouts and daily operational spills. In fact, the report states, today, accidental spills from platforms represent only 2 percent of petroleum inputs in U.S. waters and about 4 percent worldwide. Furthermore, the MMS has found that most spills are quite small—with the median being three barrels or less. Between 1971 and 2000, 41 percent of all spills were less than three barrels in size, 81 percent were less than 10 barrels, and 96 percent were less than 100 barrels.

The industry remains under intense scrutiny by its two primary regulators—the MMS and the U.S. Coast Guard—as well as a host of other governmental agencies with oversight responsibilities such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. However, it is the MMS that regulates all exploration, development, and production activities on about 8,000 active leases to ensure that these activities are conducted safely and in an environmentally sound manner. The MMS reviews and approves industry exploration and development plans before allowing any operations to commence, monitors all lease operations to ensure that in-

dustry is in compliance with relevant requirements, and conducts scheduled and unscheduled inspections. In 1997, MMS conducted over 12,000 inspections of OCS facilities.

INNOVATION BOOSTS U.S. ENERGY

The Deepwater

Between 1996 and 1999, technological advances coupled with economic incentives passed by Congress under the 1995 Deepwater Royalty Relief Act, encouraged energy companies to acquire more than 2,600 leases in waters 800 meters or greater pushing the total number of leases in the Gulf of Mexico to more than 7,000.

The number of deepwater exploratory wells drilled more than doubled from 1996 to 1998, despite the limited number of rigs that can work at such water depths and the decline in crude oil prices during this time period. During that same period, production from deepwater wells jumped 50 million barrels, bringing total Gulf of Mexico deepwater oil production to more than 570 million barrels in 2001—nearly a 535 percent increase from 1995. By 2002, deepwater activity contributed 959,000 barrels of oil and 3.6 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day to U.S. energy supplies—approximately 61 percent of the Gulf's total production.

Innovative technological leaps have enabled this thrust into ever-deeper waters. Floating drilling rigs and production platforms are now able to maintain position over top of a well thousands of feet below without the need to moor a fixed structure to the ground. Dynamic positioning systems using computer-controlled directional propellers compensate for wind, wave or current to keep the vessel stationary relative to the seabed, while innovative hull designs maintain stability even in "hundred-year" storms. As a result, drilling is now taking place in waters more than 10,000 feet deep, an accomplishment that would have been unimaginable just 20 years ago. Since 2001, industry has announced 11 major discoveries in waters exceeding 7,000 feet.

The Deep Shelf

Trapped more than 15,000 feet within the earth's crust, so-called "deep natural gas" represents a tremendous untapped domestic energy resource. Government studies estimate that there could be more than 20 trillion cubic feet of untapped deep natural gas deposits in the Gulf of Mexico—about as much as is currently being produced from all areas in North America on an annual basis!

Annual gas production from Federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico has exceeded additions to proved gas reserves every year since 1984, causing a decreasing trend in remaining proved gas reserves. New discoveries of deep gas on the OCS offer the best short-term opportunity for achieving the large reserve additions and necessary high flow rates to offset declining gas production, which has been falling since 1997. Recent deep gas discoveries on the OCS have shown these new completions can produce as much 20 to 80 million cubic feet per day.

Unfortunately, despite significant advances in deep gas technology, these prospects remain very challenging to find and develop successfully. Since 2001, Gulf natural gas production has decreased from 5,128 BCF to 4,175 BCF in 2003. Deep gas discoveries may help reverse this trend however: deep gas production increased from a relatively low 284 billion cubic feet in 2000 to 421 billion cubic feet in 2002.

New Life for the "Dead Sea"

As recently as the late 1980s, many experts agreed that oil reservoirs in the Gulf were drying up. With oil and natural gas output slackening, some dubbed the Gulf of Mexico

the "Dead Sea". However, leading edge technologies breathed new life into the Gulf—technologies that have enabled more efficient exploration in deeper waters and production from the deepest recesses of the earth's crust. Now the Gulf is widely recognized to be among the most promising areas in the world and oil production levels have increased sharply every year since 1996.

Leading edge offshore technology helps the country to find and produce the energy to heat our homes, fuel our cars, run our computers and drive the economy in faster, safer, cleaner and more efficient ways than ever thought possible. These innovations began with the natural gas and oil industry but they enrich the lives of all Americans. As the leading technological laboratory in the oil industry, the Gulf's transformation provides an interesting snapshot of the advances that have reverberated around the world and helped to keep energy abundant, affordable and clean.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOHMERT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

HONORING PPL ELECTRIC UTILITIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL 1600

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

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in praise of the actions of PPL Electric Utilities and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1600 for the inspiring sacrifices they made in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on behalf of citizens of the Gulf Coast.

Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita were two of the most destructive natural disasters to ever strike the United States. In the wake of these catastrophic storms, utilities serving the Gulf States reached out across the country for technical resources and skilled labor necessary to rebuild an electric infrastructure destroyed by the forces of nature.

PPL Electric Utilities is a great corporate citizen in my district that provides electricity needs for 1.3 million customers in eastern Pennsylvania. When the people of the Gulf Coast needed assistance, PPL true to form answered the call for help after both hurricanes. More than 180 of the company's employees willingly agreed to leave their homes and their families to help restore an essential basic service, to assist victims of the hurricanes in getting their lives back to normal.

Many of these employees were members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1600, skilled, dedicated union members whose efforts were desperately needed in the fight to restore a functioning

electrical grid in the devastated areas. These workers endured long hours of work, oppressive heat, uprooted trees, biting insects, and many other hazards to their personal safety.

In accomplishing their important task they earned respect and admiration of the people from Mississippi and Louisiana, as well as from those back home in Pennsylvania. Through their hard work, caring and professionalism they became true good will ambassadors of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the 15th Congressional District. It is my intention today to make sure this distinguished body is fully cognizant of the dynamic deference of both PPL Electric Utilities and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1600 and of their exceptional work in the Nation's time of need following Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. By working hand-in-hand, these two organizations toiled long hours to ease the suffering of the many affected by these natural disasters.

□ 1900

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

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

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, once again it is an honor to be here before the House, and I would like to thank the Democratic leader, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), and our elected leadership team, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), and also the gentleman from the great State of New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN).

We come to the floor, as you know, Mr. Speaker, almost every day to talk about issues that are facing Americans; some that we are working collectively on, others we are not working collectively on but should be working collectively on. Tonight, we are going to talk about some of the issues that we did not talk about last night, but I can tell you that the themes continue to run together.

I am here tonight with the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN), Youngstown, Ohio, and as the gentlewoman from Florida was not here, I can tell her that what we are hearing and what we were talking about last night was the fact that now we are looking at how are we going to move forward in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, how are we going to respond to those Americans that have paid taxes all of their lives, and how are we going to correct past wrongs.

From the beginning, the majority side has come off the block saying, well, the story is kind of changing now,

which is interesting, but I have a copy of yesterday's Washington Post where there is a lot of bold talk about, well, first we are going to start with Medicaid, which is a program that provides health care for financially challenged Americans throughout this country, and we are going to find this \$500 million to offset some of the Katrina cost there; and then we are going to go to some folks who really cannot fend for themselves, we are going to pick on someone that is not our size and we are going to go and cut free and reduced lunches for financially challenged children, and then we are going to hit these small farming programs that we have out here so we can make sure they cannot compete with foreign agricultural interests, which are already cleaning our clock in many ways with the help of this majority that we have here now.

Now, this has kind of changed, but it has the same theme. Now we are going to go after young people, 30-somethings that are trying to educate themselves to compete against those kids coming from other countries here to the United States and that are taking their jobs, and I will let my colleague, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYUN), talk about China and other countries. As a matter of fact, these days, they do not have to come to the United States. They can stay where they are and they will have good American jobs because the workforce is there. And they will definitely be educated. Yet we are willing to cut Pell grant opportunities and some other things.

So there are a number of issues still on the table, but I hope we can talk tonight about the lack of an independent commission. I understand that there are going to be some additional partisan hearings this week here, if that is what you want to call them, here in the Congress on the House side. I hope that we will have an opportunity to talk about the lack of a Hurricane Katrina independent commission that 81-plus percent of Americans have called for.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be here once again with my colleagues, and I look forward to some fruitful conversation with them. With that, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the gentleman, and I want to welcome back the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ), who we missed desperately last night.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I was pining for you as well.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And I announced last night that my brother had a baby last week.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Oh, congratulations. That is fantastic.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Yes, that was my big announcement. His name is Nicholas John. So I will probably be saying that to every 30-Something for the next 6 months.

But we had a great discussion last night on so many different issues, and

the Katrina issue was one. I want to go back and sort of fill in the blanks here a little bit and let people know that the Democrats are proposing that we create an independent Katrina commission like we had an independent commission to oversee 9/11. And here is the bill, H.R. 3764.

We are asking for an independent commission, meaning Republicans or Democrats do not rule the commission. It is independent of this body. It is independent of the White House. It is like we had for 9/11. Because we feel, as Democrats, that what we all had to watch happen on TV was one of the great national tragedies, not only the natural disaster that happened but the response from a government that we have been promised over the last number of years would be adequately equipped to respond, would respond in a timely manner, and that they would have a coordinated response in order to save American lives if there was an emergency.

Because after 9/11, and since then, we have been told by this administration and by this Congress that we are protecting you. You are safe. It is okay. We are going to do it. We are the party that is strong with these kind of issues. Then we found out during Katrina that that just was not the case.

You throw that on top of what we are watching happen in Iraq, and we are losing our confidence. If you ask the American people, they are losing their confidence too. That is why over 80 percent of the American people in every poll that we have seen want this independent commission. But what the Republicans have set up is a real farce. They might as well put the Chair of the Republican National Committee in charge of the oversight committee of Katrina.

There are eleven Republicans and nine Democrats, which means the minority party is not allowed to subpoena witnesses. The Republican Chair of that committee and the other 10 Republicans on the committee will be the only ones who can subpoena people to come and testify before the committee and really give this thing a thorough overview and a good look-see and overturn every rock possible to figure out what the real problems were and what the real problems are.

This is not about politics. This is about making sure the United States post-September 11 has an adequate emergency response system in place regardless of where you live. Because that could very easily been New York, it could have been L.A., or it could have been Youngstown, it could have been Miami. It just so happened to be New Orleans and it happened to be a natural disaster instead of a terrorist attack.

But if it was a terrorist attack, we cannot explain how we would have responded any differently. It was about communication and coordination and all these other things that we need to ensure for the American people. And

we believe that an independent commission that is free of politics is the only thing that is going to give us those answers. That is what the Democratic Party is asking for, that is what the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) is asking for, and that is what 80 percent of the American people are asking for.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I want to thank the gentleman from Ohio for his comments, and he is absolutely right.

Number one, I am sorry I was not able to participate with my colleagues last night. I was in my district. And when you are in the district, you really get a true sense of how people are feeling. The gentleman is absolutely right, there is a crisis of confidence out there in America. People really have had their confidence in their government's ability to deal with their everyday problems badly, badly shaken by one scandal after another, by one more bit of evidence of corruption and cronyism.

What all of this points to is and is emblematic of is a system that cries out for reform. We absolutely have to have some reform here in Washington, and one of the first reforms that needs to occur is to change this partisan committee that is stacked with Republicans and is currently not being participated in by Democrats and shift it to an independent bipartisan commission that is going to be able to be objective and review what really happened.

Every day that has gone by since Katrina's aftermath, a little bit more trickles out, a little bit more dribbles out, and if we are going to be able to restore the American people's confidence in their government's ability to respond to disasters like this, be they natural disasters or man-made disasters in the form of terrorism, we have to start by restoring their confidence and utilize a process that is going to be objective and that they know they can have confidence in in terms of the outcome, like the 9/11 Commission.

There is a never-ending possibility of more disaster looming over us. Even now, we have Wilma, the 21st storm looming out there in the ocean, potentially about to bear down on Florida and then the gulf coast again, nearing this weekend. If we do not get the American people answers as to how the aftermath of Katrina occurred and make sure it does not happen again, it is not like we have the luxury of time being on our side. We have storm after storm. We have the fact that you never know when a man-made disaster is going to occur. By their very nature, they are surprise attacks. It means it is ever more important we reform the system and make sure that our government is ready to respond, that we have a comprehensive ability to do that.

When we have people engaging in CYA, which is exactly what is occurring here, and when you look at the former Director of FEMA, who in to-

day's paper it was revealed was more worried about his title in the aftermath of Katrina than getting the job done, that is deeply disturbing.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. That is a joke.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. It speaks to the structure of their ability to respond to that disaster.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Does that not say a lot about what we are dealing with in the leadership today?

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. It does.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. It is all about what is my title. After the greatest natural disaster in the country and everything that is going on, you are talking about your title.

That just proves what we talk about a lot here with the 30-Somethings. It is more politics than it is policy. It is more politics than it is actually fixing the problems.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Absolutely.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Evident by, my God, this guy is worried about his title after Katrina. Give me a break.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Let us explain what we are talking about. In the press today there was an e-mail exchange revealed between the spokesperson of FEMA and then Under Secretary Brown where he was appalled that Secretary Chertoff had made him, I think it was the point person, I forgot the title he was given, in the aftermath of Katrina. But he looked at it as a slight, an insult, and somehow a demotion from his position as Under Secretary.

In the devastation and aftermath of Katrina, is that what we want the FEMA Director to be worried about, what he is called?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Right.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. And how he is perceived in terms of title?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Terrible.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. That is how out of touch this administration is. They are that badly out of touch, and that is why the system cries out for reform. We have to make sure we reform the system so that we can restore people's confidence and that they understand that the three C's are incredibly important: No more corruption, no more cronyism, and we have to restore people's confidence.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I think what the gentlewoman is saying is so very, very important. We talked last night and spent quite a bit of time on the culture of corruption and cronyism, and we know that it takes a while to get a culture. It is not like an incident here and an incident there. It is a culture.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. It is not random.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. It is not random. It is a way of doing business here in Washington, D.C. Unfortunately, it is affecting the entire country and in some cases it affects some parts of the world that we are also concerned about, and there are also parts of the world we are concerned about outside

of Iraq. I think that is important to point out.

I just want to mention something that the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) talked about, this H.R. 3764, which is the House bill that will create this independent commission just like the 9/11 Commission. The only difference between the bill we see by the gentleman from Ohio, House Resolution 3764, and the 9/11 Commission is the fact that it says the independent Katrina commission versus the 9/11 Commission.

□ 1915

So it is language that we all understand and eventually, like the 9/11 Commission, the majority side came around and voted for it. Some did.

I think it is also important for us to understand that independent commissions are not a new phenomenon to the way to deal with issues in correcting wrongs that took place or possible mistakes that could have happened.

For instance, I mention the 9/11 Commission, which is the most respected commission that came after 9/11. Also, if we look at the commission after the *Challenger* space accident in 1996, the Presidential commission that looked into the NASA program and things that we needed to look at.

And also in the aftermath of the accident at Three Mile Island in 1979 there was an independent commission; and numerous independent commissions established by the White House after plane accident tragedies to make sure that we do not make the same mistakes and correct issues that might have contributed to loss of life. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, there was another independent commission.

These independent commissions are given authority to go out and make sure that we do not continue to repeat some of the same issues that we are seeing right now. We are seeing a repeat on issues that are facing Americans time and time again.

Now, I want to say to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) on H.R. 3764, how many Republicans are on that bill?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, as far as I can see, there are not any.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to make sure that my Republican colleagues know, either in the leadership or the rank and file, that they know it is okay for you to call for an independent commission even though there is a Republican in the White House, even though there is an agency appointed by that Republican administration, because we are all Americans. We should have this independent commission to make sure that we are able to deal with the Federal response to natural disasters or terrorist attacks, whenever it may happen, or making sure that we can deal with some of the issues in the present.

There are still 100,000 individuals that were affected by Hurricane Katrina that are still in shelters or displaced in some Red Cross emergency

housing. The deadline for shelters to be empty was a couple of days ago, but we have trailer parks that are sitting empty. The trailer park has been established, the asphalt has been laid, the trailers have been delivered; but the people cannot move in because of technical issues of getting them in, need it be someone did not hook the power up to the trailer or the sewage is not where it is supposed to be. So there is still a lot of work to be done and lessons to be learned.

Any American city, here in Maryland today, there was an alert about a possible tunnel attack. The week before last it was the New York subway station. So we see cities and counties and local communities finding themselves in harm's way, and Americans may have to leave with what they have in their pockets or on their backs.

If we do not learn from lessons learned, having an independent commission of people who do not have a vested interest, a political vested interest in the outcome of the report, then we are not going to get better as a country, and we are not going to be better prepared.

Two things that we learned under the scenario of Hurricane Katrina: one, we are not ready. How about that. All of these top-off programs that have been created, and when I say top-off, I want to make sure Members understand what I am saying. These are the programs where the Department of Homeland Security would go into a local community and go through an exercise in case a chemical weapon was actually detonated or a terrorist event was to take place here and how would you deal with it, how would hospitals deal with, how would first responders deal with it. Where would the people go. We did that with Hurricane Pat in New Orleans. We knew. When I say "we," the Federal Government knew that anything over a category 3 would bring about catastrophic damage to the area.

I have a little picture that too many Americans are all too familiar with. This is a neighborhood east of downtown New Orleans. Billions of gallons of water flooded 80 percent of the city of New Orleans. Now, that is not Hurricane Katrina by herself; this is a lack of governance. I want to know why the Corps of Engineers stopped their work. After 37 years of working on the levee, why did they stop working to make sure it is safe. Hurricane Katrina came through and the event was over, and it did not look like this. When the levee broke in several areas, all of the loss of life took place at that time. Pretty much all of the property damage for sure took place at that time. When you say it was an act of God, well, I am not going to put all of that on God. I am going to put some of it on this government that should have been there.

Let me just put this poster down because I want to make sure that this aerial picture that was taken, and I am going to put it down for a minute because the real issue, and this is the pic-

ture before or right after people were on those roofs waiting, living it out for 3 days, waiting on the cavalry, waiting on someone to come and say is it possible to get off the roof.

Here is another picture. There is concern about somebody looting a Walgreen's for food, and people had to improvise. People are jumping in a boat not with a paddle, but with a board. Here is a kid in a refrigerator trying to find safe haven. It took awhile for all of this ingenuity to come about because definitely they could not count on the government, whether it be State, Federal, local. We need to get to the bottom of this. We need to make sure that this is not coming to a city near all of us, and we are not standing and waiting and hoping and praying that the helicopter is going to come soon or the boat is going to come soon. I think it is important. We need to learn from our past mistakes.

So 81 percent of Americans support this independent commission. For people to talk about they do not quite understand, independent commission, why? We do it when we have a horrific event in our country, whether a plane crash or a natural disaster.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I have mentioned this before and likened the lack of desire on the part of the Republican leadership here to establish an independent commission. For example, if the executives and CEO of Enron after the fiasco that corporation went through, it would be as if we said, Okay, Mr. CEO of Enron, you go ahead and investigate what happened at Enron and do a report and a full examination of the doings of your corporation and you get back to us and let us know what steps need to be taken to prevent it from happening again. We can do the same thing with Tyco.

I think the gentleman is smiling, and people who might hear this description would be sort of laughing to themselves saying of course we would not do that. This leadership is saying of course we would not have an internal partisan committee that would investigate. For some reason that is not ludicrous to the people who run this institution. It would be ludicrous to anybody who was a rational person who would actually want to get to the bottom of what happened. One would think given the information that has come out slowly over the last weeks now that there would be some more deep, abiding concern.

Let me go back to what I was saying earlier that came out today. Secretary Chertoff, according to The Washington Post, apparently belatedly named Brown the on-site disaster coordinator on the night of August 30 and declared Hurricane Katrina "an incident of national significance," which is the highest order catastrophe under their new national response plan.

This was the reaction of then-Under Secretary Brown and his assistants, "Demote the Under Secretary to PFO, principal Federal officer?" an outraged FEMA press secretary Sharon Worthy wrote Brown at 10:54 p.m., soon after Chertoff's decision.

"What about the precedent being set? What does this say about executive management and leadership in the agency?"

Brown's reply was, "Exactly."

Reading a little further, there are e-mails "that show that the government's response plan, 2 years in the making, began breaking down even before Katrina hit the gulf coast.

"Before the storm hit, Brown's deputy chief of staff, Brooks Altshuler, said White House pressure to form an interagency crisis management group was irrelevant even though a task force and principal Federal officer are key parts of the plan." He says this: "Let them play their 'Reindeer Games' as long as they are not turning around and tasking us with their stupid questions. None of them have a clue about emergency management."

Mr. Speaker, these are the people that were responsible for making sure that the people in that picture survived and actually got out and did not have to float in a refrigerator to save their own lives. This is what they were worried about, their own little title and the petty garbage that you would think is reserved for the smallest of issues.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, during this time, they spent more time having press conferences thanking everyone and saying you are doing a wonderful job.

No, you are doing a better job.

No, I want to make sure you know that you were doing a good job.

Meanwhile, folks are still clinging onto life, people are running out of insulin. They need medical supplies and people are drowning in nursing homes. These are Americans. These are Americans. These are individuals that live in our communities. There were veterans caught up in this stuff. There were teachers caught up in this. There were individuals counting on their government for them to be there for them, be it State, local, or Federal. I am not here to protect anyone. I want to make sure that we have what we need from an independent commission to make things better.

I remember this time very vividly when these e-mails were going on. This was at the height of the rescue, and they were running around here talking about titles and respect.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, we can blame the FEMA people complaining about their title and all of that stuff, but who appoints these people? These people are appointed by the President of the United States. This goes to his judgment to hire a horse attorney, not a horse's attorney; but he is an attorney for equestrian activity, that is what this gets to.

This President appointed this person, and he appointed the other people. The top seven or eight people who were involved in the top FEMA flow chart were appointees from President Bush, and they were not qualified. They had no emergency management experience. We need change in the government today. We need to change the way the situation is. We need to change the leadership. We need to reform the way we do business. We need to change the way we do business, and you do that through an independent commission, not through politics.

Do Members think that the majority party here, the Republican Party, is going to somehow oversee this whole process and dig up and say, What were we thinking? This guy was asking about his title during the greatest natural disaster in the history of the country. They are not going to highlight that and say maybe that was a little bit of the problem. They are going to do their best to keep that out of the press. Fortunately, that stuff makes its way in. But why not have an independent commission, bipartisan, to figure out exactly what happened. If we do not implement this change, we are going to be in real trouble the next time this happens.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I wanted to highlight was one of the things we have been asking people to do. H.R. 3764 is the Democrats' bill that would establish an independent commission on the response to Hurricane Katrina. The way that the administration relected on the independent 9/11 Commission, as the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) referred to earlier, they initially opposed, was the groundswell of support, particularly from the families of the 9/11 victims.

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And we need a groundswell of support from the 81 percent of Americans that, when polled, say they think the only way to approach the response and the investigation of the response to the aftermath of Katrina is through an independent commission. We need people to contact us and become citizen cosponsors of H.R. 3764.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, they can e-mail us at 30SomethingDems@mail.house.gov.

They can e-mail and be a citizen cosponsor, but call their Members of Congress, call their Senators. I mean that is what really needs to happen.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman has the website at the bottom.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, they can go to the website at www.housedemocrats.gov/Katrina or they can e-mail us. We will put them on either way. But I think it is important we also need to get ahold of the people who represent folks at home, who come down to Washington, D.C. for 3 and 4 days during the course of a

week, and let those folks know that this is something they are interested in because it speaks to more than just this legislation. It speaks to the independence that we think needs to oversee this process. It also speaks to the kind of change that we need in government. We need this kind of independence. We cannot have people holding us back to make the proper decisions in government, and that is happening way too much down here.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I think it is important to note that everyone has some sort of inquiry going on. I mean we have this partisan commission here in the House that obviously we tried to push an independent commission. That is out of order. We cannot do that. We do not need to do it because we have control, and since we have control, we are going to keep control of this situation to make sure it does not get out of hand because there may be some political reasons that we do not want certain things to come out. Well, this happened in America. It did not happen somewhere across in some foreign third world land to a group of individuals who are not a part of our democracy. These are people that live within the borders of the United States of America, born here, and I think it is important that we do not leave any American behind because the whole country can learn. So why deny the whole country from that?

Someone may say, Congressman, Congresswoman, we got it covered. We are dealing with it here in the House. What are you talking about? We are all Republicans, but we got it. We will take care of it. As a matter of fact, the White House appointed someone inside the White House, a high-ranking Homeland Security adviser to the President. Well, that is interesting. We are going to keep the adviser who advises the President on the part of Homeland Security to do a report to let him know what went wrong. If something went wrong, then maybe the adviser did not do what she should have done in this case, maybe some of the conversations that we know that the President's Chief of Staff had with the folks on the ground and the Deputy Chief of Staff that happens to be the boss of the person who is doing the inquiry.

I always tell people, I come to the floor and say, listen, this 30-Something Working Group in looking at what is happening and what is not happening, this is not a game. This is serious, and we went on the White House website 2 weeks ago. This thorough review that they are doing, not a mumbling word about this review. Not anything where Americans can be reassured that our country is doing all that it can to make sure that we do not make the same mistakes, have the same kind of loss of life that took place.

Now, here is the front page, and our President is there and honors Buckley, the anniversary and all. It is good stuff. I mean this is stuff that the

President does. And then we have the little thing that people can click on. I want to make sure that folks know that this is not the Wasserman Schultz-Ryan-Kendrick Meek report.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Third-party validators.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Third party validators. Then they can go over to the Homeland Security responding to Katrina and Rita and the same picture that was there a couple of weeks ago, the President hugging an emergency worker, rightfully so. I think that is important. But it says nothing, not even a press release, about what we are doing and if what we find we are going to make corrections and these are the subject areas that we are concerned about. Nothing. Absolutely nothing. So we know under the drape of not only corruption, cronyism, but this culture that we have here that the majority does not have the ability to even have an inquiry on themselves.

I said this as a joke several weeks ago, and I am going to say it again because it is very real. It is like my coming to the floor saying, Listen, my name is KENDRICK MEEK, and I have made some possible mistakes, and to make sure that I do not make these mistakes ever again I am going to investigate myself and I will be back in a couple of weeks to let you know what the findings are. That is how off balance, I am just trying to find the right words, that this whole theory is of the fact that the White House can look into itself and that we are going to have some findings that are going to save American lives in the future and that the House is going to have a partisan commission that is going to look at the agency that we did not give proper oversight to and still do not. The Committee on Homeland Security right now, I am here and I am giving the report, I am on the committee, has not even had one, hear me, not even one hearing since Katrina, not one public hearing to talk about what has worked and what has not worked and why do we have this problem and why do we still have people in shelters. Not a mumbling word. Not one. I am telling my colleagues if I am lying, I am flying, and I am still well footed right here. Not one hearing. That is horrible for the Department of Homeland Security, for the committee that deals with it. And I told my colleagues we are here to take care of the Federal business.

I like some of my colleagues. We go and we talk about baseball games and all of these things, and they are nice people. I consider myself a pretty nice person. But let me tell the Members something. This is about business. It is not personal. It is about business. It is about the business of protecting the American people, and if we are going to sit here and act like nothing is really going on, something is really wrong, and that is the reason why we need this independent commission.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, we have been talking about what they are not doing, that they are not establishing an independent commission. Let us mention what they are getting ready to do because we all can describe what we think the response to the aftermath of Katrina should be. Obviously, a pretty significant fiscal hit on our economy. No question about it. Between Katrina and Rita, we have refineries down. We have gas prices that have skyrocketed out of control. We have people having to dig deeper into their pockets. A dollar is not going as far as we would like it to or as it was previously before the storm hit. So one would think that the Republican leadership's response would be to ease up on the tax cuts. Let us pull back on making them permanent. Let us push back the reconciliation process, which is Washington speak for budget cuts. Let us make sure that we can ease some of the pain and dull the sharp point that has been the aftermath of Katrina.

So, instead, what is their response? Because it certainly is not any of that. This week on Thursday we expect what will be an extremely close vote on a rash of Republican spending cuts that will cut to the core, to the deepest heart of the people who need the help the most, the people who have truly been impacted by the aftermath of Katrina. They are actually going to ask us, force us, to vote on cuts in the Medicaid program, force us to vote on cuts in the Food Stamp program, force us to vote on cuts to higher education. This is a laundry list of items that they are going to propose now. A 2 percent across-the-board random set of cuts that are going to impact the people who were hurt the most by the aftermath of Katrina. It boggles the mind. How that could be a natural response to the needs of the people who are hurting the most is just so far beyond me. I feel like I am dealing with people who live on another planet sometimes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, there is no doubt about it, to be so far removed. And if we look back, we have got three wars going on right now and four tax cuts primarily to people who make hundreds and hundreds of thousands, 300, 400, 500, 600, 700, 800,000-plus, billionaires who are getting these kind of tax cuts, and then not only to do this. After Katrina we have got a \$500 billion deficit. Now we are going to cut \$10 billion out of the Medicaid program for low-income folks who need health care and their kids. \$9 billion out of college students loans. What? It is so competitive out in the world today, and we are going to cut student loans? And throughout this whole process, through 9/11, the war, Katrina, natural disasters in the gulf coast, hurricanes last year, all this stuff that has been going on, not one time has the Presi-

dent asked those people who make more than \$1 million can they maybe help us out a little bit? A novel idea. Please, somebody who makes more than \$1 million, help us. And he is the President of the United States, for God sakes. He can call these people into his office and ask them for help. Ask them for assistance. We need to balance the budget. We need to make investments in education. We need to make sure that the poor folks and the middle class folks in our country have adequate health care coverage.

And then with the wounds wide open, to throw a little salt in it, he repeals the Davis-Bacon provision, which says that for the Federal money being spent to rebuild the gulf coast after Katrina that the people working would have to get prevailing wage in that area. And the prevailing wage in that area is 9 or 10 bucks an hour, and the President repealed that so the Federal money going to that area does not have to be prevailing wage. How much lower is he going to go? He is trying to help these people, and they want to go back and rebuild their community, and he is saying no. He is going to say we are going to pay them minimum wage. That is salt in the wound.

And those same people are going to be the same folks who will probably need Medicaid, who still want to send their kids to school and need the student loan and the Pell grant, which is being cut by \$9 billion. Meanwhile, and I am going to just reiterate what the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) said before we got here, all the while we are spending \$20 billion in reconstruction in Iraq, building and renovating 110 primary health care centers, vaccinated 3.2 million children, rehabbed 2,700 schools and trained 36,000 secondary teachers, funded 3,100 community development projects, and provided housing for tens of thousands of Iraqis. Meanwhile, we are repealing the prevailing wage provision for our own people? We are cutting health care and student loans for our own people? This is outrageous. This is absolutely outrageous what is going on.

We need change in the government. We need reform. We need people to come down here who are not going to be so tied to the special interests to be independent and make independent decisions for the best interests of this country, not any other, and in the process hurt our country.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from Florida will continue to yield, I was just going to say that all of this points to this culture that the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) referred to earlier, this culture of corruption and cronyism. And it has created this groundswell of need for reform. We cannot go on like this anymore. I mean I am raising young children. He is raising young children. The gentleman from Ohio's (Mr. RYAN) brother is raising a young child now. We need to make sure that the next generation that comes up does

not inherit a badly damaged country that results from the policy decisions that are being made here. There is some deep harm that will reverberate for at least a generation as a result of these cuts and more and more tax cuts and an ever-burgeoning deficit and more and more reliance on foreign countries and more debt. There are consequences for these kinds of things.

When I go trick or treating with my kids on Halloween, that is when I most often get to see my neighbors and spend some really good time talking to them, and those are the times that they grab me by the wrist and say, "Debbie, what is going on here?" Every year that goes by with another year of this Republican leadership literally not having any ability to be in touch with the reality of the lives of real people is another year that we have shaken the confidence to the core of the American people.

□ 1945

We have got to move in the direction. We have got to get some reform. We have got to get some leadership in America that understands what the basic needs are of the people.

Instead, we have an administration that appears to be of the wealthy, for the wealthy, and by the wealthy. It has, I think, actually reached historic proportions. We have never had a time where you have had the priorities of the leadership in the government so focused on the most elite set of people in the country.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. We are not making this up.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I wish I were making it up.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I really think if I was not here and coaching some football in high school in Ohio and I was flipping through and watching us, if I was not exactly plugged in as much as we are, I would think they have got to be making this up. I mean, they just cannot be serious about all of this stuff. They have got to be fudging the facts or misrepresenting them or putting a certain spin on it like they do in D.C.

We are not making this stuff up. I do not think you can, even if you wanted to.

Picture this, natural disaster in the U.S. In the U.S. years ago, they passed the Davis-Bacon provision, which two Republicans authored just by coincidence, that when Federal money is spent somewhere, including natural disasters, wherever the money's being spent, the workers have the right to be paid the wage in that area.

Then during the greatest natural disaster, the President repeals it for the very people who are going to go back in and rebuild their own community. What? You have got to be kidding me. Who would believe that?

At the same time, to pay for the rebuilding of the community, we are going to cut health care for the poor; we are going to cut student loans for

middle-class people; and we are not going to ask the rich people to pay for anything, not even the rich people, people who make four or five, six, seven, eight. Even during this, you just wanted to ask millionaires to give a portion of their tax cut back to help us fund this. It is like you cannot believe it.

It is almost like when you play sports, did you ever have those moments where things kind of slow down a little bit? That is what it feels like down here. You are just slowly watching the unraveling happen. We come to the floor every night not for therapy, but we come here because we hope that we can convince the American people that the Democrats are for changing all this and making this better and reforming the way government works. Reform is not consistent necessarily with tax cuts for wealthy people. It is about fixing the way government executes its responsibilities, and this is what we are for, and that is what this independent commission is for.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I did not want you to leave out, he raised the ceiling as it relates to small businesses to a quarter of a million dollars that an agency could spend on a credit card and not necessarily have to do business with the small businesses in the area. That was also suspended. These are small and the minority businesses, too. When we say small businesses, these are small businesses, period. This is not something where you say just women-owned businesses and minority businesses. These are small businesses, period.

So I think it is important we realize that any outrage in this Congress is not from the majority side as it relates to it. If you start talking about, well, first of all, I want to help you out, we are going to respond to the disasters, matter of fact we want businesses to move back, we are going to let the businesses back in before we let the residents back in, you have got to do more for our small businesses than give them a boon and say good luck. They have no employees.

In the meanwhile, we want the people to come back, but as it relates to the construction, to build the bridges and rebuild the schools and do all the things that need to happen to make this a functional community; but we do not want them to make too much money. We want them to make the minimum wage on these jobs, or whatever wage you want to pay them, but not a prevailing wage that is this Federal law.

Because this happens to be an emergency, and this is the President's thinking, since this is an emergency, I can just suspend Davis-Bacon. I could not do it under calm waters; let me do it now. Let me just hit you while you are down on all fours.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. What is coming out of the conservative think tanks at this time, well, what is going to happen is these workers are going to get this

extra money from the prevailing wage, and they are going to give it to the unions. Then it is just going to pad the union coffers.

I do not know if you have the chart there or not, union membership in the three hardest hit gulf States, the highest was 10. The lowest was four, and another one was like five. Five percent of the workers were union workers. It was just nonsense, and then you look how many union members are there, none basically. None.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. When you think about it, some people may say, well, what are they talking about? What are these three Members of Congress talking about that happen to be in the minority, a few votes shy from being in the majority, to be able to make what we are talking about reality?

This would not be a discussion about an independent commission to look at Katrina or what did happen or what did not happen in Katrina, best practices, so when another U.S. city goes through a situation where they have to evacuate the entire city, families being displaced, living with others, some people living in arenas, some folks living in gyms and church fellowship halls and synagogue fellowship halls throughout the country, how do we bring about the kind of organization that is needed to make sure that we can get Americans back into their normal lives so that hopefully it will not be a burden on the U.S. taxpayer for a very long time?

The way things are set up now, A, there is no oversight, especially in this House. There is no oversight about the urgency of making sure that we save as many dollars as possible through a functional government doing what it is supposed to do on the timelines. It is not there. Money is still going out for vouchers to stay in hotels. I mean, folks need to have shelter; but if there is a cheaper, better way that will get them back home and to get them helping them, being able to get the paycheck or even open their business, then let us do that to make them self-sufficient. That is not the conversation.

The conversation here is to say, well, let us make some budget cuts, and we do not want to talk about Iraq. We did want to talk about that. Oh, my goodness, if something comes out about Iraq, get out of the way; we have got to fund it. Matter of fact, can we add another billion to it, can we, because I want to make sure we give our commitment to the Iraqi people. Let us get another billion.

But when it comes down to the Americans, our people, once again, I will say we salute one flag. I do not know, we have to look at these student loans and grants, and we have to also look at Medicaid, additional cuts on top of cuts that we have already made.

Well, my colleague said something that I thought was very interesting, and I know our time is coming to an end shortly, about the fact that we have to ask millionaires. We are not

talking about folks that make a hundred, not even \$400,000 a year. People that make millions a year, the Congress has to ask if we can roll back some of the tax cuts that they are enjoying right now in the hundreds of thousands to help the country after it was hit by the biggest natural disaster that it has ever been hit with. We have got to ask.

But guess what, no one is asking folks on Medicaid, no one is asking kids that receive free and reduced lunch for the reason because they are poor. No one is asking them. No one is asking States as it relates to rolling back their Head Start money to make sure that kids are ready to perform in this working world and that they go to school ready and prepared. The gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) worked on that in the Florida legislature.

No one is walking around here asking about that. Folks just say, well, you know what, this is what we are going to do; tough talk for hard times. We are not going to pick on someone that can pick back. We are not going to hit a person that can knock us to the floor, because they will be able to give campaign contributions to my opponents. No, we are going to get the folks that we say we are trying to help. We are going to hit them. Matter of fact, we are going to floor them, and we are going to do it because we can. That is what makes this such a tragedy.

That is why we need this independent commission. That is the reason why we need H.R. 3838, an anti-fraud commission that will oversee all of the contracts that are going on in the present to be able to review it all, to make sure that it is not left up to some bureaucrat so that I am sitting somewhere in the Committee on Homeland Security and they are saying, well, you pick up The Washington Post or New York Times, whatever the hometown paper may be in someone's area, and say there were millions of dollars that were spent and someone charged \$1,000 for a roll of toilet paper, and we do not know what happened, but we are looking into it.

No, that is after the taxpayers have already been raped of their money and the victims were made victims again because the money ran out. So we do not have time for an Iraq-Halliburton experience that we have an investigation going on, meanwhile thousands of dollars are going out the door.

If folks want to have tough talk about budget and fiscal responsibility, then we have to have management, and we have to have oversight. You just cannot let billions of dollars out the door and expect the people who have already made mistakes again and again and again say here is another \$62 billion, see if you can do better this time. It is just not going to happen, and that is the reason why we have to have it.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, in our last few minutes, I want to just point out that the respon-

sibility lies at the feet of the President. He has the bully pulpit to ask people who are among our wealthiest to make sacrifices.

I represent a community that has a lot of wealthy people, and I know they say to me all the time, you know what, I am willing. They understand what the needs are. They get it, and I know we have an hour tomorrow night, that we are going to have an opportunity to come out here again.

One of the things I think we should talk about, and I do not want to do a rush job on it, is there are steps we can take. There are things we can do to make people whole. There is a way that we can restore Americans' confidence in their government, and there are reforms that we can and must make. I hope we will have a chance to talk about that more tomorrow night because we have got to take this country in a new direction. It would be irresponsible for us to continue hurtling down the path of irresponsible public policy and harm that we are bringing on people who are already knocked to the ground, and now we are putting our boot on their neck to keep them that way.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I agree. We want to take the country in a new direction, in another direction.

Since 1994, the Republicans have held this Chamber. The President has been in for 5 years. They have controlled the Senate on and off for a good while over the past decade and a half. We want to take the country in another direction, because if you look at the leadership, I just believe that because of the lack of experience they just are not governing. They just do not know how to govern.

When you look at the increased poverty rates, when you look at wages, when you look at what is going on with companies like Delphi and General Motors, when you look at the health care crisis in this country, when you look at the poverty crisis, the cuts for school funding and local communities, libraries being cut, prisons and jails that cannot handle the load that is coming in, in every single aspect here, reducing our dependence on foreign oil, every single aspect here has been the ball has been dropped.

We want to take the country in a new direction, in a better place, with the changes that I think the Democratic Party wants to provide.

If you want to e-mail us, it is 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov, and let us know if you want to be a citizen cosponsor of the independent Katrina commission, which we think would be the best way in a nonpartisan, bipartisan way to try to address the issues, and I thank my good friend from Florida for the opportunity to join both my colleagues here tonight.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN). I am glad you were able to sum it up for us. The gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) is right to let us focus on things we are doing.

We mentioned the pieces of legislation the Democrats have offered to this Congress. The Congress and the majority side have not accepted that legislation. We are still willing to fight on behalf of the American people.

□ 2000

MEDICARE PART D

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, we just heard from the other side, the 30-Something Democrats. I have been listening, as I know my colleagues have, to the 30-Something Democrats for about a year and a half now a couple or three times a week. It is the same old same old. Now they have pledged to come back tomorrow night with some positive information voice, and I look forward to that. In fact, I am going to listen very closely, because all I have heard from my three colleagues on the other side, the 30-Something Democrats, the two from Florida, the one from Ohio, very intelligent, very well spoken, very articulate, and very, very negative.

So before we get into our special hour talking about something positive, a Medicare prescription drug benefit for our needy seniors, I just want to suggest to my colleagues who spent the last hour talking negative we look forward to hearing from them tomorrow night maybe on something positive for a welcomed, welcomed change.

Mr. Speaker, it kind of reminds me of the fall of 2003, my first year in the 108th Congress, when we worked so very hard on trying to bring to our seniors finally, after almost 38 years, a prescription drug benefit under Medicare. What we heard from our colleagues on the other side of the aisle was very similar to what we just listened to in this Chamber over the last hour from the 30-Something Democrats. It was all negative. There was no plan, there was no alternative. It was just: Seniors in my Democratic district, you men and women who have supported me and let me represent you in the Congress, this is what I suggest that you do, you take out your AARP card and you cut it to shreds because that is what I, your Congressman or your Congresswoman on the Democratic side of the aisle, plan to do.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, what we did was a historic benefit. In fact, for 2 years now, and it will continue until January 1 of 2006 when the official Medicare Part D prescription benefit plan is available, we had an almost a 2-year transition plan of a Medicare prescription drug discount card which would allow our neediest seniors actually to have \$600, a debit card if you will, not a credit card, but \$600 each of those 2 years if they were at or near Federal

poverty level low income, below about \$11,000 a year for an individual or below \$14,000, \$15,000 a year for a couple, basically men and women, our seniors who are on Medicare and essentially living off of their Social Security benefit and very, very little else.

I think it was a tremendously compassionate thing for this Congress, this leadership, this Republican majority and this President, George W. Bush, to finally deliver on a promise that had been made by prior Congresses, prior Presidents. I will not get into naming names or saying who was in charge at what period of time.

The fact is Medicare was first passed in 1965. Medicare was a very good program then, it is a very good program now, but it desperately needed modernization when we have come to realize, especially over these last few years, how important it is to have an opportunity to have that prescription drug benefit to go along with Part A and Part B.

Part A of course, Mr. Speaker, you understand is a hospital part and the nursing home part. There is a pretty high deductible for that as well, today something like \$850 out of pocket before there is any coverage for Part A. And Part B, if God forbid a person end up in a nursing home after 100 days, there are no benefits in any period or episode of illness. Everything else is out of pocket, and that is why so many of our seniors who do end up in a nursing home pretty quickly become dependent, wards of the State almost, and Medicaid, which is strapping our States so badly now across this country, pays about 85, 90 percent of all skilled nursing home bills, is paid by Medicaid because people literally are going broke and they cannot afford it.

So here again, as I waited of course to have this opportunity to speak on the Republican side, the aisle where we have dedicated, Mr. Speaker, to explain and talk about something positive. We are a positive party. We want to do things that are for the benefit of the people and not just stand around and criticize like we heard over this last hour.

I do not hear a plan from the other side, yet they voted almost overwhelmingly, thank goodness there were a few in a bipartisan fashion did vote in favor of the Medicare prescription drug modernization plan Part D, and it should not have been a partisan issue. It should have been not about the next election, but doing something that is going to help the most treasured part of our society, really, that being our senior citizens, and particularly those who are in greatest need. So, Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be asked by the leadership tonight to lead this hour as a physician Member of the body.

There are actually 10 M.D. physicians in this congressional body of 435 Members. There are other Members who are health care professionals, be they psychologists or pharmacists or registered nurses and physical therapists, veteri-

narians, people that have worked in health care, and I think we all owe it to our colleagues and to the American people to get behind and to support this legislation which will in fact go into effect January 1, 2006.

Mr. Speaker, it is important for each one of us on both sides of the aisle not to discourage our constituents, our seniors from signing up for this prescription drug benefit, but to explain it to them and let them know and to particularly let those know who are at a low income level.

We mentioned just a few seconds ago about that amount, about \$11,800 for an individual, a single person, a widow or a widower, or about \$15,000, \$16,000 for a couple, that they are eligible for supplemental help. We anticipate, Mr. Speaker, that the deductible for the Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit would be about \$250 a year and that the monthly premium would be about \$35 a year, \$32 to \$35 a year. That is what we predicted a year and a half ago. Now that these plans are rolling out and are being offered to our seniors, the marketplace is working. Competition, that competitive entrepreneurial spirit is working without government price controls, and many of these plans are going to be offered or are being offered right now to our seniors at as low as \$20 a month premium, not \$32, not \$35, but \$20 a month. So already the predicted cost is coming down, and as a result of that I think the number of seniors who sign up and take advantage, sure, there will be, Mr. Speaker, some seniors who will realize that they already have coverage. Maybe they are a retired State employee, possibly a teacher, maybe they are a retired Federal employee, possibly they work for a company like in the State of Georgia, Lockheed Martin or Coca-Cola or Home Depot, some of these strong companies that seniors have worked for 30 or 40 years, and that was not atypical with the great generation, they stuck with the job and with the company and they have been promised health care benefits and benefits that do include prescription drug coverage.

In this bill, by the way, we have done everything we could to make sure that companies do not drop those plans, that those promises made are promises kept. That is in addition part of this Medicare modernization. So some people, Mr. Speaker, some seniors will decline to sign up for Medicare Part D because they already have a plan and they have a good plan and they stick with it, and that is perfectly understandable. But for those seniors who do not have anything, who get to go to their doctor, maybe their family practitioner, their general internist for that annual physical, and lo and behold they find out that their cholesterol is elevated, their blood sugar is elevated, their blood pressure is elevated and they have that need to be on medication and they go to the drug store with a fistful, literally a fistful of prescrip-

tions, maybe four or five. You talk about sticker shock. Currently our seniors in that situation, they are maybe not part of an HMO and they do not get any discount because of volume, it is just them trying to fill a prescription.

I know that recently I went to the drugstore and happen to be on a statin to lower my cholesterol and ordered a 3-month supply, and only to find out that my part of the prescription, I think 25 percent of the true cost, was going to be \$110. When I asked the pharmacist what it really cost, the cost per pill, and I will not mention the pill in fairness to the company, but it was something like \$5.25 for each pill, and it is necessary that I take that every day, and my health is pretty good. But you take a lot of our seniors, Mr. Speaker, they do not have one thing wrong, a lot of times it just almost like you might say is multi-system diseases. They may have three things that impact each other. What has happened in the past of course is this: They maybe were too embarrassed to say they could not afford the prescription, and maybe they turned around and walked out and said they would be back but never came back. Or possibly they asked the pharmacist, instead of a month's supply, just give me a 2-week supply, and then they would go home and they start breaking those pills and trying to stretch it just like we oftentimes have to stretch the budget when things are tight.

But the problem is, of course, that is when these diseases get out of control. That is when the elevated cholesterol results in plaque formation in the coronary arteries, or the blood sugar gets elevated and all of a sudden there is a problem with blindness and loss of limb or a patient ending up on renal dialysis.

I hope my colleagues would listen carefully to this. We heard at the outset a lot of Members, and very legitimately and honestly and sincerely, oppose this bill and the vote was a very close vote, and indeed it was. I am very proud that I voted yes, and I think most if not all of the physician Members as a body also voted yes on both sides of the aisle. But there were men and women of good faith who voted no. In some instances they were voting no because they did not think that we were doing enough. You even hear that today, the hole in the doughnut is too big and the plan is not good enough. It might be okay for some people, but for the typical average senior who is a Medicare beneficiary or someone who is on Medicare because of a disability, it is just not good enough. We want to do more, we want to close down, shrink down that hole in the doughnut, so they voted no. And I can understand that line of reasoning.

There were Members mostly on this side of the aisle who felt that we cannot do this because we cannot afford to do it. We have got a deficit, we have got a debt that is far too big by everybody's admission. Although we

would like to do this, we cannot do it because we cannot afford really to do anything. We are in a war in the Middle East trying to bring democracy. I think we are succeeding there. I think the light at the end of the tunnel is beginning to shine brighter and brighter with the success and the 60 percent plus turnout here recently in the new constitution and then hopefully parliamentary elections a month from now.

□ 2015

The point I wanted to make, Mr. Speaker, in regard to the cost, the cost was calculated based on the fact that you would continue to spend in the Medicare program in this country the same amount, maybe increasing depending on, as the population of seniors increased for part A, you would have the same situation for part B; it would increase because of an increase in population of seniors.

And then you would have this added expense. We were told initially that that was about \$400 billion over 10 years, and then there was a recalculation and maybe it was going to be as much as \$600 billion. The fact, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, is this. We get no credit for the fact that taking prescription medications, when our seniors can go to the drug store and get those prescriptions filled, and they can in a very timely fashion lower that blood pressure, lower that blood sugar, lower that cholesterol, and guess what, we do not end up spending money on them for part A or part B, do we except maybe for an annual check-up on an outpatient basis by one of our wonderful primary care physicians who work so hard and such long hours? No. We keep them out of the hospital.

Before the Medicare modernization, before December of 2003, you could not even go to your doctor and get a routine thorough physical and have it paid for under Medicare. You could not get a blood test for cholesterol, you could not get a mammogram, you could not get a PSA blood test screening for prostate cancer, you could not get a colonoscopy.

In this bill, in addition to the prescription drug benefit, all of those things are now available and paid for. This is what we call, Mr. Speaker, preventative medicine. Not waiting until somebody is eligible for coverage under part B because they show up in the emergency room having had a stroke because their blood pressure could not be treated, or they ended up on the operating table getting the coronary bypass or even worse, having a leg amputated because they never had the money to treat their diabetes.

We save money, Mr. Speaker, on part B because of part B. And even if we did not, it is the compassionate thing to do. It is the compassionate thing to do. Who wants to end up spending the rest of their life in a nursing home after a stroke no matter who is paying for it?

But as I said earlier, those days are limited to 100, and then after that,

mom or dad or grandmom or granddad exhausts every bit of their savings, everything that they have worked their whole lives for, maybe they wanted to send a grandchild to college, an opportunity that they never had when times were tougher, and all of a sudden they lose it all simply because we did not, Congress did not, give them this coverage, this Medicare prescription drug benefit.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, to my colleagues, to anybody who will listen, that this was the right thing to do. This is not something that we can afford to put off. You cannot. I have heard people say, well, gee, you know, the seniors have waited 3 years, surely because now we are in a bind, and we are trying to figure out a way to pay for the restoration of the gulf coast and rebuild that infrastructure, certainly we need to do that and we need to look for so-called offsets. And they are there.

We talk about maybe taking a little haircut and cutting 1 to 2 percent of the growth in every Department. I think we can find those cuts, and I think we can do that. But to ask the seniors to wait another year or two or three, that would be the cruelest of ironies on our part.

And I, Mr. Speaker, am not willing to do that. And I would beg my colleagues, let us not go down that road. We are about to do something that is really good for our seniors. It may be not unlike what we have done in the Middle East. We hear, whether it is from the 30-something Democrats or in the editorial pages from our liberal newspapers in this country, the constant, constant negative criticism and naysayers, and this talk about what is your exit strategy.

I have been hearing that, Mr. Speaker, for 2 years. What is your exit strategy? I mean, you know, you are in the early part of the fourth quarter of a football game, and you are winning, but the going is getting a little tough. If you pull your team off the field, you do not win; you forfeit.

And all of those lives, 2,000 dead, and four times that many injured, are for naught. What a disgraceful thing that would be if we did not follow through. So the analogy then is the light is at the end of the tunnel, it is shining brightly, I think, as I stand here tonight, Mr. Speaker, in the Middle East.

And I think that is absolutely true in regard to health care for our seniors as we go forward. And to all of a sudden snuff out that light because we have this natural disaster, this catastrophe which nobody could prevent or predict, and we have to respond to it, but as Thomas Payne once said, when he was serving at Valley Forge with George Washington, these are the times that try men's souls.

But we, thank God, Mr. Speaker, can walk and chew gum at the same time. This Republican leadership can deal with both of these issues, and it would be a terrible mistake to turn our backs

on our seniors at this critical time where we are seeing light at the end of the tunnel and providing for them a benefit that they well, well deserve and have needed for so long.

The thing about this bill that excites me, Mr. Speaker, I guess one of the things that I am the most excited about, is the fact that the benefit is the greatest for those with the greatest need. Yes, there is a hole in the donut, and it is true that for some people the benefit would not be great if they were not spending anything on prescription drugs.

And there are those in our society who are very fortunate. Sometimes in medical parlance we refer to this as having the Methuselah gene: they enjoy long life and good health, and other members of their family the same. And, you know, maybe they will go see the doctor every year or two; but everything is always fine, and so they are not spending any money on prescription drugs.

So they may look at it and say, gee, \$250 deductible if I have to spend anything, that is out of my pocket. And if I am spending \$30 a month, you know, that is another almost \$400, and I am not currently spending that. So, you know, I look at that and I have spent \$700 the first year of the prescription drug benefit that I have got, and last year I did not spend anything on prescription drugs, so I have lost \$700. Well, that is true. That is true.

But what that individual needs to realize, and I hope that my colleagues in the Congress on both sides of the aisle will make sure that they in a very fair way explain this to their constituents, you beware that next year or next month or next week or even tomorrow, do not all of a sudden have a little chest pain and end up being that person that needs to be on four or five prescription drugs, and then your bill could be 3 or \$4,000 or \$6,000 or \$8,000 dollars a year.

And it does not take long for that to put one in the poor house, if they can afford it at all. So for everybody, for every senior there is something that we call catastrophic coverage. So if they spend, an individual on Medicare, spends in any year up to \$3,600 on prescription drugs out of their own pocket, that of course would include the deductible and the copay and then, yes, the gap or the hole in the doughnut; but beyond that, if there are still costs for prescription drugs, the Medicare part D insurance program pays 95 percent of everything above that.

That is a wonderful benefit, what we call catastrophic coverage. I hope most people will not get into that situation. But clearly they could. They could get into that situation. So what I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is this is a good benefit for everybody; and everybody is eligible, from the lowest income to the highest income. If they do not have coverage in some other way for prescription drugs, then they are eligible for this benefit.

Of course, those who are living off of Social Security and they have very little assets, not much stuff, we all, I think, Mr. Speaker, have too much of a desire for stuff, stuff that really in some instances is not very important. Certainly more stuff does not necessarily make you happier.

But a person can own their home, they can own it free and clear. They can own up to 50 acres of land that may have been in the family for some time and they do not want to sell. They can certainly own an automobile. But they cannot have much stuff beyond that. Much assets.

But if they meet that means test, then the deductible is covered. The monthly premium is covered. There is no copay up to the first \$2,250 or 25 percent as it is to everybody else, and there are no holes in the donut, there is no gap in the coverage. Everything is catastrophic coverage almost from day one, maybe a dollar copay for a generic prescription, and up to a maximum of \$5 for the most expensive.

Remember I talked, Mr. Speaker, earlier about that statin that I was taking that cost \$5 a pill. For our needy seniors, a 3-month supply, 100 pills, you do the math, that is over \$500. They might have a \$5 copay for a prescription like that.

Mr. Speaker, I see that one of my physician colleagues has joined us, and I thank him for taking time out of his busy schedule to be with us during this leadership hour to talk about this Medicare part D prescription drug benefit that we talked about.

He was very much a part of that, Mr. Speaker, and he was in the 108th, my classmate, my friend. I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS).

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me. I could not help but see as the leadership hour progressed you were doing an excellent job of covering all of the things that I think are so important to tell our constituents and our seniors about this plan.

Of course, it is an optional plan. There is no requirement that anyone take this plan. But still I think it is worthwhile for families to sit down, perhaps the day after Thanksgiving, while everyone is at home and thinking about things, to sit down and look at these plans and decide if it might not be a good idea for the Medicare beneficiary in your family.

I would stress that the first date that the benefits will be available will not be until January 1, but the first day that a senior can sign up for a plan is November 15. So that Friday after Thanksgiving or the Saturday after Thanksgiving after you have had enough leftover turkey and pumpkin pie and football, maybe it would be a good idea to sit down and decide if this is not worth a little closer scrutiny.

I took the liberty of going to the Medicare.gov Web site. If anybody has not been there recently, I would encourage them to do so. If you are un-

able to use a computer, ask your son or daughter or your grandchild to do it for you. I promise you they know how.

But looking on the Medicare.gov Web site for my State, Texas, there are some interesting figures available there. And perhaps one of the most interesting there, it is too small to show on the television, but there are a variety of plans that are available in the State of Texas.

Just going down the list here, we see one that has a monthly premium of \$28, which is lower than the premium that was originally designated as \$37, the premium that we originally designated on Medicare, and there is no deductible incurred with that expense. So that is a straight monthly expense.

□ 2030

Mr. Speaker, I would argue that that is a heck of a deal. And again, there are several plans like this, and they are all available for you to see in your State at the Medicare.gov Web site. Furthermore, for people who want to look into using one of the Medicare HMOs or PPOs, one of the Medicare advantage plans that will be available, there are several in my State of Texas; there are several in the counties that I represent. There is a PPO plan with basically a zero drug premium, and there is an HMO plan with a zero drug premium and zero drug deductible, so these are significant savings for people who are on Medicare who do spend money on drugs.

I would stress, and I have had constituents call me, and they looked at the plan and they say particularly when looking at the concept of a \$37-a-month premium with a \$250 deductible, they will say this is of no benefit to me. That may be true, in which case do not do it, but look at some of the plans that are available in your State, in your county and see if there is not one there.

Have a family discussion. Involve your children or your grandchildren in the discussion, because doggone it, we take good health for granted. It is something, though, that can change year by year and that is, after all, why we buy insurance, not to save us money on our current expenditures, but to protect us from those very hefty expenditures that may be incurred in the future.

I must tell the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) he has done a very thorough job about discussing Medicare. I agree with him completely about the need for cutting the deficit this year. I think that is critical that we do so, but this plan is not the place to make that cut. And for anyone who has heard a story or a rumor that the Medicare prescription drug part D roll out may be delayed because of problems with the deficit, that is simply not true. This program will roll out on time. And as we always like to say, it is on time and under budget.

With that, I yield back to my good friend from Georgia.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS), and I thank him so much for being with us tonight. I would welcome, if time would permit, for him to stick around with us and possibly get into a little bit of a colloquy regarding some other salient points of this bill. Certainly, I appreciate him being here and giving us this time this evening.

I was earlier, Mr. Speaker, talking about that statin that I bought a 3-month supply of just last week and that the cost was going to be, the true cost, I paid 25 percent according to my plan, the prescription drug plan that I have, but the true cost was over \$500. Well, a senior who maybe has no prescription drug coverage under any plan, they are not part of an HMO, they are not retired from a company or they are but the company is not providing prescription drug coverage as part of the health care benefit, if you multiplied 3 months times four which would give you 12, if my Georgia Tech math serves me well, then that cost would be \$2,000 for that one prescription.

Well, that is getting pretty darn close, Mr. Speaker, to the \$2,250 that we were talking about, that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) was talking about. And the savings on that you would not have to have too many more prescriptions, maybe an antihistamine or two or an antibiotic here or there during the course of a year to get up to at least \$250, if you have got one very expensive drug like that statin I mentioned. The senior who was enrolled in that scenario, they would actually save about \$1,100 a year. That is how much the coverage would give them.

Of course, if they had prescriptions above that and they got into the gap or the hole in the doughnut, certainly there would be more out-of-pocket expenses. But I think it is very important for people to understand when they hear these naysayers, some of whom we heard from earlier tonight during their leadership hour, that this is a waste of time and effort, and it is not any good. And now that you have torn up your AARP card, and by the way, the reason they made that recommendation when we came out with the transitional prescription drug discount card when we first passed this bill, knowing it would take almost 2 years to get the prescription drug part B insurance program part up and running, AARP had the audacity to support a Republican proposal, Mr. Speaker.

I think the other side must have felt that that organization was always their best friend or, as the saying goes, in their hip pocket. And they could not stand the fact that AARP, and I am a member, have been since age 50. I will not tell you how many years I have been a member. It is a wonderful organization of 37 million seniors in this country. AARP serves them very well. And AARP as far as partisan politics, we are blind to whether it was an R or a D proposal. When they saw a good

thing they supported it, and that is what they should have done, and that is what our colleagues on the other side of the aisle should do.

When you see a good thing, do not constantly say no, no, no, just because you are afraid that the majority party or this President is going to get credit for a job well done and a promise made and a promise delivered. Get on board. Join the team for the benefit of our seniors and to support a good program when you see one.

It is a time now for all of us to work with our seniors to make sure that they understand the program, that they know how to contact Medicare, www.Medicare.gov or dial 1-800-Medicare. There are organizations in every State, the CMS, Committee on Medicare-Medicaid Services, has contracted with Medicare to explain this benefit.

I know in my own office, Mr. Speaker, we are going to put computer terminals in the main office and have someone there that can be online with seniors who just drop in and say, I have gotten the brochures; I have seen the public service spots on television, but I am still a little bit confused and would you help us out. I know that I am going to do that. I know that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is going to do that.

I know that my physician colleagues and my health care provider colleagues in this body and hopefully all 435 of us will take that opportunity, because there is a wonderful program and as the gentleman said, and I am so glad that he reassured our colleagues and anybody who might be listening to us this evening during this leadership hour, that we are not going to delay this program. We cannot afford to do that to our seniors. They have waited too long. And as I said earlier, this is a compassionate program, and it would be cruel to pull that rug out from under them when they have waited so long for this opportunity.

With that, my colleague from Texas (Mr. BURGESS), if he would like to make a few more comments and possibly we can have a little bit of dialogue back and forth with the remaining time that we have this evening. And I will turn it back over to the gentleman from Texas at this point.

Mr. BURGESS. Again, I think you have done an excellent job of laying out the case for the prescription drug benefit. We have a saying back in Texas when something is a really good deal, we say it does not cost, it pays. I kind of feel that way about the part B Medicare benefit.

There are three ways that the Medicare part B benefit could, in fact, result in a costs savings for the Medicare program. One was by introducing competition. The second was by the more timely treatment of disease with appropriate medications. And the third way was by intervening far earlier in the disease process before it gets to the more costly end-state of the disease.

Well, guess what, we will not know about the latter two for some time, but

we do know about the competition aspect. And competition works. Competition has driven down the cost of premiums. Competition has driven down the cost of the deductible for many of the plans that are going to be available in my State, in my congressional district, and many other areas across the country.

How soon will we know about whether or not the timely treatment of disease results in a lowered cost for treating the disease? I cannot tell you that. But the fact that the emphasis is going to be not only on the timely treatment of disease but on prevention, identifying those individuals who are at risk, using the disease management tools that are available in the Medicare program, how powerful is it that someone would have the knowledge that a patient's weight had gone up day over day so that they need to go to their doctor's office and get their congestive heart failure treated, get their medications adjusted on Friday morning rather than coming into the emergency room late on Sunday night and incurring 4 or 5 days in the intensive care unit at who knows the figure, 6, 7, 8, \$9,000 a day.

That is the kind of cost difference we are talking about from the timely treatment of disease. As far as intervening early in the processes so perhaps that person never gets to the stage of heart disease where they develop congestive heart failure, incalculable the amount of dollars that could be saved. Just by increasing exercise, modifying the diet to reduce that risk of type 2 diabetes. Disease management will be a powerful tool for holding down costs in the future.

Again, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) has done a great job in outlining the benefits of this plan, and I certainly thank him for taking time out of his schedule to come and explain this to his constituents and the American people at large.

I am happy to enter into a colloquy if there is any time left; but I honestly think, Mr. Speaker, that the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) has done a wonderful job, and I will yield to him for whatever his pleasure is at this point.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman so much. I appreciate his being with us in talking about this issue.

The gentleman and I are not only colleagues of course here in the Congress, but we are, as I said earlier, fellow physicians; but I think most of our Members realize we are both OB-GYN specialists so we share so much in common. And I would guess that the situation in Texas is very, very similar to the situation in Georgia. Maybe there are some figures that you would want to mention in regard to Texas; but, Mr. Speaker, in Georgia we have got a State maybe a little smaller than the State of Texas population-wise and certainly geography-wise, but we are a State of almost 9 million people now.

There are approximately 85,500 Medicare beneficiaries; 16,700 of those live below 135 percent of the Federal poverty level. These are the folks that are going to benefit the most, and that is why I felt so strongly and passionately about this compassionate program. It is those 16,710 who are at or below 135 percent of the Federal poverty level, Mr. Speaker. There are another 7,000 in Georgia, that brings it up to about 25,000 people in Georgia who are at or below 150 percent of the Federal poverty level. All of these individuals, all of these individuals will be eligible to receive supplemental benefit.

Earlier in the discussion in the hour we talked about the numbers, and I need to correct it a little bit. I think I may have given numbers that were a little bit on the low side. But you may qualify, listen to this, seniors may qualify if you are single and have income below \$14,355 and resources are less than \$11,500. That does not include your possibly paid-for home and homestead and your automobile. And married couples who have income below \$19,200 and resources less than \$23,000. Again, excluding their homestead their home and their automobiles.

These individuals and those at or about the Federal poverty level, again, no deductible, no co-pay, no monthly premium; and you get that prescription filled for \$1 on generic or maybe as much as \$3 or possibly \$5 for one of those very expensive drugs that I talked about earlier.

□ 2045

And, Mr. Speaker, here again my colleague may want to talk about the situation in Texas, because I suspect it is very similar.

Mr. BURGESS. Well, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman has caught me without having done my homework as well as he has, so I do not have those figures at hand. But when my colleague was going through that it reminded me of the times we were on this floor over the last 18 months talking about the Medicare prescription drug discount card. And of course in the hour before us there were some individuals who were fairly negative about anything that might be offered from the Republican side of the aisle and they spoke very harshly against that prescription drug discount card for the past 18 months. And that was so pernicious, so pernicious to people who may have benefited from that prescription drug discount card; the \$600 a year subsidy and the discount rates that were available on that card.

What a shame. What a shame that their constituents did not get to participate in that because their representatives came back and told them, no, this is a bad plan. It is a Republican plan and it is not good for you.

Well, this is a compassionate plan. This is a bipartisan plan, because there were Democrats who supported the bill, I am grateful to say, the night that we took that vote in November of 2003.

So I urge people, regardless of their party affiliation, to look at the benefits that are available to you in your State, in your area. Look at it with your loved ones. Look at it with your children or grandchildren because there may be some significant savings, some significant benefit to you.

There is also a benefit to the program at large. If you treat your disease more effectively, if you prevent disease effectively overall, that disease process is going to cost less, and that is good for the country as a whole.

I have to tell the gentleman from Georgia that I just cannot let this hour go by without asking one additional time for some type of sane liability reform in this country. We have had good liability reform in Texas, so why does it matter to me with the rest of the country? Why do I even care, since Texas is taken care of? The reason I care is because the cost of defensive medicine in this country in the Medicare program alone probably approaches \$30 billion a year. That is almost the cost of this prescription drug program.

If we could reform our liability system, this program costs us nothing. It is the right thing to do and we should do that this year. And I yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. GINGREY. I thank the gentleman from Texas for his leadership not only on the Medicare Modernization and Prescription Drug Act, but also on medical liability. He has been a stalwart supporter of the Health Act that we have passed in this body so many times over the last few years.

Mr. Speaker, in the remaining time that we have I wanted to make a couple of additional comments. We got some good news here recently in regard to the COLA, the Social Security COLA, which is about a 4.6 percent increase next year because of the Consumer Price Index. That is good news for our seniors. That is about a \$40 per month, typically, increase in that Social Security paycheck.

Now, it is true that the premium for Medicare part B, even though that premium only covers 25 percent of the true cost, will also have an increase next year of about \$10. That \$10 from \$40 leaves \$30 still remaining in that COLA. And even for the seniors who get no supplemental help, that \$30 will pretty much cover the premiums for Medicare part B. In fact, it may more than cover them, because, as I said earlier, because of the marketplace, because of competitiveness, pharmacy benefit managers and companies that are going to offer the Medicare prescription drug discount program, we are hearing premiums as low as \$20 a month.

And another thing, Mr. Speaker, that we need to say before we conclude the hour, because we have heard so much negative rhetoric about this tremendous gap in coverage, the hole in the donut and the program not being nearly good enough, is that we will have an

opportunity to reduce those costs by some companies now with a slightly increased premium, maybe as much as \$40, possibly \$50 a month, so that there will be no gap in coverage. It will close that hole in the donut completely. So people will have the option of paying a little bit more and having coverage without any gap.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I want to again remind our seniors and ask our colleagues to remind their constituents that beginning November 15 through May 15, 2006, a 6-month window of opportunity will be the time to sign up for the Medicare part D prescription drug benefit. Look at the program and compare. If you have something else, make a comparison, and then make a decision. And make that decision early. Because if you do, then that coverage starts January 1. If you wait until after the program starts there may be a month gap before that coverage kicks in. And if you wait beyond May 15, then there will be a surcharge. So it is very important to do it in a timely fashion.

I thank my colleagues for their attention, and I thank the leadership for giving me this opportunity to discuss something as vitally important as this Medicare prescription drug benefit for our needy seniors.

IRAQ WATCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JINDAL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I come to the well tonight as part of our continuing Iraq watch to talk with the Members and the folks who are watching about the issues that face us in Iraq.

During the last few months, we have had everything sort of arranged so that we should not pay any attention to the chaos and the deaths and everything else. We were told again and again that the democracy train was on the track and it was going down the track. And a big date was on Sunday, this past weekend, when the Iraqis would vote on a referendum adopting a constitution.

Now, that constitution appears to have been ratified by the Iraqi people. But when I came to this House many years ago, there was an old Texan here who I came to know and respect a great deal. He was the ranking member and then was the second and then finally the chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services. He once handled a very contentious committee of the House in a way that was very respectful and very understanding and gave everybody, Republicans and Democrats, a chance to say whatever they wanted. And, boy, it took forever, but he was always in control.

At the end of it, I congratulated him. I told him I thought I had never seen a committee handled more masterfully.

The Committee on Banking and Financial Services at that point was the largest committee of the Congress. There were 50 Members. This man's name was Henry Gonzalez. He was from San Antonio. His son now serves here. Well, Mr. Gonzalez said to me, Jim, I learned two things from an old guy in San Antonio. One of them is, never try and lasso a cow running downhill. Let him run out until he is tired. And the second one is, it is always too soon to congratulate yourself.

I think it is useful for us tonight to think a little bit about that old Texas aphorism as we consider what happened in Iraq in the referendum for the new constitution. This is a constitution that was voted on by people and was created by people who were selected by us, basically. We put them together, molded them and talked to them and kept shaping what was going on inside the organization.

There are three groups of people basically in Iraq, although there are some others, but there are the Shi'a and the Sunnis. Those are two sects of the Muslim faith. And then there are the Kurds, who also happen to be Sunni believers in Mohammed. Now, those three groups of people have all different interests.

The Sunnis have been in charge of Iraq for many, many years. Going back to the end of the First World War, Sunnis have generally been the leadership. In fact they have been the leadership in the country during that entire period. And the Shi'a, although more numerous, have never been in charge because it has not been a democracy. It is very obvious that a minority people, the Sunnis, were running the country. And it was obviously something that was a real irritant to the Shi'a. And in the midst of this, the Kurds got totally forgotten. The Kurds simply were pushed aside.

So when it came time to write a constitution, the United States did something which I think you can understand the thinking that might have gone into it, and that is that if you want to control Iraq, pick the largest group. They are not a majority, but pick the largest group and add one of these other groups to them and that will give you a majority. And if you can get them to see things the way the United States wanted them to see it, we could then drive a constitution which would be acceptable and be voted on by the 18 provinces.

Now, they did that. The Shi'a and the Kurds together wrote a constitution, and it is an interesting constitution because it sets up this kind of a situation. It says that the Sunnis can make their own state and the Kurds can make their own state and the Shi'a can make their own state and they will be loosely connected at the center, in Baghdad, by a federation. So there will be a federal style of government like we have, except for the fact that states will have way more power than the federal government does. Each state can

go its own way. If they want to use Muslim law, sharia law, in the Shi'a area, they can put that into place. If they do not want to use that in the Sunni area, then they do not have to put it in place. And if the Kurds want to do something entirely different, they can do something entirely different. So it is a very, very weak bringing together of this country.

Now, one of the issues that is a contentious issue, of course, is the control of their natural resources. Iraq is a very wealthy country. It has oil. One of our diplomats said, Iraq is important because it swims on a sea of oil. The oil is under the area where the Kurds live and where the Shi'a live, so they can pump the oil in their little area and have money to make a nice country. And the Kurds can pump oil and make a nice little country for themselves. But the Sunnis are left out in the cold, because there is no bringing all the money to Baghdad and deciding it should be distributed equally among the three. There is no requirement that that happen. They do not have to give anything to the federal government. They can make their own way.

So now you can begin to see why the Sunnis might be a little bit reluctant to get involved in this new Iraqi government, why they opposed the issue of the constitution, because there was no protection for the minority.

One of the things about our Constitution is that it is designed to protect the minority. That is why we have a Bill of Rights. The government, the President, the Speaker, the Senate cannot run over people in this country because every citizen has a Constitution with a Bill of Rights which says what they are entitled to.

□ 2100

If you do not feel like you are getting it, you can go to court and exercise it in the courts and have the courts enforce your rights to free speech or ability to live without search and seizure, or your right to bear arms. All of these are rights in our Constitution.

This Iraqi Constitution has none of those rights for the minority. So there is nothing guaranteed to the Sunni or to the Shia or to the Kurds. In fact, the Constitution was written so that the 19 provinces in Iraq, if any three of them have a two-thirds "no" vote, the Constitution would have failed. It would not have been ratified. They would have had to have gone back and come up with another Constitution that made better sense or had more public support.

Now, in an election like this you would say, well, this is a free and fair election. We are going to let everybody vote. And we basically walled off the whole country. They walled off each province. They put a curfew on. They simply restricted the movement of people throughout the entire period and had some very interesting results.

Now, when Saddam Hussein was president of Iraq, he won with 100 per-

cent of the vote and everybody kind of laughed; that is interesting. That must have been some election. Nobody believes 100 percent of the vote. In the Soviet Union when there was 100 percent, you knew the fix was in. There was no real opposition.

What has happened is now that the vote is over and we now look at this election through the eyes of some analysts, the first one is in Time magazine of October 18, today, and there are allegations of ballot stuffing that make this election tainted in the eyes of the Sunni. More than 90 percent of the voters in many Shiite and Kurdish provinces were reported to have voted for the proposed Constitution. In Anbar, a Sunni area, the numbers were equally high. In the swing provinces, the numbers simply look implausible. When you look at the number of votes that they say are there and how many people are supposed to be there, it does not look like things were as they might seem.

So from the eyes of the Sunnis, this is an illegitimate election. It did not ratify the Constitution as far as they are concerned. It is stolen.

Now, what do you think is going to be the reaction to that? What do you think the reaction will be to that? Well, one does not need to be a political analyst or read the New York Times or Washington Post to realize if people think the election has been stolen, they are not going to respect the results and they are very likely going to continue the insurrection.

I think everybody who looks at this situation from the very start said that if this passes, given the way it was put together and given the way the vote came out, there was no way a victory could be declared by the passage of this Constitution.

Now, I am sure the White House and others will come down and it will be in the press tomorrow about how wonderful it is, they have taken another step down the road toward democracy. Well, they have taken another step. I do not know if it is toward democracy. Other papers suggest what is coming is chaos. If you look at the San Francisco Chronicle of today, this says the government is facing a big challenge. Many questions are still to be resolved. Now why is that?

Well, this Constitution was a kind of a moving target. It was not like they wrote it and then they printed up a million or 5 million or 10 million copies and sent them out all over the country to people. They never got it finally written, so most people voted for something today that they had never had a chance to read. They might have heard about it in the mosque or in the street or somewhere, but they never saw and read a copy of it.

One of the things that was happening, one of the groups of Sunni people or politicians, they decided they would go with the Constitution. They were going to support it, but they had a meeting and they talked about some

amendments. They needed six or eight or 12 or 14 amendments. Who knows what they wanted. Nobody knows. I do not know. Nobody knew in Iraq. Certainly the average person in the street who voted on this never knew what it was about. And so what this says is the Constitution, they put an amendment in at the last without meeting in body. They just stuck it in there that says they can have major changes in this Constitution before the next election, which is supposed to occur in December. This Constitution was supposed to set up the procedures for them to elect a real constitutional body, a real parliament in December. The one that they have now is called the interim. That is the one we kind of appointed. The fact is that no one knows what is going on.

Now, for PR purposes, our government will say we have taken a further step, we have now moved forward. No one should be surprised. No one in the United States should be surprised if we continue to have our young men and women die. Five of them died the day after the election. Almost 2,000 Americans have died already. We have spent somewhere in excess of \$200 billion on this war.

When you think about it, and probably some Members have forgotten, remember when we were told we would not have to pay for this war. When they start pumping oil, the Iraqis will have enough money that they can do all of their own reconstruction. They do not have enough oil pumping to keep the lights on. Most cities do not have lights on but about 2 hours a day. Many do not have fresh water. This is after the United States, with all of our military power and all of our political clout and everything else, has been unable to bring order to this country.

Now, the President will tell you, and I can almost make the speech for him, Well, this election went off very well, and it is because the Iraqis that we trained as policemen and soldiers were out in the streets and things were quiet.

Mr. Speaker, there were Americans standing with machine guns standing prepared to back them up in every situation. This was not an Iraqi-run election; this was an American-run election.

The analysts do not see an end to this. There has been an average of 570 attacks per day, despite the apparent approval on Sunday. Think about it, is that country at peace? Are these people satisfied with what is going on if there are 570 attacks per day?

If we had one attack, we would think the sky was falling, much less having a bomb going off here and there and everywhere all over the place, 570 a day. If we had that going on in this country, we would probably be doing a whole lot different in this body than we are.

We had the mayor of New York who apparently did not want to go to a debate, and suddenly there is a big terror alert in New York and they are searching people's bags. And then it comes

out people are not even sure about this information and where the information came from. You realize the use of fear continues in this country on a daily basis. That is what is going on in Iraq. They are creating fear everywhere.

I was over in Amman, Jordan, a few weeks ago. You come there and you realize that there are no hotel rooms. There are a million Iraqis living in Amman, the capital of Jordan. Anybody with money and the ability to get out of Iraq gets out because it is so unsafe. It is so unstable. It is hard to live there with no electricity, no water. It does not make any difference if you have money. If there is no water in the pipes, you do not have water. It does not make any difference if you have money, if there is no electricity. You may have your own generator, but that is a tough way to live with a generator; and then you have to worry about getting gasoline for it. They have a shortage of gasoline. They are importing gasoline into Iraq because their own refining capacity is not sufficient to meet the needs of the country.

When you look at that situation and say, we are going to have another election in 3 months and then we will have a duly elected parliament and then we can go away, folks, what is happening here is the American people are being taken along 1 week at a time. Wait one more week; I can see a light at the end of the tunnel. You are going to see and hear from people that somehow if we just last a little longer, we are going to make it. Some people have accused me of having a certain bias, and perhaps I do.

There are columnists, and this is in *The Washington Post*. This is George Will's column. George Will and I have one thing in common: we are both Cubs fans; otherwise I do not think we agree on very much. But George Will wrote a very interesting article today. His title is "Standing Up a Constitution." Like you bring in an 18-wheeler with a constitution on the back of it and you push it off and stand it up, now it is in place, we have had elections, and so we must now have a constitution.

He says the first civilian leader of the U.S. occupation, retired Army General Jay Garner, and you may remember General Garner only lasted a couple of months. Well, the reason was he laid out his timetable, reconstruct the utilities, stand up the ministries, appoint an interim government, write and ratify a constitution and hold elections. He said there would be a functioning government in Iraq within 90 days. Ninety days. This was just after Baghdad had fallen. He was the governor, and he was going to run the place. He made this prediction we would get out of there in 90 days.

That was never going to happen. We knew it was not going to happen. The people in the White House did not want it to happen that way. They immediately pulled him and put Bremer in there. The first thing that Bremer did was to disband the army. Think about

this for a minute. You have 500,000 people in the army. Are all of those people evil? Are they all bad? Are they all members of the Baath Party? Probably not. The sergeants and the privates and the lieutenants. Yes, the generals and the colonels perhaps. But what Bremer did with one swipe of the pen, he wiped out the entire army so there is no pay. Everybody has to go home to their village disgraced. They cannot take care of their families, cannot pay their bills. What he did was put 500,000 Iraqis underground with a rifle and a grudge. This insurgency that we are seeing, this civil war that we are watching, actually, and it is going to get worse, is one that is simply being driven by decisions made by the United States.

Now what George Will says in this article is that we should not get too excited about a big turnout. He said the fact that people voted in tribal factions enmeshes them in the democratic process and its civilities. They voted, and so now they are stuck with it. Perhaps, but he says in 1929 through 1933, the turnout in German elections was especially high because so were the stakes. In Germany's turmoil, the issues included which mobs would control the streets and which groups would be persecuted. In Iraq's turmoil, the issues are exactly the same.

□ 2115

What followed that period when Hitler came to power was the same chaos that he came out of and put a hold on Germany.

What is going to happen here? We think this constitution is going to stand up? We think that somehow they are going to sit down there when members of the parliament are being killed, when members of the parliament cannot leave the country because they do not dare to leave because they do not know if they will be able to get back in? They simply are a nonfunctional government. This is a failed state.

And Mr. Will finishes by saying: "When America's Constitution was ratified in 1789, federalism was an unfinished fact. It still is but today's adjustments of States rights and responsibilities are" usually "minor matters" that are handled out here in the floor. We basically know what the Federal Government does and we know what the State Government, and it has taken us 200 years to work all that out.

"If the Federal Government of 1789 had not grown in strength," and it did not start strong but it gradually got stronger and stronger, "relative to the States, far more than most ratifiers of the Constitution anticipated or desired . . ." They never thought the Federal Government would be as strong in this country as it was when we started. But they had a mechanism by which that could happen. This constitution that we gave the Iraqis prevents that from happening. What we have done is basically we have divided the country up on a religious basis or ethnic basis. We have not done anything to create na-

tionhood in Iraq. We say we have, but the acts, the things that we have forced down their throat as a constitution basically have not worked.

"So," he says, "the question today, which will be answered in coming years by the political process framed by Iraq's new constitution, is whether the constitution 'stands up' a Nation or presages the partitioning of it, perhaps by the serrated blade of civil war."

He is really saying this question is not over by any stretch of the imagination. There are many analysts, when we read the newspapers worldwide, particularly in the Middle East, who believe that we are going to have 18 separate states. All these states will have their own power, and they will fight war among themselves, and they will always be weak. Some people say that is exactly what the United States wanted. They did not want a strong Iraq. That is why we had to take out Saddam Hussein. We had to take out this strongman who had this country and he controlled it.

Nobody controls Iraq today. I do not care how many soldiers we put there now. We do not control it. We go and control this area, and then we walk and we go over to this area, and suddenly the place that we controlled a couple weeks ago is back right where it was when we went there in the first place. So what is now developing in this country is continued chaos.

Now, there are other articles in today's paper. Many of my colleagues are responsible for all kinds of things in this country, and it is not easy to have a full chance to read all the newspapers, so that is why I am coming out here to talk about this, to talk about what is in the newspaper.

This is a column written by a doctor who is the chief executive of the Iraqi National Movement, which is a Sunni political party. This is a Sunni political leader, in the *New York Times* in today's editorial page, and his name is Hatem Mukhlis. And the title of his article is that we are "Voting 'Yes' to Chaos." From the point of view of the Iraqi Sunni, this vote that happened a couple days ago, what he says is, "The Iraqi constitution, if it passes, will break the country apart." That is not it might break the country apart or I am fearful that it will break the country apart. It will break the country apart.

Now, when people are of this level of political understanding, we are not talking about a taxicab driver that somebody stopped and asked him. This guy is a political leader in the country, and he does not say that is what he wants. That is not what he wants. But what he is implying is that this is a situation that we have created, and he says, "Anyone who thinks that such a constitution would calm the insurgency has probably been spending more time than he should have reading Alice in Wonderland." The guy obviously knows a little bit about America. He probably was educated here. One would

be surprised how many Iraqi leaders were educated in United States universities.

When I went to dinner in Amman, I was at a table with 12 people, of which seven had been educated in the United States and four had been educated in Great Britain. These people are not uneducated or unaware of the ways of the world. They simply know the place in which they live and the people with whom they live. They know the history. They know the way Iraqis think. They know Arab customs. They know what can happen, how people will think about a given situation, and they know that if we put this thing together and say, well, anybody can go off and run their own state, that some are going to go off and run their own state. There is just not any question about it.

And when the country starts coming apart, what is the United States going to do? Are we are going to stand back and say, well, okay, they can have Shi'a country over here and a Sunni country over here and a Kurdish country over here, it is all right with us? Is that what we set out to do when we went in there?

We certainly have not gotten what we thought we were going to get, although we now have passed a constitution. It got so bad, there was so much fear in our government that we were not going to be able to pass this constitution that they went in in the last couple of weeks trying to change the way the votes were going to be counted. They said it has to be two-thirds of those registered to vote. Not two-thirds of those who voted, but it has to be two-thirds of those registered. If they have got 100 people registered, two-thirds is 66. But if 54 of them vote, how do they get 66 against even if everybody voted no? It has to be two-thirds of those 54 who vote. And there was so much uproar over this change that we put through in the days just before the election, the United Nations came in and said if they do that that is not going to be a fair election. We were worried up to the very last minute whether or not we could control what was going on there and have it come out the way we wanted to have it come out.

Now, this Iraqi says: "Rather than unifying Iraqis, this constitution would only increase the rift between our ethnic and religious groups. It could also lead to the Balkanization of the nation, as the 18 states coalesce into three superstates, with the Sunnis trapped between the Shiites to the south and Kurds to the north. Hatred toward those Iraqis who return to Iraq on the backs of American tanks will be nurtured. Inevitably this would lead to more hatred towards the United States, since even though it is the American troops that are preserving Iraq's unity, it was the invasion that has led to this chaos."

We are in a no-win situation at this point. The President cannot win this. Unfortunately, and I think it is unfor-

tunate for all of us, not just Democrats, it is unfortunate for Republicans, the President has said we are going to stay the course. This course has led into more and more and more problems. And it is almost impossible to imagine that the President is going to let this happen right on through the next election.

Images of the Americans leaving off the roof of a hotel in Saigon in 1975 are not out of the realm of believability for this particular situation in Iraq today because the American people want to have their own security taken care of. What they saw with all this money wasted in Iraq was that there was not enough money to take care of the problems of people of Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi.

Somebody said that the loans that they give in Iraq are free but the ones that are given in Mississippi for reconstruction have interest. So somebody down there said, What I am going to do, I am going to go over to Iraq and try to pay it off, get my money in Iraq and bring it home. The point being that the American people have realized that the wasting of our resources abroad is not what we elected the President to do. He promised us in 2004 he would protect us, and yet when a hurricane comes FEMA does not exist. He is reduced to telling some guy, when there is a mess everywhere, Gee, Brownie, you did a good job. Brownie did a terrible job. He did no job really. And this war is sapping our energy as well as sapping the goodwill that we have in the world. In fact, it is building more and more hatred out there.

Now, the solution, at least if people have been reading the newspapers, there are two other things the President can do to make things look better. One of them is to distract us. I mean anybody who has ever seen a magician operate knows that they put their fingers up here and snap their fingers so people will pay attention to what they are doing up there, but with this right hand they are doing something else somewhere. They are pulling something from someplace. The distraction in the political process that this government has used has been a very common one.

Last night I was watching a DVD about the Vietnam era, and one of the things that happened during the Vietnam era when things were not going well in this country, there began to be a message from the White House that this was not being caused by Vietnamese. This was being caused by fighters coming from outside. They were coming from the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and we had to attack Laos and we had to attack Cambodia because if we did not, the fighters would be coming from the outside.

When I was watching this DVD last night, I thought to myself we could take those lines and pick them up and put them into the mouths of the President and his advisers today around the issue of foreign fighters. Iraq, they tell

us, is not caused by Iraqis. It is caused by those people who were coming from outside. They are the ones. If we could just stop them. Why do the Syrians not close their border?

I am sorry? They mean that if the Syrians would close the border, suddenly this would be all over? Is that what they are telling us? His own generals say that not more than 10 percent of the people fighting in Iraq are from outside. It may be as low as 4 or 5 percent. It is a very small number of people. This is not being caused from the outside. However, if we could start some kind of border fight, they had one, a short one, last weekend up on the border with Iraq, then maybe if we could get something going on on the border there, we could get people thinking that must be what it is. The President is right, there are too many people coming in from the outside.

It is not true. It is not true. There is no evidence of that. The people who really know and who tell us the truth say it is not happening.

□ 2130

They produced a letter the other day. They said we have got a letter from Osama bin Laden's second in command to the guy running al Qaeda in Iraq. If you read today's newspaper, there is all kind of doubts about whether that letter is even legitimate. It was picked up about 3 or 4 months ago. Certain parts of it do not make any sense. It is simply very, very unlikely that that is a legitimate letter from Osama bin Laden. He is asking for 100,000 American dollars in that letter. I mean, come on.

What are we talking about here? I mean, none of that holds together, but it did happen that that letter came up just at the time of the election. Days before the election, here comes a letter.

Every Member of the United States Congress who has been in a campaign in their life at any time has had the sort of Thursday surprise of election before Tuesday. It always happens. They come out with something about that you killed your favorite billy goat in the backyard with an axe or something. Then, after the election's over, it turns out it was not true. Well, here is another one of these things that is coming, and people have to say I wonder if we can believe anything that comes out of this administration.

They will not let us have hearings here. They will not let us get anybody in here to find out what is going on in Abu Ghraib prison. They will not let us have hearings on the issues that threaten our image in the world. We say that we care about human rights, but then you look at what we do at Guantanamo and what we do at Abu Ghraib, and you have to ask yourself why would the President even go to the point of saying we cannot see the caskets coming home? Some young man or some young woman goes out and dies for our country, and they come home and the parents would like to be

there at Dover when the casket comes home. Is that too much to ask? I mean, is it really? Would it be that much trouble to make it possible for a family to go when their loved one's coming home? The President said we cannot have any pictures and it will just confuse the public; the public cannot handle it.

The United States population does not need to be hidden from the truth, and the truth is that the foreign fighter argument from Syria is phony, and they are going to use that. If they do not go into Syria or create some kind of a coup or something in the next few weeks, I will be very surprised.

On the other side of Iraq, you have Iran. I think I talked out here on the floor before, but Iran is primarily a Shiite country. It is not all Shiite, but it is primarily Shiite, as is the southern part of Iraq, which has been a back and forth flow of people for a long time. Many of the issues that arise out of this whole confederation idea are troublesome because the Arabs who live in Iraq say you are going to give the control of this country to the Persians, Iraqis and Persians.

We do not think in those terms. We do not know about that kind of stuff. We are such a hodgepodge in this country. We look at somebody and we think, well, maybe I can figure out if that person is Irish or Polish. If there is an African American, I do not know if they came from Africa or the West Indies. If we hear a Hispanic voice, we do not know where they came from. We have no idea. But in these countries, where for 1,000 years they have lived in the same place, they know where everybody is from, and they know who has responsibility for what and so forth.

We now have manufactured this business about nuclear weapons. This is the United States. We have more nuclear weapons than the whole world put together by a factor of 10, and we suddenly get up on our high horse and say you cannot have any nuclear power, because we know if you get nuclear power, you are going to go and make weapons. We have talked about that, and why do we not let the United Nations inspectors go in?

The United Nations inspector Mr. Al Baredai, he won the Nobel Peace Prize. He is the guy who went into Iraq and said I cannot find any weapons. We said we are going to have to go to war anyway. We would not accept the judgment of the United Nations that there were not weapons of mass destruction. The President had decided that the best way to confuse and scare the American people was with the threat that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and was going to be an imminent danger to us within 24 hours. So he was going to drive that idea, whether the inspectors found it or not. In fact, he was not going to let the inspectors there long enough so that they could at some point give a clean bill of health on that particular issue. He simply would not allow it.

What we are facing now today is that we now have the possibility of going into Iran because we say they are developing nuclear power. We have nuclear power plants all over this country, all over this country. Why can they not make electricity out of nuclear power?

We do not want weapons. Sure, we can deal with the weapons part, but how about having a nuclear power industry? We are not saying people have to close down here in this country or that somehow the British cannot have it or the French and the German. Everybody else has nuclear power. Why can the Iranians not have it? Because we say they are going to use it to make weapons. Well, that may be true, but we have a mechanism by which we can monitor that, through the United Nations. Through the International Atomic Energy Agency, it can be monitored.

Where we stand today is that we have a situation, and I say this in summary, we have a situation where we have rammed through a Constitution in Iraq that both Iraqis and American conservatives are being convinced absolutely it will not work, to being very dubious about whether it will work. If that is where we are and we read in the newspaper, I bring this up because I want people to be thinking about when they read about Syria, why is Syria coming up? Why is Iran coming up? Why are we widening the war rather than pulling out and bringing our troops home?

I happen to be one of those who believes that we could be out of there by Christmas. There is no reason we could not. People say, oh, it will get worse. Get worse than what? Get worse than what is going on right now, where we are losing five Marines at a crack? I do not know how much worse you think it could be if we brought them home and let the Iraqis work it out themselves. They will find a way. They do not enjoy killing each other. That is not the Arab way.

The Arab way is to sit down and figure out a way that they can live in peace. They call it atwa. It is an arrangement that they establish between peoples, and they find ways to resolve these kinds of conflicts. It is foreign to us. We go to court. We are always going after somebody or we go militarily. The idea of sitting down and working it out, having a cease-fire and having a big peace conference in Iraq or in Jordan for that matter, with all the countries around, the Saudis do not want there to be a war. The Egyptians do not want a war. The Lebanese, the Syrians, the Turks, Iranians, none of the people around Iraq want this thing to continue to fester because the possibility of it boiling over into their people is very likely, and they are worried about that.

There is really a lot of cultural interests in bringing this thing to an end if the United States were to allow that to happen, but what is required? It is for the President to listen to what is going on in the world, and I take some hope.

The President has got one of his very trusted folks out. He has given her a new job at the State department, Ms. Karen Hughes. She went out on, I think they thought it was going to be a PR goodwill trip, and got an earful of what was going on out there. She came back with a wholly different view. She had been sitting in Washington, listening to all that goes on in the White House. Everybody's telling everybody, everything that is going is fine; everything's going wonderful; do not worry about a thing. Everything is going to get better tomorrow. She went out and find out how really bad it was.

When she came back, she brought a group of Arab negotiating women into the White House to meet with the President. That is how much things had changed. Imagine the President sitting down with a bunch of Arab women, talking about peace, about what is really going on out there?

This is not a situation that is going to be resolved with guns and military might. We have the best Armed Forces in the world. The people are the best. They are the best trained. They have the best equipment in most cases, if our military people pay attention and order stuff. We have the best and most powerful, but we cannot control the world that way. It will have to have a diplomatic aspect to it, which up to this point has not been there, and it is going to have to be there.

We cannot run Iraq as though it was a colony of the United States. There are 16 bases, which we have built, various sizes of installation. Why are we building permanent bases in Iraq if we want to get out?

It makes you wonder exactly what our plan for Iraq was. I do not think we have ever been told the truth about that, and I think that there are a lot of issues that will continue to come up and will lead us to have this Iraq Watch once a week on the Democratic side because we do not think that people on the other side really want to talk about the chaos and the problems it is causing us, both internally in the United States and externally, and the death and the cost. All of that needs to be discussed.

IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOHMERT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I am motivated to come because of the comments made by the previous speaker, by an incident that happened today in my committee, and listening on TV to a previous speaker on Iraq.

All three of them, to the best of my knowledge, have not been to Iraq since the war, and yet, they profess to know so much about what is going on in Iraq. I have not quite understood why our colleague would go and meet with Saddam Hussein before the war and not

seek to understand and meet with our people in Iraq and the Iraqis after the war.

I voted to remove Iraq out of Kuwait in 1991 because I believed we could not allow Iraq, and Saddam Hussein in particular, to control 19 percent of the world's oil, the 10 percent that was in Iraq and the 9 percent in Kuwait, and then threaten over 40 percent of the world's oil in Saudi Arabia, the Arab Emirate, Qatar and even Iran. So even more than 40 percent. It is almost like a James Bond movie that we would somehow think that we would want that to happen.

People say it is all about oil. No. It is about our being able to light a room, heat a room, provide power in a hospital, to be able to move. Basically, it is about our lifeblood.

So we went in and removed Saddam, and we had an agreement, which he did not abide with for 12 years. In fact, we encircled Iraq, hoping, I guess, that he would eventually comply.

□ 2145

We had inspections that we sought to have him comply to, and he did not. At the time, we did not think he had a nuclear program; in fact, our CIA did not think he had it, and then his 2 sons-in-law went to Jordan and told us exactly where we would find his nuclear program. And then we were able to get Hans Blix and others to go to those areas and we found that he did, in fact, have a nuclear program. So our faith in the CIA, at least mine, sure was impacted significantly, frankly, by the failure of our people to know that, in fact, he had not just chemicals which he used on his own people.

I have been to Iraq 10 times since the removal of Saddam in 2003. I have spoken to Kurdish families that lost loved ones. They described to me how those killings took place. The helicopters flying over, the mists that they saw, their families that collapsed in utter pain. I have also seen the killing fields that existed courtesy of Saddam Hussein. Regretfully, we almost gave him a playroom in which to do these things, because we encircled him with a no-fly zone.

I voted to remove Saddam Hussein from power in 2002, and we did that in 2003 because, like President Bush, former President Clinton, Senator CLINTON, my 2 democratic senators, Senators DODD and LIEBERMAN, I believed he had weapons of mass destruction. I went to Hans Blix and asked him in his own country why Saddam wanted us to believe he had weapons of mass destruction. And he said, he wanted his neighbors to fear him and he said, he never believed that we would come in. I thought, that is kind of hard to believe. But then, when I thought about it, it is not hard to believe. He never thought we would remove him from Kuwait. He never thought we would do that, which is a real lesson that a military power that you have, as powerful as it is, if your

adversaries do not think you will use it, becomes a power you ultimately may use; whereas the threat of using it if they believe you will use it means that you can get a change in behavior.

But he also believed we would not attack because we learned that the Oil For Food program had enabled him basically, as the Dulfer Report says, yes, he said, no weapons of mass destruction, but then he said that in his interviews with Iraqi officials, that Saddam believed that he had the vote of France, Russia, and China because of the Oil For Food program, and because of the Security Council would not allow the United States to go in. Well, they did not. And he figured if France and Russia and China would not vote for us to go in, we would not go in. The President kept telling Saddam, cooperate, or we will come in. My wife would say to me, why is the President saying that? She said, I know he is going to do that. I said honey, he is not speaking to you, he is speaking to Saddam, because we do not want him to go in; we want him to comply.

Now, the bottom line is, we went in. And, in April 2003, being a Peace Corps volunteer and someone who was not in Vietnam and yet, here I am, of Vietnam age sending other troops to Iraq, I thought, well, what could I bring to the table? I realized that what I could bring is what I was trained in the Peace Corps to do: it is to understand their culture, understand how we are able to appreciate them, an Arab Nation, and to see how we could help them have the opportunity to decide for themselves ultimately how to rule their own country. In Mukasa, I was there in April 2003, and I think I was the first Member of Congress to go into Iraq; in fact, I know I was, and I had conversations with a number of people, but one of them was with a gentleman named Mohammed Abdul Hassan, and I said to him, what do we do that makes you uncomfortable. He said, when you throw candy on the ground and our children pick it up as if they are chickens or dogs. He said, when an Arab woman puts her hand to her heart, a Muslim woman, and your soldier is offended, when really she is saying, thank you for honoring me, but Muslim women do not shake hands with men, but particularly with strangers, and you are offended. You should not be offended. She is honoring you by saying, "thank you, but." And, at one point, which seemed a little out of character, he put his hands on my shoulders and looked at me and said, you do not know us and we do not know you.

Well, I could not wait to get back home, because when I go to Iraq, I do it for 3 reasons. I want to see firsthand what is happening so I am not looking at it through the press. Because when you look at it through the press, it is like you look at it through a little scope. It is wherever they focus attention. I wanted to learn firsthand, be-

cause I had learned from my concern about his having weapons of mass destruction that I wanted to know firsthand, not through other sources. I wanted to see for myself. But I also wanted to come back home to be able to tell my own government things that I think they needed to do. One of them was very clear as soon as I came back. I said to our own government, we need Iraqi-Americans there, and we need Arabic speakers.

Now, at that time, Iraq was under the control of the military and Mr. Bremmer, and I think they were insensitive to the cultural differences. I think that they did not pay attention to what the State Department had said about looting, about the need for Arab speakers.

The second time I went there, I went outside the umbrella of the military. I want to make this point. I went on my own. Well, actually, I went with some nongovernment organizations that enabled me to stay in Basra, meet with Iraqis, stay in Al Gut, meet with folks in Al Gut, go to Hanacan, Sulaymania, Irbul, speak to every day Iraqis, spend the night, talk to them. The second time I went there, I started hearing, why are you putting my father and my brother and my uncle out of work? Why are you doing that? What did they do? They did not know I was a Member of Congress; they thought I was evaluating the programs provided by these nongovernment organizations, and it was honest, that is what I was doing. I just did not tell them I also happened to be a Member of Congress.

They made such a strong case. They said, why can't we at least guard the hospitals. That rings in my ear, because we have lost 3 American soldiers in my district, the first one guarding the hospital, which is to acknowledge to my colleague who just spoke that we did make mistakes, huge mistakes, and we dug a deep hole.

We basically created a void because we disbanded their Army, their police, their Border Patrol, and their government. We put over 400,000 people out of work and, in the process, all of their family members became a bit angry. So we are talking about nearly 2 million Iraqis who were basically told by our government, you have no future role in Iraq.

And I say that and I wish the administration would acknowledge it, because rather than making me more concerned about where we are today, it makes me appreciate where we are today. If we were up here in April 2003 and were a little ahead or a little behind; we dug ourselves a huge hole by disbanding their Army, their police, and their Border Patrol. But when you see how far we were down, you realize now that we have come a long way. We, the Iraqi people, and we, the United States, in the incredible dedication of our troops, we lost nearly 2,000 Americans, but we have had over 14,000 who have been injured, and some of them quite severely.

The bottom line is, though, if you appreciate that we have come a long way from the hole we dug, you do see the progress that my colleague does not seem to want to see or acknowledge, which I think has been quite significant.

Another time I went to Iraq, I had one of Mr. Bremmer's people pull me aside and say, we do not have any resources. I only have one person here: me. And it is all centrally controlled. And we need money. I need at least 50 people. The Marines are leaving and they did kind of the work I was doing, interacting with the populace and the polls are coming in and they are not going to do it the same way. We need resources.

I came back and said, we need resources. I was a little shocked to find a month later that we saw tens of billions of dollars being added. A little resources was a lot more than I thought. And I do feel that if I had it to do over again, I would have wanted to have a clearer picture of the potential costs. I still would have been very strongly an advocate of going into Iraq, but I would have liked to have known the costs better. And that is one area when I look back and I say, why did I not try to determine those better.

Another time I went in, I met with our folks who take the weapons, the IEDs, the improvised explosive devices and they break them down, and I went and saw a room filled with hundreds of these tiny mechanisms. And the people that were there, there were about 2 to 3 of them, I know 2 in particular, and they said, we only have a handful of people. We need 50 to 100 folks to help us break these down. They were key chains, the keys that would open the door, they were the car door openers, they were timers in washing machines. They said, if we had more people we could break down where they were made, because we could identify the type of unit that is made to make these bombs and we would know where to go in Iraq. When I came back, I frankly asked to meet with the President and had an opportunity to share my concerns with the President and other officials about the need to get people in that area, which is to say that, and then that happened. We got those individuals. And we were able to break down a lot more of these weapons.

I believe, as I point out in other criticism, before I talk about some of the amazing things that have happened, I believe that if the White House had been more open to legislative oversight, and we in Congress had been more aggressive on legislative oversight, Abu Ghraib never would have happened, because this is what would have happened. One of us would have been in Abu Ghraib, and a soldier would have come up to us and probably use stronger language than I am going to use, and he or she would have said, I do not know a darn thing about over-seeing prisoners. I am a cook. I am in

artillery. I do not know how to do it. By the way, Congressman, some pretty bad things are going on here by a few people. And we would have then raised questions, and it would have been looked into.

So one of the sad things from my standpoint is in summary, I wish that our military had listened more to what the State Department said would happen, which did: the looting, do not disband the Army, the police, or the military, or the government; I wish that we had done oversight in a stronger way.

But this is the amazing thing that has happened. It is absolutely amazing. Those who have voted against the war have been in strong criticism of the President. So almost everything he does, they are critical of. And yet, when they are critical of it and it turns out right, they just kind of fade into the woodwork. They said, do not transfer power to the Iraqis in June, do not rush them. And we did, and it was a huge success, the transfer of power in June of last year. Every critic of the President said do not do it, it will be a failure. When it succeeded, they just acted like nothing happened. Well, a huge thing happened. We transferred power.

I can tell my colleagues that it worked and it was significant because when I was there for one of my visits and I had met with the President and I had met with the Prime Minister and I had met with the foreign minister, the Foreign Minister Negroponte, and what was crucial about the transfer of power, besides giving the Iraqis the authority, was we took it away from Defense to run the government, Mr. Bremmer, and let them fight the war, and we gave it to State Department to be our liaison with a legitimate government, or at least a government that now was in Iraqi hands. I will say legitimate in parentheses since there was not any election.

So we went out on this press conference and there was all this Iraqi press, and I have to tell you, I thought, this is kind of a kick, I am going to have a press conference with Iraqis. The first thing I said was, "we made some mistakes, but." And there was nodding of heads by the Iraqis because I knew that they all agreed and knew that it was a mistake to disband the Army, the police, the Border Patrol and the government, at least most of them felt that way.

Well, the first question was to the Iraqi Foreign Minister, so I stepped aside and he answered the question. I asked, is there another question. The second was to the Foreign Minister. I stepped aside and he answered that. This went on for 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 times and I finally said to Mr. Negroponte, I said, Ambassador, what better proof do we have that the Iraqis believe, and with justification, that their own people are now in charge.

□ 2200

That was a huge, huge success, for which the President basically got no

credit. Then there was the election in January 2005, and all of the critics said do not have this election, it is going to be a big failure. There is going to be violence. It is not going to work.

Well, I was there on election day. And it was one of my most thrilling moments as a Member of Congress, because I was getting affirmation that we were clearly on the right track. Clearly on the right track. I was in Irbil. And I met with the Democratic Institute, and the National Democratic Institute and the International Republican Institute that are funded to help countries all around the world understand democracy.

And in these institutes were not Americans; they were all of the people we had helped in different places, in Yugoslavia and South America. They were all there to help Iraqis. It was thrilling to see all of this world community to come to help.

But at any rate, I am going and witness the vote. And I had a badge on that gave me the privilege of serving, and in Irbil there was this school, and there were three classrooms on one side, and three classrooms on the other. And people were going in, and registration was running pretty well.

Under Saddam if you did not register, you were likely to get killed. So we had a pretty good registration list. But what was amazing was in every one of those rooms the furniture was the same; it was corrugated cardboard, but so firm it was like furniture.

And people were given their local, their state, and their Federal ballot. They went behind a protected area. They voted and then they came up to the person who was right there with the three ballot boxes.

The person took their ballots, folded them up and put them on top of each ballot. And then took their finger and stuck it in the ink jar. And I am thinking, well, this is interesting. You get killed, I am told if you vote, and yet those folks are putting their finger in an ink jar.

And I learned from some from South America, they use that system in South America in some of the countries. If you try to erase the ink it gets darker. The only way you can take it off is to take your finger off. You just have to wait until the skin dies. So it is there for many, many, many days.

And I am watching this. Give the ballot. Put your finger in the ink jar. And I wanted to bond with the Iraqis. I was in a Kurdish village. And I went up, I think somewhat meekly, and I said, would it be all right if I stuck my finger in that ink jar?

Well, the woman who was in charge of the election there looked up at me, looked down at the ink jar, looked up at me again, looked down, then looked up at me again and then she said, no, you are not an Iraqi. I was embarrassed.

Everybody looked at me. I sure was not an Iraqi. And then I welled up with this incredible emotion, for two reasons. The pride that she had, and I was

not one of her. But she was a Kurd, and she said I was not an Iraqi. She did not say I was not a Kurd.

I saw Iraqis line up to vote. They were dressed up. And they brought their men with them, the Iraqi women, because they wanted to vote. And I saw them carry their children, just like we would do.

Later that day, I met with the President of Iraq. The election is in January. This was to elect an assembly which would then select people for a panel for the Constitution, that then had to be ready by September for a vote in October. And he told me he got there half an hour early. And they made him wait a half an hour.

And then he smiled, and he said, is that not terrific? But then he got angry, and he said, I was fined \$1,000 for campaigning the day before the election.

And I said, well, Mr. President what did you do? He described to me what he did. And I am thinking to myself, it sure sounded like campaigning to me. And then he said, But, you know, they fined everybody else too.

And I thought, you know what, this is amazing. When I met with the election officials later that day, I learned there were 160,000 Iraqis who ran this election. Contrary to what my colleague said previously, this was not run by Americans. We taught them, Yugoslavians taught them, South Americans taught them, the English taught them, some in the eastern European nations, other Eastern European nations had come to tell them about democracy.

They set it up, and they ran it almost flawlessly. Frankly, better than happened in some of my own urban communities in my own district. There was immense pride, and there should have been pride. So it took them a while to get their government, but they did. And they were a few weeks late in getting their Constitution.

What did the press say? The press said, they are failing. That is what they said. All of the major newspapers on TV, they are failing. And I am thinking to myself, they have failed because they missed a deadline by a week or two? They failed? So I began to think. Let me think. 1776. Declaration of Independence. Articles of Confederation. Constitution of the United States. I think that was like 13 years.

And then as Condoleezza Rice pointed out to me, besides the failure of the Articles of Confederation, in our Constitution, if you were black you were three-fifths a person and a slave. Women did not have the right to vote. And there were a few other things. We punted on a few issues.

Now, the Iraqis have given women the right to vote. The Iraqis have even guaranteed 25 percent of their seats in their assembly will be women. That is what they have done. The Iraqis have said Sharia law exists if you declare under Shiia or Sunni, Sharia law. If you declare you are a Shiia or a Sunni.

But if you choose to be under common law, then you are under common law.

They then have tried to draw in the Sunnis, who in the negotiations were allowed to participate even though they did not vote in the last election, they did not vote. But they were still there.

But the Sunnis would tell us that they did not have this authority to say, yes, we put our stamp of approval on this, because they said we were not elected like you were, Shiias and Kurds.

But they agreed with so much in private as to what was done. And the Shiias and the Kurds kept trying to say, well, if we do this, do this. And then we hear in the press that somehow this is a bad thing. And then I began to think about our Constitution. When we had the Constitution, it did not include the 10 Bill of Rights, and fortunately, Virginia, in particular, said we want the Bill of Rights.

And Jefferson said, we want the Bill of Rights. We had to change our Constitution 10 times in order to become these United States. We had to amend what had been already agreed to. And yet we are not even saying that the Iraqis can do the same thing? And we are saying they have to do it in 2½ to 3 years, when we took many, many years, and along the way had the Articles of Confederation.

So I look at the transfer of power in June of 2004 and say what a huge thing. Then the elections in 2005. So what about the election that just happened? I kept turning to the press to see what happened. And I did not hear what happened. And then it dawned on me: you know, it must have been a success, because the press was not talking about it. What a horrible thing to say and have to admit, but it is so true.

If it is a success, it is not going to be talked about, which is to say, frankly, if the press moves to al-Kut, that is where the bombing would be, not in Baghdad.

If the press moved to Basra, that is where all of the bombing would be. If the press moved to Kadhimain, that is where all of bombing would be because the bombing is not for domestic consumption; it is for international consumption.

The Iraqis are used to bombings. They have 400,000 people in the killing fields. They have the dead in the Kurdish areas because of the chemical weapons Saddam used. I met a woman who for 10 years was not allowed to go out of her house. I do not say out of her property, out of her house. Because her parents were so fearful, given her looks, she was attractive, that Udai and Qusay would choose her as their woman of pleasure some night, Saddam's two sons.

It was a horrific place to be. And now Iraqis are forming their government. When I asked Iraqis during any number of my 10 visits, what is your biggest fear, their biggest fear is, and it is hard to tell you how I feel when I say it, but

they say that you will leave us. That you will have us taste what you have, give us an idea, give us a sense of how life could be without Saddam, give us a sense to have our own destiny determined by the majority, that you will leave us.

I say to them, we will not leave you. Now, you know what, I do not think we will. But when I hear the talk and I look at CNN and I look at other newscasts and I hear the blind, we are in a mess in Iraq, and I see the transfer of power, the election in January, the referendum now, and what I believe will be a huge participation in December, I am saying, I am in awe of what the Iraqis have done.

I am in awe of what our Americans have done. Because while we never should have disbanded the army, the police, the border patrol, their government, we did, and the Americans, the limited number of Americans had to fill in the void and pay a huge price.

But they also have done something else besides trying to maintain security, trying to teach about democracy, trying to build an economy. They have trained their army, their police, their border patrol, they are training their government officials.

Six months ago, I would have had to tell you honestly, and I would have been honest, that the police were not professionals, because they were not. They did not have enough training. They did not have enough experience. They did not have enough equipment. But now we are giving them the training, the equipment. They have the cars, the uniforms, the places, the weapons, the training clearly; and now they are getting the experience.

They are getting the experience. The military was able in the last town that we were able to free, the Iraqis went in. We followed. The Iraqis freed the town. We followed. The bottom line is, we followed and the Iraqis are now able to hold it.

Let me get toward the conclusion here and just say to you that we may fail or we may succeed, but we have a better chance. We have a better chance in Iraq than we had when we formed our own country.

Dave McCullough in "1776" said we needed lots of miracles. We needed the miracle to make sure the wind was blowing in the right way so George Washington could leave and escape the British in New York.

We needed a miracle to get Massachusetts and Virginia to agree. We did not have three parties. We did not have the Kurds, the Shiias and the Sunnis. We had 13 very independent States. We had large States; we had small States. How are you going to get them all to agree? Are Rhode Island and Delaware going to agree to let Virginia and New York or Pennsylvania govern? No. But we did it. They do not need a miracle. What they do need is a little more time.

What they do need is the possibility that they can have their elections, that

they can refine their Constitution, and that they can make sure their military has the capability to provide the security.

So when people say, what is our exit strategy? I say it a hundred times, it is very simple. And when they say we do not have an exit strategy, that is simply not true. We have had an exit strategy from day one. It has been revised a few times, but we have had an exit strategy. It has been revised because we underestimated the strength of the insurgency. We underestimated the consequence of disbanding their army, their police and their border patrol; but our strategy is so basic, so simple, and it does not need to be doubted.

Our strategy is to train their police, to train their border patrol, to train their military so they have the capability to keep order. To train their government so that they not only know about majority rule, but minority rights. To give them more time to experience the government, to give them more time to have their military be engaged in a fight with help from the United States. Will we leave? We will leave probably sooner than we should.

□ 2215

In my judgment, Senator MCCAIN and others have been right. We have been understaffed in Iraq. We will leave probably sooner than we should but we will not leave completely because Iraqis will still need logistical support. Their military will not have the cooks, the people who can do the transportation, and all the other things that they need besides that fighting force. They will not have the air power that they will need. And frankly, I do not think they are going to want us to leave from Iraq completely when they have neighbors like Syria, the Turks who fear the Kurds, the Iranians that fear the Kurds and are trying to wrap their arms around the Shias, and the Saudis who do not want democracy to succeed.

When my colleague, the previous speaker, talked about how people predicted bad things, I know darn well that the President of Egypt predicted the election in January would not succeed. He was wrong. He predicted the constitution would not pass and I think he is wrong. And I think it relates more to not the United States but more to the idea that Sunnis are having to give up power in Iraq to Shias, and that is of concern to many.

Have there been other benefits from our being there? I do not think that you would have seen Qadhafi and Libya do a 180 degree turn. It was around the time we captured Saddam Hussein that Qadhafi I think probably thought, you know, I have billions of dollars. Why would I want to end up like Saddam Hussein? Why in the world would I want that to happen? And in Syria even the Israelis were saying the Syrians will not leave Lebanon but they left Lebanon. I do not think they would have left Lebanon if we were not in

Iraq. Fortunately, the Syrians fear we might do something in Syria.

Now to some in my district they think that would be the craziest thing in the world to do something in Syria. No, the craziest thing would be for the Syrians to fear that we would not do something. The craziest thing would be for us to say that we will not do something in Syria. The smartest thing is to keep the Syrians wondering so we can have a change of behavior without using military.

When I met with the Syrian ambassador he said, We want to be your friends. Just tell us what we are doing wrong and we will stop. And I said to the ambassador, Mr. Ambassador, we will not want to tell you the things we know you are doing wrong and then just have you stop the things we know you are doing wrong. We want to you stop even the things we do not know you are doing.

We want you to stop allowing insurgents to come into Damascus who are terrorist bombers who then come into Iraq to blow themselves up. When my colleague said only 10 percent of the insurgency are foreigners. I thought, yes, there are only 10 percent of them but 98 percent of them are bombers, people who blow themselves up. If we could get rid of that 10 percent, we would get rid of 98 percent of the suicide bombers. Most Iraqis do not have any interest in blowing themselves up.

So there is more I could say about Iraq. I am in awe of what our troops have done. I am in awe of the Iraqi men and women that I have met. I believe that most Iraqis who are involved in this government believe they are the Madisons, the Benjamin Franklins, the George Washingtons. They believe they are helping to create a new nation that not unlike its fledgling democracy in the United States, where you could have said, you know, tell me a country that has been a democracy, a country where there have been some States. Tell me a country. You could have used the same argument against the United States. Nobody has it. It is not a natural thing. We in this world have kings and queens and dictators.

Well, what I found at least with the Iraqis is they take to democracy. They love the debate, the dialogue. They love to barter. They love it. And there are a lot of things we could criticize what they have done, but I think in two and a half years they do not need a miracle, but they make me feel like they are doing something that will have unbelievable significance in the long run for peace and prosperity.

PROGRESS IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHAYS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I have to indicate what an inspiring talk that was that the gentleman from Con-

necticut (Mr. SHAYS) has provided this body and those who all may be tuned in. It was very touching, extremely informative, and most helpful; and it was a pleasure to hear.

As I think about some of the comments that have been said in recent days regarding the Iraqis and the Iraqi government and those people who are trying to become a self-governing people, I am struck and I am brought back, as the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) was, back to the days of this country's battle for independence, and all the naysayers that were around. It is estimated that perhaps less than a third were actually those who were actively involved in seeking independence and truly believed in the cause.

Having been in Iraq earlier this year, after the January elections, having seen what the Iraqis were getting a glimpse of, it is like being a teacher and seeing the light come on with a student. They get it. They understand. Make no mistake, there are corrupt people in Iraq just as there are in America. There have been elections stolen in America. There have been, I am sure, improper voters everywhere there has ever been a vote. But this is truly an awesome historic time.

Could it fail in Iraq? It sure could. Could it fail for sure if we abandon what has been done in the cause for which so many have already given their lives? It sure could. It could fail. And it is heartbreaking when people say, let us just get out before the job is done and let us just get out, meaning that those people who laid down their lives in service to this country, in helping to spread freedom and fighting insurgency and terrorists in other streets so we do not have those fights here in this country, we will, we have, but the major battles have been overseas because the terrorists get it.

They understand once the seed of democracy begins to bloom in the Middle East, then it grows and it spreads seeds that then grow up and democracy spreads because once people get that glimpse of self-government it is an incredible thing. Just like John Adams wrote his wife, Abigail, and explained, the thing that philosophers through the ages have talked about, this idea that people could govern themselves is just within our grasp. Oh, to be living in this time when it is so close within our grasp.

Well, we have been the beneficiaries of that. As I spoke to people in Iraq one gentleman, tears began to come as he talked about how brutal and barbaric it had been in Iraq under Saddam and how because of Saddam's spies that were everywhere, neighbors could no longer trust neighbors. They could not speak what they thought without worrying about somebody turning them in. They could not make anybody mad in the neighborhood because then somebody might enter a false report to get them arrested just out of spite. Even the spies had to be careful because they

were spied on by others. And so it was a paranoid area.

He said neighbors for years had quit speaking to neighbors out of this kind of fear and paranoia, but it was not just paranoia. There were really people out to get them in order to move up. I know having spent a summer in the Soviet Union, it was the Soviet Union when I was there back in 1973. I had asked one of the Soviet students when somebody rushed out of a room, I said, Where is that person going? He said, She is going to tell on me because in your country maybe money helps advance you, but in my country the only way you get anywhere is to step on other people on the way up.

That is the way it was in Iraq. You stepped on other people to move forward, and it was a terrible time to live in. And this man, as tears welled up, he said on the day of the election neighbors that had not spoken for years, they came out, they held hands and they walked to the polls together to vote.

Now, anybody that would seek to demean the great things that have already been accomplished that has put the self-government within these people's grasp so that the seed of democracy might grow and flourish and develop and spread to the surrounding countries, is just intolerable. There are great things that have occurred. There are people who have laid down their lives so this could happen. There are people who have laid down their lives in service to this country. There are people that have been wounded and hurt. And as the speaker said, we have visited those people, we have been with families at funerals and it is heart-breaking. But there is a seed of freedom and democracy and the potential for self-government that has been granted.

Now, comparisons continue even tonight to be made by a colleague across the aisle who wants to compare this to Saigon. This is not Vietnam. Iraq is not Vietnam. It is completely different. That advisory action where we had advisors in Vietnam that was escalated by President Kennedy and then escalated further into a full war even though it was called police action by President Johnson, and then was ultimately, even though he is no hero of mine, President Nixon did get us out of Vietnam. I am not pleased with the way it was done, but people were made to die for nothing. But they did not die for nothing. They died for the ideal that man was created by their creator with God-given rights. They did not die for some wishy-washy government in Washington.

Now, this election in Iraq and what is going on over there is historic. It is awesome. It is being done by valiant people to demean what has been done and the lives that have been sacrificed, even by Iraqis, is simply inappropriate, excessive political exuberance at the cost of truth, honesty and dignity.

Now, the naysaying brutality that is being heard verbalizing this idea that

we should have our head in the sand is simply inappropriate. I was grilled by some Al-Jazeera reporters. They said, You must have been upset by the January elections. Your candidate was not elected. I said, We were not here about a president. We were here about a process, that you would govern yourself, and you would select your own president.

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It is not about a president. It is about a process. And they began to see.

And some of the Sunnis had said, you know, we were told by our leaders not to vote; that, for one thing, the vote would not come off because of all the violence, and we saw that did not happen. People did vote anyway. We were also told it would be a fraud, that the Americans would use this as a way to install their puppet government. But that did not happen. The guy that was most friendly to the United States got third place. We saw, wow, this was a real election and we missed it. We are not going to let that happen again.

And even though it may not have been a majority of the Sunnis, the Sunnis bravely came out and voted. And they voted knowing even still their religious leaders were speaking against it.

I was able to relate to the Al-Jazeera and some of the Iraqis present with a story that can be depicted in the beautiful huge portrait outside this very floor of the Constitutional Convention with Chairman Washington standing there. The story that was told was of Benjamin Franklin sitting there, as depicted in his chair at the Constitutional Convention after they had come up with a document, finally. And he said, you know, I have been looking at that half of a sun engraved on the back of your chair trying to decide through the process of this convention if that was a rising sun or that was a setting sun, and now I believe it is a rising sun. And I related to the Iraqi reporters, I believe what I am seeing in this country is a rising sun.

It is an incredible day in the history of mankind that in the area where many believe the cradle of mankind existed, where mankind started, for the first time in thousands of years that area is about to govern themselves. We have done a great thing.

There are things that I have heard right here on this floor that I might disagree with our President over, but I thank God that he has stayed the course. Because if the seed of freedom and self-government is allowed to grow and flourish in Iraq, it will spread with other seeds. We are already seeing that, as the gentleman from Connecticut pointed out, in surrounding areas, if we stay the course long enough to let them take over, let them govern. We have trained their policemen. We are training their soldiers, and they are nearly ready to take over. What a glorious day that will be for them. They are not going to agree with

us on many things, but they will be a free people and they will understand that freedom.

I thank God that in the late 1700s, 1776 to 1789, that the naysayers that said how stupid this was, that those in France who were the naysayers to this gentleman, Lafayette, who really saw something in the potential for these colonies in America, I thank God, the very God we see inscribed above the Speaker's chair, where it says "In God we trust," I thank that God that the naysayers did not prevail; that the naysayers, those with their heads in the sand, the negative people, that they did not prevail. Thank goodness that freedom won out.

And I am praying to that same God that it prevails in the Middle East, despite the naysaying of those who would be heard even in this body itself. And, Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to have addressed this issue this evening.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BECERRA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

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:)

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. PAUL) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. SHUSTER, for 5 minutes, October 19.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, for 5 minutes, October 19.

Mr. MARCHANT, for 5 minutes, October 19.

(The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DENT, for 5 minutes, today.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Mr. Trandahl, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 3765. An act to extend through March 31, 2006, the authority of the Secretary of the Army to accept and expend funds contributed by non-Federal public entities and to expedite the processing of permits.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 35 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, October 19, 2005, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4526. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of General Kevin P. Byrnes, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4527. A letter from the Director, International Cooperation, Department of Defense, transmitting pursuant to Section 27(f) of the Arms Export Control Act and Section 1(f) of Executive Order 11958, a copy of Transmittal No. 07-05 which informs of an intent to sign a Research, Development, Test and Evaluation Annex to the Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Australia, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2767(f); to the Committee on International Relations.

4528. A letter from the Deputy Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, Transmittal No. 05-30, concerning the Department of the Navy's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to Chile for defense articles and services; to the Committee on International Relations.

4529. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of the State, transmitting a copy of the Memorandum of Justification under Section 610 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 regarding the determination to transfer FY 2004 and FY 2005 funds to the FY 2005 International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement Account for the Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative; to the Committee on International Relations.

4530. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergency Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), section 505(c) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, 22 U.S.C. 2349aa-9(c), and pursuant to Executive Order 13313 of July 31, 2003, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995; to the Committee on International Relations.

4531. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting in accordance with Section 645(a) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, a report of the amount of acquisitions made by the Department from entities that manufacture articles, materials, or supplies outside the United States; to the Committee on International Relations.

4532. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a copy of Presidential Determination No. 2005-34, Waiving Prohibition on United States Military Assistance with Respect to Benin, pursuant to

Public Law 107-206, section 2007; to the Committee on International Relations.

4533. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report entitled "Report of U.S. Citizen Expropriation Claims and Certain Other Commercial and Investment Disputes," pursuant to Public Law 103-236, section 527(f); to the Committee on International Relations.

4534. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the semi-annual report of the Inspector General for the period ending March 31, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 5(b); to the Committee on Government Reform.

4535. A letter from the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's FY 2004 report entitled, "Performance of Commercial Activities," pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2461; to the Committee on Government Reform.

4536. A letter from the Auditor, District of Columbia, transmitting a report entitled, "Audit of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2D for Fiscal Years 2003 and 2004," pursuant to D.C. Code section 47-117(d); to the Committee on Government Reform.

4537. A letter from the Director of Finance and Administration, Delta Regional Authority, transmitting in compliance with the Accountability for Tax Dollars Act of 2002 (ATDA), a copy of the Authority's Audited Financial Statements for FY 2004, pursuant to Public Law 106-554, section 382L. (114 Stat. 2763A-280); to the Committee on Government Reform.

4538. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management, and Budget, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's Annual Report on grants streamlining and standardization, covering the period from May 2004 to May 2005, pursuant to Public Law 106-107, section 5 (113 Stat. 1488); to the Committee on Government Reform.

4539. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Department of Agriculture, transmitting in accordance with the requirements of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002, the Department's annual report for Fiscal Year 2004; to the Committee on Government Reform.

4540. A letter from the Acting Chairman, National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting the Board's 2005 FAIR Act inventory; to the Committee on Government Reform.

4541. A letter from the Chief Justice, Supreme Court of the United States, transmitting a copy of the Report of the Proceedings of the Judicial Conference of the United States for the March 15, 2005 session, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 331; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4542. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a copy of the Annual Report to Congress on the Refugee Resettlement Program as required by section 413(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4543. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's report on the effects of Parental Kidnapping Laws in domestic violence cases, pursuant to Public Law 106-386, section 1303; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4544. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's report on stalking and domestic violence for 2002 through 2004, pursuant to Public Law 106-386, section 40610; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4545. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmit-

ting the Department's report to Congress for 2004 on Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Services and Programs, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 10420(d); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4546. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's Twenty-Seventh Annual Report to Congress on the activities during Fiscal Year 2004 as pursuant to subsection (j) of section 7A of the Clayton Act, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 18a(j); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4547. A letter from the Chief Executive Officer, United States Olympic Committee, transmitting the 2004 Annual Report of the United States Olympic Committee; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4548. A letter from the Interim Staff Director, United States Sentencing Commission, transmitting a copy of the 2003 Annual Report and Sourcebook of Federal Sentencing Statistics, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 994(w)(3); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4549. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's report entitled, "2004 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor," pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 2464; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4550. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Stock Held by Foreign Insurance Companies [TD 9226] (RIN: 1545-BD27) received October 4, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4551. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Research Credit, Section 41 (b), Qualified Research Expenses. [U.I.L. 41.51-01] received October 4, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4552. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Examination of returns and claims for refund, credit, or abatement; determination of correct tax liability. (Rev. Proc. 2005-67) received October 4, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4553. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Reduction in Certain Deductions of Mutual Life Insurance Companies (Rev. Rul. 2005-58) received August 23, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4554. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Determination of Issue Price in the Case of Certain Debt Instruments Issued for Property (Rev. Rul. 2005-57) received August 23, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4555. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Sherwin-Williams Co. Employee Health Plan Trust v. Commissioner, 330 F.3d 449 (6th Cir. 2003), rev'g 115 T.C. 440 (2000) — received September 12, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4556. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Treatment of Certain Amounts Paid to Section 170(c) Organizations under Certain Employer Leave-Based Donation Programs [Notice 2005-68] received September 12, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C.

801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4557. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Transfers of Excess Pension Assets to Retiree Health Accounts (Rev. Rul. 2005-60) received September 1, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4558. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Last-in, first-out inventories. (Rev. Rul. 2005-63) received September 1, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4559. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Administrative, Procedural, and Miscellaneous (Rev. Proc. 2005-61) received September 1, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4560. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Collected Excise Taxes; Duties of Collector [TD 9221] (RIN: 1545-BB75) received September 1, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4561. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Guidance under Section 951 for Determining Pro Rata Share [TD 9222] (RIN: 1545-BD49) received September 1, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4562. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Examination of returns and claims for refund, credit, or abatement; determination of correct tax liability. (Rev. Proc. 2005-62) received September 1, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4563. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Adjusted Gross Income Defined (Rev. Rul. 2005-52) received August 10, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4564. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Weighted Average Interest Rates Update [Notice 2005-63] received August 10, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4565. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Exclusions from Gross Income of Foreign Corporations [TD 9218] (RIN: 1545-BE16) received August 10, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4566. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Capitalization and Inclusion in Inventory Costs of Certain Expenses (Rev. Rul. 2005-53) received August 10, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4567. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Property Transferred in Connection with the Performance of Services (Rev. Rul. 2005-48) received August 10, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4568. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — 2005 Section 43 Inflation Adjustment [Notice 2004-56] received August 10, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4569. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Guidance Regarding the Simplified Service Cost Method and the Simplified Production Method [TD 9217] (RIN: 1545-BE61) received August 10, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4570. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Modification of Notice 2005-4; biodiesel and aviation-grade kerosene [Notice 2005-62] received August 10, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4571. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — 2005 Marginal Production Rates [Notice 2005-55] received August 10, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4572. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Automatic Consent for an Eligible Educational Institution to Change Reporting Methods (Rev. Proc. 2005-50) received August 10, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4573. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Information about additional criteria that will be applied in selecting proposals for the Internal Revenue Service's Industry Issue Resolution (IIR) program. [Notice 2005-59] received August 10, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4574. A letter from the Acting Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Foreign tax credit and other guidance under section 965 [Notice 2005-64] received August 23, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4575. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a joint report on the counter-drug efforts in Afghanistan as required by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004; jointly to the Committees on International Relations and Armed Services.

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. SENSENBRENNER: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 1400. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide penalties for aiming laser pointers at airplanes, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 109-250). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 3647. A bill to render nationals of Denmark eligible to enter the United States as nonimmigrant traders and investors; with an amendment (Rept. 109-251). Re-

ferred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA (for himself, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. BORDALLO, and Mr. FORTUÑO):

H.R. 4070. A bill to permit each of the territories of the United States to provide and furnish a statue honoring a citizen of the territory to be placed in Statuary Hall in the same manner as statues honoring citizens of the States are placed in Statuary Hall; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. FLAKE:

H.R. 4071. A bill to amend Public Law 109-59 to provide additional transportation flexibility and to rescind certain amounts of Federal funding; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. GERLACH:

H.R. 4072. A bill to direct the Federal Trade Commission to revise the do-not-call telemarketing rules to prohibit calls from certain political organizations to persons on the national do-not-call registry; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. AL GREEN of Texas (for himself, Mr. POE, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas):

H.R. 4073. A bill to designate Pakistan under section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to permit nationals of Pakistan to be eligible for temporary protected status under such section; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. MCCARTHY:

H.R. 4074. A bill to provide student loan forgiveness to the surviving spouses and parents of victims who were Hurricane Katrina or Hurricane Rita first responders; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. POMBO:

H.R. 4075. A bill to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to provide for better understanding and protection of marine mammals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska:

H.R. 4076. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to issue Disaster Recovery Bonds for disaster relief and recovery efforts; to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. DOOLITTLE (for himself, Mr. BOUCHER, and Mr. GOODLATTE):

H. Con. Res. 268. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress regarding oversight of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DUNCAN:

H. Res. 498. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of School Bus Safety Week; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. MCCOTTER:

H. Res. 499. A resolution condemning the murder of American journalist Paul Klebnikov on July 9, 2004, in Moscow and the murders of other members of the media in the Russian Federation; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. SHAW:

H. Res. 500. A resolution recognizing the 60th anniversary of the disappearance of the

5 naval Avenger torpedo bombers of Flight 19 and the naval Mariner rescue aircraft sent to search for Flight 19; to the Committee on Armed Services.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 19: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. BACHUS.
 H.R. 23: Ms. PELOSI.
 H.R. 25: Mr. DUNCAN and Mr. CARTER.
 H.R. 97: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania and Mr. REYES.
 H.R. 115: Mr. SHERMAN.
 H.R. 147: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, and Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan.
 H.R. 224: Mr. MENENDEZ and Mr. HONDA.
 H.R. 269: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 282: Mrs. DAVIS of California.
 H.R. 312: Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD.
 H.R. 352: Mr. MCINTYRE.
 H.R. 356: Mr. PEARCE and Mr. HULSHOF.
 H.R. 363: Mr. HONDA, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. ROSS.
 H.R. 371: Mr. PRICE of Georgia.
 H.R. 414: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
 H.R. 415: Mr. ANDREWS.
 H.R. 503: Mr. BROWN of South Carolina.
 H.R. 515: Mr. MCCOTTER.
 H.R. 552: Mr. BURTON of Indiana.
 H.R. 558: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 586: Mr. NUNES.
 H.R. 602: Mr. TURNER and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
 H.R. 691: Mr. CAMP.
 H.R. 697: Mr. MICHAUD.
 H.R. 752: Mr. FATTAH.
 H.R. 769: Mr. FOLEY.
 H.R. 783: Mr. UDALL of New Mexico.
 H.R. 791: Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts.
 H.R. 827: Mr. SWEENEY and Mr. REYNOLDS.
 H.R. 838: Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 839: Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota and Mr. ABERCROMBIE.
 H.R. 859: Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 891: Mr. NORWOOD.
 H.R. 892: Mr. NORWOOD.
 H.R. 896: Mr. UDALL of New Mexico.
 H.R. 916: Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. REYNOLDS.
 H.R. 923: Mr. SHUSTER.
 H.R. 934: Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. ANDREWS, and Mr. SIMMONS.
 H.R. 960: Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. HOYER, Mr. FORD, and Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan.
 H.R. 968: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida and Mr. HOLT.
 H.R. 995: Mr. EMANUEL.
 H.R. 1070: Mr. JINDAL.
 H.R. 1106: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.
 H.R. 1120: Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. FORD, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
 H.R. 1186: Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania, and Mr. MARCHANT.
 H.R. 1188: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. SOUDER, and Mr. HOLT.
 H.R. 1190: Mr. ISSA.
 H.R. 1222: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
 H.R. 1239: Mr. ANDREWS.
 H.R. 1241: Mr. WALSH.
 H.R. 1246: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Ms. HARMAN, and Mrs. CAPPS.
 H.R. 1306: Mr. KINGSTON, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. HYDE, and Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina.

H.R. 1353: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
 H.R. 1376: Mrs. EMERSON.
 H.R. 1380: Mr. PASTOR, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. KLINE, and Mr. HULSHOF.
 H.R. 1388: Mr. DOOLITTLE.
 H.R. 1402: Mr. DINGELL, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. KIND.
 H.R. 1413: Mr. BERMAN, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. HINCHEY, Ms. LEE, and Mr. GORDON.
 H.R. 1426: Mr. JENKINS.
 H.R. 1510: Mr. BONNER and Mr. MARCHANT.
 H.R. 1549: Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. SWEENEY, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. BURTON of Indiana.
 H.R. 1558: Mr. BROWN of South Carolina.
 H.R. 1588: Mr. MARKEY.
 H.R. 1632: Mr. HALL.
 H.R. 1671: Mr. OWENS and Ms. HERSETH.
 H.R. 1704: Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California and Mr. KLINE.
 H.R. 1744: Mr. EVANS.
 H.R. 1749: Mr. MORAN of Kansas and Mr. LATHAM.
 H.R. 1796: Mr. EVANS.
 H.R. 1898: Mr. SIMPSON, Mrs. SCHMIDT, and Mr. CLAY.
 H.R. 1956: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.
 H.R. 2045: Ms. CARSON.
 H.R. 2048: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, and Mr. RENZI.
 H.R. 2061: Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. AKIN, and Mr. SOUDER.
 H.R. 2106: Mr. MCCOTTER.
 H.R. 2112: Mr. LAHOOD.
 H.R. 2134: Ms. WATSON, Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. KIRK, Ms. CARSON, Mr. RENZI, and Mr. LANTOS.
 H.R. 2176: Mr. MCHUGH.
 H.R. 2231: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. MATHESON, and Mr. TIERNEY.
 H.R. 2238: Mr. DICKS.
 H.R. 2294: Mr. SHAYS.
 H.R. 2331: Mrs. MCCARTHY.
 H.R. 2533: Mr. HONDA, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. RAHALL, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mrs. EMERSON, and Mr. UDALL of Colorado.
 H.R. 2666: Mr. POMEROY and Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky.
 H.R. 2683: Mr. CONYERS and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
 H.R. 2719: Mr. EVANS.
 H.R. 2794: Mr. EVANS.
 H.R. 2963: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. OWENS, and Mr. KILDEE.
 H.R. 3127: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. DOYLE, and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
 H.R. 3137: Mr. CAMP and Mr. MCCOTTER.
 H.R. 3146: Mr. POMBO.
 H.R. 3159: Mr. KILDEE and Ms. HART.
 H.R. 3183: Mr. MCCAUL of Texas and Mr. UDALL of New Mexico.
 H.R. 3187: Mr. MCINTYRE.
 H.R. 3189: Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. MCCOTTER, and Mr. MCINTYRE.
 H.R. 3196: Mr. ACKERMAN.
 H.R. 3256: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. KANJORSKI, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 3334: Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. ADERHOLT, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. TOWNS, and Mr. CLAY.
 H.R. 3336: Mr. ROTHMAN.
 H.R. 3358: Mrs. MALONEY.
 H.R. 3369: Mr. HOLT and Mr. NADLER.
 H.R. 3385: Mr. CALVERT and Mr. EMANUEL.
 H.R. 3420: Mr. ENGEL.
 H.R. 3559: Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. GOODE, Mr. PORTER, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. HALL, Mr. TIERNEY, Ms. HERSETH, Mr. ANDREWS, Ms. DELAULO, Mr. BONNER, Mr. GIBBONS, and Mr. MCCOTTER.
 H.R. 3561: Ms. BERKLEY and Mr. DOGGETT.
 H.R. 3563: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
 H.R. 3617: Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 3630: Mr. REGULA.
 H.R. 3639: Mr. LANTOS, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.
 H.R. 3698: Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. McNULTY, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. OWENS, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. BACA, and Mr. WEXLER.
 H.R. 3704: Mr. FORBES.
 H.R. 3737: Mr. ROTHMAN, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina, and Mr. MCHUGH.
 H.R. 3748: Mr. McNULTY and Ms. BERKLEY.
 H.R. 3764: Mr. MICHAUD.
 H.R. 3800: Mr. CUMMINGS.
 H.R. 3825: Mr. DOYLE, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania, Mr. GERLACH, Ms. HART, Mr. MURTHA, Mr. PITTS, Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania, Mr. SHERWOOD, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, Mr. KANJORSKI, and Mr. HOLDEN.
 H.R. 3838: Mr. KIND, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DOYLE, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
 H.R. 3860: Mr. CONAWAY.
 H.R. 3861: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD and Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.
 H.R. 3867: Mr. PAYNE.
 H.R. 3905: Mr. GONZALEZ.
 H.R. 3916: Mr. EVANS.
 H.R. 3925: Mr. McNULTY and Mr. BROWN of Ohio.
 H.R. 3933: Mr. CASE, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. ISRAEL.
 H.R. 3938: Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. BURTON of Indiana.
 H.R. 3940: Mr. GOODE, Mr. KINGSTON, and Mr. COSTA.
 H.R. 3944: Mr. MICHAUD.
 H.R. 3947: Mr. FORBES.
 H.R. 3949: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama and Mr. OWENS.
 H.R. 3954: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
 H.R. 3960: Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. PAUL, Mr. MCKEON, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.
 H.R. 3966: Mr. COOPER.
 H.R. 3968: Mr. UDALL of Colorado and Mr. EVANS.
 H.R. 3970: Mr. FORBES.
 H.R. 4011: Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. OWENS, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
 H.R. 4025: Mr. LYNCH, Mr. ROSS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. BISHOP of New York, and Mr. MOORE of Kansas.
 H.R. 4030: Mr. WAXMAN and Ms. HOOLEY.
 H.R. 4032: Mr. TANCREDO.
 H.R. 4033: Mr. BOEHLERT and Mr. UDALL of Colorado.
 H.R. 4045: Mr. McNULTY, Mr. SAXTON, and Mr. GONZALEZ.
 H.R. 4047: Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. PENCE, Mr. GOODE, and Mr. REHBERG.
 H.R. 4048: Mr. CONYERS and Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island.
 H.R. 4050: Ms. DEGETTE.
 H.R. 4061: Ms. HERSETH.
 H.J. Res. 38: Mr. MENENDEZ and Mr. WALSH.
 H.J. Res. 60: Mr. MILLER of Florida.
 H. Con. Res. 172: Mr. EVANS.
 H. Con. Res. 173: Mr. KIRK, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, and Mr. WU.
 H. Con. Res. 179: Mr. CHOCOLA, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. MURTHA, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. GILLMOR, and Mr. SHAW.
 H. Con. Res. 231: Mr. WU, Mr. HONDA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Ms. BORDALLO.
 H. Con. Res. 260: Mr. KING of New York, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. CONYERS, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. NADLER, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, and Mr. HOLDEN.

H. Res. 215: Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. BORDALLO, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, and BEAUPREZ, Mr. GONZALEZ.

H. Res. 222: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H. Res. 335: Mr. McNULTY, Mr. BEAUPREZ, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. WYNN, Mr. KUHL of New York, and Mr. BERMAN.

H. Res. 390: Mrs. NORTHUP and Mr. PETRI.

H. Res. 438: Mr. HOYER, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, and Mr. SAXTON.

H. Res. 447: Mr. MORAN of Virginia and Mr. CLAY.

H. Res. 453: Mr. SOUDER.

H. Res. 471: Mr. DINGELL.

H. Res. 477: Mr. STARK, Mrs. MCCARTHY, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. INSLEE, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, and Mr. LANTOS.

H. Res. 487: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. CASE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. WATSON, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms.

BORDALLO, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. GONZALEZ.

H. Res. 489: Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. CASE, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms. LEE, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, and Mr. WALSH.

H. Res. 492: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.

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. 2290: Mr. SMITH of Texas.

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 554

OFFERED BY: MR. FILNER

AMENDMENT No. 1. At the end of the bill, add the following new section:

SEC. . . . LIMITATION.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, this Act does not apply to an action brought by, or on behalf of, a person injured at or before the age of 8, against a seller that, as part of a chain of outlets at least 20 of which do business under the same trade name (regardless of form of ownership of any outlet), markets qualified products to minors at or under the age of 8.