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No. 18

House of Representatives

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ISSA).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC.

February 14, 2006.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DARRELL E. ISSA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord God Almighty, giver of all good gifts and authority's source of wisdom, we stand humbly before You. We ask Your forgiveness for the times we are self-centered and not attuned to the needs of others or Your holy inspirations.

Give us strength today to accomplish the work of the people in the House of freedom and civil expression. Receive our praise and thanksgiving for Your countless gifts and the opportunity to serve in government.

To You be honor and glory 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 Georgia (Mr. GINGREY)

come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GINGREY 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.

NSA TERRORIST SURVEILLANCE

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, since it has been revealed that the NSA had a terrorist surveillance program, opponents of the administration have been quick to criticize this program.

Let us try to set the record straight on this effective tool in fighting the war on terror. One Senator has charged the NSA is eavesdropping on Americans who have no indication of wrongdoing. The Senate minority leader, who has been briefed on the program, called it domestic spying.

In fact, this program is extremely limited to international communications, in which one party is suspected of links to al Qaeda or other terrorist organizations, like calls made by 9/11 hijackers to their leaders in Afghanistan.

Are some Democrats so confused, or do they care more about attempting to gain political advantage than protecting our Nation?

Mr. Speaker, we know our enemies place operatives within our borders who blend in and wait to strike as they did on 9/11, but they are still out there. I do not care one iota about protecting the privacy of terrorists who have been sent to this country to murder innocent Americans. It is regretful that some seek political gain at the expense of our security.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET PROPOSAL

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

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, today is Valentine's Day, representing our heart. I would like to extend my heart to all of the Members of the United States Congress.

The President's budget does not, in fact, reflect a warm heart, as it eliminates funding for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program. Each month, CSFP provides over 475,000 low-income individuals with nutritious food packages; 85 percent of the recipients are seniors, all with income levels below a meager \$12,400 per year.

In Indiana, 4,979 seniors are currently enrolled in this program. Next year, they could go hungry if the program is eliminated.

The budget proposal enables participants to enroll in a food stamp program once the CSFP is eliminated. The food stamp program, while extremely important, does not offer the same benefit and convenience that CSFP does. The food packages that seniors receive from the CSFP go to veterans who are sleeping under a bridge and who are homeless.

I would ask the majority leadership of this Congress to redress those inequities in the President's budget.

Some seniors are also hesitant to participate in the food stamp program because they perceive it as a welfare program. Yet these same seniors participate in the CSFP in Indiana.

I was touched by the story of a senior who received her first CSFP box from Gleaners. She cried after discovering 12 pudding cups in her box. Her case manager explained, "Pudding is a luxury she has not been able to afford in a very long time." Let's not forget that as we craft a budget resolution, something as simple as pudding cups are a great luxury for some Americans.

□ 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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Our budget is a reflection of our values and priorities. Our seniors deserve the very best from us, and it is incumbent upon us to keep them in mind when determining our budget allocations.

SALUTING THE BRAVERY OF BORDER PATROL AGENTS

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

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to salute the bravery of Border Patrol agents working along the Mexican border. I recently returned from a week-long trip to the Mexican-California border, where I had the opportunity to ride along with our Border Patrol agents.

I was impressed by the bravery of the Border Patrol agents who escorted me. We personally saw a Border Patrol supervisor pull an illegal alien off a 10-foot wall and arrest him despite his violent attempts to resist arrest. I witnessed another Border Patrol agent scale a 5,000-foot mountain at 2 in the morning in freezing 30-degree weather and single-handedly arrest and handcuff eight illegal aliens.

The Border Patrol agent I rode with told me that he had been shot at on several occasions. Twenty-three of his colleagues have been killed in the line of duty since 1990. For example, Border Patrol agents Susan Rodriguez and Ricardo Salinas were gunned down by a murder suspect. Agent Jefferson Barr was shot to death by a drug trafficker.

I have a message for these brave Border Patrol agents: the U.S. Congress knows you are there. We appreciate your service, and help is on the way.

CONGRATULATING THE NCAA FOOTBALL CHAMPION TEXAS LONGHORNS

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, for the second time in a row, the University of Texas has won the Rose Bowl. By any definition, the 2006 victory was a classic and made the Longhorns the national champions.

Led by quarterback Vince Young, the Longhorns fought their way to a stunning 41-38 victory over the top-ranked University of Southern California Trojans.

Vince Young ran for 200 yards, passed for 267 and scored the winning touchdown with 19 seconds left on the clock. It does not get much better than that, which is why Vince Young won the Most Valuable Player trophy.

UT Coach Mack Brown and the entire Longhorn football team have a special place deep in the hearts of all Texans. Through hard work, determination and teamwork, the Longhorns beat the odds and became an example for all of us of what sportsmanship really means.

Today, appropriately, the Longhorns were honored at the White House by

President and Texan George Bush. Please join me in congratulating the Longhorns on their championship season. Hook 'Em Horns.

OLYMPIAN AND TEXAN CHAD HEDRICK

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, there is a Texas-sized force to be reckoned with in Italy. Chad Hedrick, the 28-year-old former inline skating icon from Spring, Texas, is speed skating his way to victory.

In the first day of Olympic competition, he has already garnered gold, the first for him and the United States in these Olympics. Chad's love for skating started at age 2 in roller skates at his parents' roller skating rink in Spring, Texas.

He grew up and became one of the world's most famous inline skaters, but he switched to speed skating only 4 years ago. Chad Hedrick is a contender for four more medals in the games in Italy, and he is off to a spectacular start.

Although the rink and the type of skates have changed, this hometown hero's passion and talents have only gotten stronger throughout the years, and his passion was shown when he became teary eyed when the Star Spangled Banner played as he was awarded the gold medal.

The entire State of Texas and the Nation congratulate Chad on this astounding accomplishment, and we will be cheering for him for the remainder of the games. As we say in Texas, get 'er done, Chad. And that's the way it is.

CUTS TO ENTITLEMENT PROGRAMS

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise because I am deeply concerned with respect to the President's budget, his proposed cuts to women and children. In particular, the budget of fiscal year 2007 fails on all accounts and provides insufficient funding for our Nation's greatest investment, its children.

Domestic programs, as we know, are vital to women and children, particularly the WIC program, which will see its funding decline by almost \$5 billion over the next 5 years. For low-income families who rely solely on WIC to feed their children and keep them healthy, these cuts are simply unacceptable.

We will see a continued rise in poverty and food shortage among these families. The President's budget is also hurting women who work to provide for their families by cutting back on their health care.

Despite the huge budget cuts made already to the Medicaid program in the budget reconciliation bill, the President proposes to slash another \$17 bil-

lion over the next 5 years. Medicaid, as many of you know, helps women and children, the most vulnerable in our population. I urge the Congress to reject this morally irresponsible budget.

MORAL SECURITY

(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, our constituents expect us to not only guard the economic and national security of this Nation; they expect us to preserve the moral security that has made this Nation great. Just the other day, I had the chance to deliver the keynote address at an event for the Tennessee Boy Scouts.

Mr. Speaker, in this job we do as Members of Congress, there are times when you speak to a group and you can just feel that they are doing the right things. The Boy Scouts fit in that category. They are teaching our boys what it means to serve their community.

We are a Nation built on shared moral values. Families across the country know that our communities are strong and that this country is strong when those values are respected and protected and preserved for future generations. House Republicans know this, and we will be working here each and every day to protect this Nation's security.

STUDENT AID

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

Mr. DOGGETT. I have just returned from a joyful celebration at the White House, not one about red or blue States, but about burnt orange, branded into the pages of sports history.

As much as all of us can come together to celebrate the dramatic UT National Championship, I think that supporting Longhorns and supporting university students means much more. It means providing a Federal financial commitment to our students to let them achieve their individual greatness.

When qualified students cannot afford to attend a university, all of us lose. This President's budget, as far as I can tell, is one big fumble. Because once again, added on top of the \$12 billion that Republicans have just cut in Federal student financial assistance, are additional cuts to Perkins loans and to GEAR UP for those who are trying to get into college.

For the students that I represent at the University of Texas-Pan American, who already face big financial challenges, this burden is going to be a great one. One in four of the students have dependent children and more than 75 percent are first-generation students. I hope that we can make substantial changes and show a real commitment to Longhorns and students everywhere.

□ 1415

MASHA'S LAW

(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, I rise today to share the heartbreaking story of a 13-year-old girl in my district and to call for tougher penalties for child pornography.

I have introduced, along with Representative TIERNEY, H.R. 4703, called Masha's law after 13-year-old Masha Allen, whose adoptive father posted pornographic images of her at age 5 on the Internet. Thankfully, law enforcement officials tracked and convicted her father. Masha now lives in Douglasville, Georgia, with a new and loving adoptive parent. However, hundreds of her images are still on the Internet; and her photographs are some of the most widely downloaded pictures in the world.

Mr. Speaker, we absolutely must do something to harshly reprimand those who produce, distribute and consume child pornography. Did you know that under current law the penalties for illegally downloading music are three times higher than the penalties for downloading child pornography? This is absurd and unjust. My legislation would increase the statutory damages for victims of child exploitation and ensure victims can sue those who download their pictures.

We must protect those who have no way of protecting themselves from this horrific and sickening crime, and I ask that you join me in supporting Masha's law.

WILLIE VAUGHN POST OFFICE

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, this weekend I had the fortune to attend a funeral in a small rural town in the southeast corner of Arkansas of a gentleman who was 101 years old. But the people in that town were all excited and happy because one of our Members, Congressman MIKE ROSS, had named the Post Office in that town after this gentleman, Mr. Willie Vaughn, who had worked and been there almost a hundred years. I commend our colleague, Representative MIKE ROSS, for making a lot of people in Southeast Arkansas very happy.

MYTH VERSUS REALITY

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, since the revelation of the National Security Agency's terrorist surveillance program, we have heard all sorts of hysterics from the other side of the aisle. I think now is the time to separate myth from reality.

Allegations that the NSA program is illegal are a myth. The reality is that the President's authority to authorize this program is firmly based in both his constitutional authority as Commander-in-Chief and in the authorization for use of military force which passed Congress after 9/11.

Allegations that the NSA program is a domestic eavesdropping program used to spy on innocent Americans are a myth. The reality is that this program is narrowly focused, aimed only at international calls and targeted at al Qaeda and related groups. There are safeguards in place to protect the civil liberties of Americans.

Allegations that NSA activities violate the fourth amendment are a myth. The reality is that that program is consistent with the Constitution's protections of civil liberties, including fourth amendment protections.

There are people who want you to believe this program is targeting average Americans. Nothing could be further from the truth.

ROYALTY HOLIDAY FOR MAJOR OIL COMPANIES

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, today in the New York Times Americans were told that not only had the Congress passed a royalty holiday for major oil companies but in the most recent energy bill they had expanded and extended that royal holiday. So we have the situation today where a bill, a law that was passed many, many years ago when the price of energy was very low, has been kept on the book in spite of efforts to try and repeal it by myself and others. And now with world oil prices in excess of \$60 a barrel and the oil company profits of the majors at historical record highs by all of the major oil companies, the Federal Government is going to continue to provide a royalty holiday to those oil companies that will cost us, at a minimum, over \$7 billion in the next 5 years and maybe an additional 35 to \$40 billion over that same period of time.

The time has come for Congress to stop this program, to insist upon the renegotiation of these leases; and if the oil companies will not participate in that renegotiation they should not be allowed to bid on Federal land owned by the taxpayers of this country and continue to be able to rip off the taxpayers of this country.

INTERNATIONAL STRENGTH ON IRANIAN REGIME

(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, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the

controlled President of Iran, continues to deny the horrors of the Holocaust and encourage the elimination of Israel. As his message of hatred and fanaticism grows louder each day, the seriousness of his nuclear ambitions has become increasingly obvious.

Last week, the IAEA Board of Governors, including our allies, India, Canada and Australia, voted overwhelmingly to report Iran to the U.N. Security Council. Although the Bush Administration built a case for international unity, Iran's President persists in his quest for nuclear weapons. The U.N. must act quickly and strongly to hold Iran accountable for violating the nuclear nonproliferation treaty.

During the Cold War, Ronald Reagan advocated peace through strength. As the Iranian regime continues to undermine peace and stability, leaders of free nations must work together to seriously address this grave threat. While the Iranian president, chosen by a fixed system, continues to pursue his agenda of terror, the Iranian people deserve a brighter future of economic expansion, not a warmongering leader.

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

RUNAWAY SPENDING IN WASHINGTON

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, the headlines announcing one scandal after another have grieved the heart of the American people and have eroded public confidence in our national government's commitment to governing of the highest moral caliber.

The Bible says that righteousness exalts a nation, so the converse must also be true. So Congress is preparing to fight for ethics reform, not because such scandals hurt our party but because they do hurt the Nation. But as we reform our rules of ethics we will do so with the understanding that these are but symptoms of the core problem. The real scandal in Washington, D.C., is runaway Federal spending.

Fiscal and moral integrity are inseparable issues. So it is not enough to change the way lobbyists spend their money, Mr. Speaker. We must change the way Congress spends the people's money. Only by marrying budget reform and ethics reform can we hope to restore the confidence of the American people in the fiscal and moral integrity of our national legislature.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington DC, February 13, 2006.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on February 13, 2006, at 3 p.m. and said to contain a message from the President whereby he submits the Economic Report of the President together with the 2006 Annual Report of the Council of Economic Advisers.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

ECONOMIC REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 109-78)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Joint Economic Committee and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

The United States economy continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience, flexibility, and growth. Having previously endured a stock market collapse, recession, terrorist attacks, and corporate scandals, this year the economy showed strong growth and robust job creation in the face of higher energy prices and devastating natural disasters. This is the result of the hard work of America's workers, supported by pro-growth tax policies.

In 2005, the Nation's real gross domestic product (GDP) grew 3.5 percent for the year, above the historical average. About 2 million payroll jobs were added in 2005, and the unemployment rate dropped to 4.7 percent last month, well below the averages of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Real disposable personal income increased, and real household net worth reached an all-time high. This growth comes on top of an already strong expansion. More than 4.7 million payroll jobs have been added since August 2003.

Compared with the performance of other nations' economies, our economic growth is especially impressive. The United States has added more jobs in the past two-and-a-half years than Japan and the European Union combined. Real GDP growth in the United States has been faster than in any other major industrialized country since 2001, and America is forecasted to continue as the fastest-growing country over the next two years.

Our economy's fundamental strength comes from the ingenuity and hard work of our workers. Productivity—how much workers produce per hour—has accelerated since 2000. In the past five years, productivity has grown faster than in any other five-year period

since the mid-1960s. The productivity of the United States is increasing faster than any other major industrialized country.

Productivity growth raises our standard of living and plays a central role in our competitiveness in the worldwide economy. Productivity growth will be even more important as new technologies accelerate global economic integration and as the American population ages.

We must now build on this fundamental strength by making robust investments in physical sciences, improving private incentives for research and development, and boosting math and science education and worker training. The American Competitiveness Initiative will help us remain a world leader in science and technology, which means good high-paying jobs for the American people.

We must also continue to pursue pro-growth economic policies and foster a culture of entrepreneurship. To adopt innovations effectively, our companies and workers need the incentives and flexibility that support a thriving free-market economy.

Maintaining a low tax burden is essential for our economic growth and competitiveness. Tax relief has helped our economy, and raising taxes will increase the burden on our families and small businesses. To keep our economy growing, Congress needs to make the tax relief permanent.

Two years ago, I called for cutting the budget deficit in half by 2009 by restraining spending and spurring economic growth. Every year of my presidency, we have reduced the growth of non-security discretionary spending, and last year Congress passed bills that cut this spending. This year, my budget will cut it again, and it will reduce or eliminate more than 140 programs that are performing poorly or not fulfilling essential priorities. By passing these reforms, we will save the American taxpayer another \$14 billion next year, and we will stay on track to cut the deficit in half by 2009.

Controlling discretionary spending alone is not enough, however. We have recently passed significant savings in mandatory spending programs. We need to do more because the only way to solve our Nation's fiscal challenges is to address the explosions in growth of entitlement programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. I have called for a bipartisan commission to examine the full impact of the Baby Boom retirement and help us come up with bipartisan answers. The longer Congress waits to act, the more difficult the choices will become.

Working together, we accomplished other significant pro-growth reforms that will help our Nation's economy grow stronger and create more jobs. More remains to be done.

Growth in spending on health care has been more rapid than general inflation, straining consumers, employers, and government budgets. Two years

ago, we created Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) to help give patients more control over their health care decisions and to make health care more available and affordable. This year, I am proposing to enhance HSAs to make them more widely available, valuable to consumers, and attractive to small businesses—and to make it easier for people to keep their insurance policies when they change jobs. Last year, we worked with Congress to pass a patient safety bill that will help reduce medical errors. Getting doctors and patients the information they need on the quality, cost, and effectiveness of different treatments will help Americans get the highest quality and highest value care. This year, my Administration will push to make more information about price and quality available to consumers, and move forward on these and other policies to lower the cost of health care.

Our Nation's liability laws allow too many frivolous lawsuits and raise costs for consumers and businesses. A year ago, we worked with Congress to pass bipartisan class action reform to help curb lawsuit abuse. I urge Congress in the coming year to pass other essential legal reforms, including asbestos and medical liability reforms.

Energy prices have risen in the last year, but the underlying causes of high prices are long-standing. Last year, we passed the first major energy bill in over a decade. It encourages new technologies and updates government regulations. Over time, the new law will help increase the reliability of our energy supply and the efficient use of the energy we have. We must continue to find new ways to diversify our sources of energy. I have proposed the Advanced Energy Initiative to help increase research in alternative energy sources and technology and to make America less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

Because 95 percent of the world's customers live outside of our borders, opening international markets to our goods and services is critical for our economy. My Administration will continue to work tirelessly to open markets and knock down barriers to free and fair trade so that American farmers and workers can compete on a level playing field worldwide.

These and other issues are discussed in the 2006 Annual Report of the Council of Economic Advisers. This report is prepared by CEA to help policymakers understand the economic context of a variety of issues and trends as our Government makes decisions regarding our economic future. By adopting sound economic policies that build on our strengths, we will keep our economy moving forward and extend prosperity for all Americans.

GEORGE W. BUSH,
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 2006.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE
CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 13, 2006.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of rule II of the rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 13, 2006, at 2:50 pm:

That the Senate passed S. 2275.
With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House

COMMUNICATION FROM THE
CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 13, 2006.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 10, 2006, at 10:05 a.m.:

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 22.

That the Senate agreed to H. Con. Res 331.
That the Senate passed S. 2166.

Appointment:
United States-China Economic Security
Review Commission.
With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

COMMUNICATION FROM RANKING
MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable Charles B. Rangel, Ranking Member, Committee on Ways and Means:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington DC, February 13, 2006.

DEAR SPEAKER HASTERT: Pursuant to section 11142 of SAFETEA-LU (P.L. 109-59), I hereby appoint to the National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing Commission the following individuals:

Mr. Elliot (Lee) Sander, Director of the Rudin Center for Transportation Policy and Management at New York University, and Senior Vice President and Director of Strategic Development at DMJM Harris, of New York City, New York.

Mr. Craig Lentzsch, CEO of Coach USA and KBUS Holdings, of Dallas, Texas.
Sincerely,

CHARLES B. RANGEL,
Ranking Member.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE OF-
FICE OF THE 50TH DISTRICT OF
CALIFORNIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Nancy Lifset, Office of the 50th District of California:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, February 8, 2006.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a grand jury subpoena, issued by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, for testimony.

After consultation with counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,
NANCY LIFSET,
Office of the 50th District of California.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

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

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

SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING
THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE USO
TO OUR ARMED FORCES

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 322) expressing the Sense of Congress regarding the contribution of the USO to the morale and welfare of our servicemen and women of our armed forces and their families, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 322

Whereas the United Service Organizations, Incorporated (the USO), a nonprofit, charitable organization, was founded in 1941 to provide morale and recreation services to military personnel and in 2006 is celebrating its 65th anniversary of service to United States servicemembers around the world;

Whereas the USO is chartered by Congress and is endorsed by the President and the Department of Defense to provide morale, welfare, and recreation-type services to members of the Armed Forces and their families;

Whereas the USO operates 124 centers around the world, including six mobile canteens, through which support is provided to members of the Armed Forces and their families, who visit those facilities more than 5,000,000 times per year;

Whereas the USO relies on over 33,000 volunteers providing approximately 400,000

hours of service per year, in both peacetime and time of conflict;

Whereas the USO plays an important role in contributing to the success of the Nation's military mission by providing a reliable private connection directly supporting the morale, welfare, and recreational needs of the members of the Armed Forces; and

Whereas the crucial link to home provided by the USO is made possible through the generous contributions of more than 1,000,000 American citizens and scores of corporations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress extends its appreciation to the United Service Organizations, Incorporated (the USO), on its 65th anniversary and recognizes that the work of that organization in supporting the members of the Armed Forces and their families is a valued contribution to the success and mission of the Armed Forces.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the United Service Organizations, established on February 4 of 1941, has become a national treasure. In every war and every theater of operation since World War II where Americans have been deployed, the USO has been there to entertain and to increase the morale and welfare of the men and women in the military and their families. As the chairman of the USO Caucus it is my pleasure to bring this resolution to the floor today.

When the organization was formed, the military was expanding rapidly for the impending conflict. Between 1940 and 1944 the size of our military grew from 50,000 to over 12 million. At its high point during the Second World War the USO had over 3,000 clubs and 1.5 million volunteers to provide services to military personnel. On the entertainment side, the U.S. provided 428,521 shows and performances. To put this figure into perspective around the world, the USO would do sometimes 700 shows a day. It estimates that over 7,000 entertainers were sent overseas to entertain our troops.

Today, USO facilities are visited over 5 million times a year; and although the USO does have a paid staff, the bulk of the service that they provide is through 12,000 volunteers who donate over 450,000 hours annually.

In 2005, the USO sent out over 50 celebrity entertainment tours. Almost

200,000 servicemembers in some 30 countries were visited by these tours. The USO has distributed over 750,000 care packages to deploying servicemembers, and last year they had three care package stuffing parts right here on Capitol Hill for troops deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan. I have helped stuff packages myself, as have many other Members of Congress and their staff. We have to date stuffed and sent 12,000 care packages. My goal is to increase that number to 20,000 a year. It is the least that we as Members of Congress can do.

H. Con. Res. 322 will recognize the thousands of men and women, mostly volunteers, who have made the USO possible, for without them the USO would not be half of what it is.

Every time I have the opportunity to go overseas to Iraq, Afghanistan, to Bosnia and other areas of operation around the world, the men and women tell me all the time, send us more USO shows.

□ 1430

Send us more of those USO care packages. To me, Mr. Speaker, that says that our USO continues to be the single most important morale booster to our men and women serving overseas. From the Second World War to Iraq, the USO has been there and is there today, and we are here for the men and women of the USO.

God bless them and the incredible work that they do.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the USO Congressional Caucus, I join my colleague and good friend, Congressman MILLER, on the House Armed Services Committee, who is our founding co-chair of the USO Caucus, in support of House Concurrent Resolution 322. This resolution recognizes the 65th anniversary of the United Service Organizations and extends Congress's appreciation to the USO for 65 years of dedicated service in support of our Armed Forces and their families.

I have personally seen the impact of the USO on the lives of our Nation's military during visits, as my colleague mentioned, to Iraq, Afghanistan, and military facilities around the world. I have also seen the work of the USO closer to home. The congressional care package stuffing party, which was held in the Rayburn foyer last September, helped provide care packages stuffed by Members of Congress and our staffs for soldiers deploying from the Continental United States Replacement Center in my district at Fort Bliss, Texas.

Also at Fort Bliss in December, the USO established a Wounded Warrior Room at William Beaumont Army Medical Center, providing soldiers recovering from combat injuries a place to relax during their treatment. And later this spring, the USO will open a new center on the main post of Fort

Bliss to serve both those currently stationed at Fort Bliss and also the nearly 20,000 soldiers who will be coming to El Paso as part of the decision of BRAC and the overseas rebasing troop movements.

While we see every day the good things that the USO does for our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, many Americans may not remember how the USO came into existence. The year was 1941, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt challenged six private organizations to take responsibility for the leave recreation of the armed services. The six organizations were the Salvation Army; the Young Men's Christian Association, the YMCA; the Young Women's Christian Association, the YWCA; the National Catholic Community Services; National Travelers Aid Association; and the National Jewish Welfare Board. These six organizations pooled their resources together and became known as the United Service Organizations, or more commonly referred to today as the USO. The USO incorporated on February 4, 1941, and remains a private nonprofit organization that is supported entirely by over 1 million American citizens and hundreds of corporations.

Back in its early days, USO facilities were opened in such unlikely places as churches, log cabins, museums, castles, barns, beach clubs and yacht clubs, railroad sleeping cars, and even some storefronts. These USO facilities were many things to so many people, a place to see movies or a place to dance and meet people, a quiet place to talk or write letters back home, a place to find religious counsel, and always a place to go for free coffee and doughnuts. By 1944, the USO had more than 3,000 clubs across the country. However, by 1947 the USO had all but disbanded.

During the Korean war, the USO eventually reopened 24 clubs worldwide; and during the conflict in Vietnam, the first USO opened in a combat zone. It is here where I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I have personal knowledge of just what the USO means to a young soldier far away from home, bringing a little bit of home to a combat zone.

As the draw-down in Vietnam ended, the USO began to provide new programs to help servicemembers and their families transition back into civilian life. With the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the USO opened its first center in Afghanistan, the Pat Tillman USO Center, at Bagram Air Base in 2005. Today there are more than 124 airport and family centers worldwide, located in 10 countries and 21 States.

The USO is also recognized for its entertainment effort on behalf of our servicemembers and their families. In fact, one cannot recognize the USO and not remember that the most beloved and recognized entertainer, the great Bob Hope, was part of the heart and soul of the USO. Bob Hope began his first USO tour in 1942 and continued to

entertain and support our troops for more than five decades. Bob Hope brought laughter and joy to thousands of men and women deployed around the world, and he and other entertainers volunteered to entertain the troops both in the United States and abroad, often under some of the most trying situations and conditions.

Today that same commitment and dedicated spirit lives on in the hundreds of entertainers that have volunteered and continue to support our deployed troops in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, as well as other bases around the world.

Today the USO continues its outstanding achievement under the leadership of president and chief executive officer Ned Powell; chief of staff Sarah Farnsworth; and senior staff, Michael Farley, John Hanson, Keith Weaver, Bruce Townsend, and Hilary Welch; and the contributions from the USO World Board of Governors. These great people continue to help build and sustain the USO. But the most critical component of the USO and what makes it so special and what makes it so unique are the over 33,000 volunteers and paid staff members who contribute over 400,000 hours of service annually. These are people that are the heart and soul of the USO and provide direct comfort and assistance to our troops and their families, and I want to thank them all and honor them for their service to our troops and their families.

Congress also recognizes the important role that the USO plays in support of our servicemembers and their families; and to further provide support to the USO, it established the USO Congressional Caucus. As co-chair of the caucus, I am pleased that over 150 of my colleagues have joined that effort to enhance the outreach to our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, coast guardsmen, and their families.

So today, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this great resolution.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), a gentleman who has three sons serving in our Armed Forces today, one of whom returned from service in Iraq last year.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I urge support for House Concurrent Resolution 322, and I appreciate the leadership of my Armed Services Committee seatmate JEFF MILLER for authoring the resolution. He and his wife, Vicky, are tireless advocates for our military heroes who protect American families. I am also grateful for the USO Caucus leadership of Congressman JEFF MILLER and SYLVESTRE REYES, two of the most dedicated Members of Congress.

Created in 1941 by the request of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the United Service Organizations delivers

encouragement and optimism to our brave men and women in uniform. The USO is ably led by president and CEO Ned Powell, who is a distinguished graduate of Washington and Lee University in Virginia.

Throughout the past six decades, the USO has evolved continuously to meet our soldiers' needs during wartime and peacetime. From operating clubs where troops can meet, to sponsoring Bob Hope's historic shows, the organization has a tremendous record of providing critical comfort and aid to our servicemembers. Today, with the help of 12,000 volunteers providing nearly 450,000 hours of service per year, the USO operates 124 centers and six mobile canteens around the world. On the State level, we have had outstanding programs such as in South Carolina with Redd Reynolds entertaining National Guard troops.

I am proud to join Congressman JEFF MILLER and Congressman SYLVESTRE REYES in congratulating the USO for its 65th anniversary of dedicated service. As American soldiers risk their lives in the war on terrorism to protect American families, the USO's mission is more important than ever. I appreciate the USO firsthand from my knowledge as a Member of Congress, a 31-year veteran, and as the parent of three sons currently serving in the military.

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

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and thank my colleagues from Florida and Texas for introducing it.

Established on February 4, 1941, at the direction of President Roosevelt and chartered by Congress in 1979, the USO has long provided generously for the morale and welfare of our troops. Through their various programs, events and campaigns, the USO extends a touch of home to the men and women of our nation's military. The USO benefits from the generosity of many Americans, as the bulk of the service delivery is provided by 12,000 volunteers who donate over 450,000 hours annually.

Funded through the generous contributions of the American people, organizations and corporations, the USO operates 124 centers worldwide and 6 mobile canteens. With overseas centers located in Germany, Italy, France, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Iceland, Bosnia, Japan, Qatar, Korea and Kuwait; the USO has built an extensive network—with service members and their families visiting USO centers more than 5 million times each year.

Many of us in this Chamber have participated in or witnessed firsthand the good work done by the USO for many of our constituents. Since 2003 the USO has distributed over 1 million prepaid phone cards as part of Operation Phone Home. The cards have been distributed in Iraq, Afghanistan, hospitals, and even to service members impacted by Hurricane Katrina. In 2005 the USO sent out over 50 celebrity entertainment tours. Almost 200,000 service members in 30 countries were visited by these tours. Additionally, over 750,000 care packages were delivered to de-

ploying service members. Last year the USO held three care package stuffing parties on Capitol Hill for troops deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan, where Members of Congress and Staff were able to assemble about 12,000 care packages.

More than just entertainment, the USO also provides critical services such as "newcomer" briefings for troops and family members and new spouses; family crisis counseling and support groups for families separated by deployments; housing assistance; and nursery facilities.

Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the House USO Caucus, it gives me great pride to rise in strong support of this resolution and in support of the USO for all of the work they have done for our military community and our nation.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 322, acknowledging the contributions of the United Service Organization to the morale and welfare of the servicemen and women of our armed forces and their families.

It is with great honor I join Congressman REYES and my fellow colleagues in supporting the United Service Organization (USO), an organization I know well as a Vietnam-era Marine. The USO was formed in response to a 1941 request from President Franklin D. Roosevelt for the purpose of providing the men and women of the Armed Forces with comfort, hospitality, and recreation. The USO continues to successfully fulfill this mission in collaboration with the U.S. government and numerous private organizations.

Since the opening of the first center in 1963, the USO has grown to over 120 centers worldwide, ranging from Seattle, Washington to Seoul, Korea. Annually, 12,000 volunteers donate 450,000 hours of their time assembling and delivering over 750,000 care packages to deployed service members. Last year, Members of Congress and their staff participated in three care package stuffing events that assembled about 12,000 packages for troops deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan.

As our military continues to grow and change, the mission of the USO also continues to expand and incorporate new ideas to better serve our servicemen and women. In 2003, the USO began "Operation Phone Home," which distributed over one million prepaid phone cards to our troops, enabling them to communicate with family members while stationed overseas.

The most well-known programs sponsored by the USO are the Celebrity Entertainment shows, which have proven to be an effective morale booster. In 2005, the USO sent over 50 celebrity entertainment tours in 30 countries, which were attended by almost 200,000 service members. Longtime USO entertainer, Bob Hope, is perhaps the most memorable advocate of the USO. His legacy continues to inspire and attract celebrities, entertainers, and the American people to donate their time and talents in support of the troops.

The USO provides a channel for American citizens to express appreciation and admiration to those who bravely defend the United States overseas, and to let our military men and women know they are cared for and not forgotten. The USO embodies the generous spirit of the American people and their unwavering support for our servicemen and women. On the 65th Birthday of the USO, I, sincerely extend my thanks for providing so much support and comfort to our Armed Forces.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 322, recognizing the importance of the United Service Organization's (USO) many contributions and to their vital role in the betterment of the lives of our servicemen and women.

We are sending an increasing number of soldiers, both enlisted and reserve, to serve in locations far from home, which shows that the USO's work is just as necessary today as it was 65 years ago. In 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt challenged 6 private organizations to provide morale boosting support for our servicemen and women. The USO has met that challenge head-on.

As a member of the congressional USO Caucus, and a member who has visited war zones around the world throughout my years in Congress, I have seen evidence of the services they provide our soldiers and the value of these welcoming facilities.

The organization is well-known for inviting Hollywood entertainers to perform concerts, boosting morale, and providing temporary reprieve from the daily stresses of their profession. However, the USO provides more than just mere entertainment for the armed services, offering less publicly known programs, such as crisis counseling and support groups for both military personnel and their families.

The USO operates 124 of these facilities around the world, including 49 overseas. As a testament of their good work and its commitment to expanding its efforts, the USO just opened its newest facility in Kuwait, just two weeks shy of the organization's 65th birthday. This center is the 6th in the Persian Gulf region, showing that the organization has continued with its tradition of providing support where support is needed, be that at home, or halfway around the world.

For soldiers unable to meet their families at a facility, the organization reaches out providing phone cards and care packages, so that at the very least, they can hear a familiar and soothing voice, and enjoys a taste of home.

The USO's charter may be signed into law, but it still operates as a non-profit, charitable organization relying on both private contributions and support of volunteers. Thankfully, the organization is in no short supply of either with scores of companies and 33,000 volunteers offering their support. The USO serves as the bridge between concerned citizens wanting to make a difference, and our servicemen in need of assistance. With that said, I can not understate the value of the organization's work in enhancing both the lives of soldiers on the ground, and their families' safe at home. For all of the aforementioned reasons I hope my colleagues will vote to recognize the many contributions the USO has made in enhancing the lives of our soldiers.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 322 to recognize the outstanding contributions of the United Service Organization (USO) to the morale and welfare of our servicemen and women in the U.S. Armed Forces and their families. I also take this occasion to commend the USO upon their 65th anniversary.

The USO has served as a source of support, entertainment, and morale for American troops since its chartering in 1941. Established at the request of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the USO has served our Nation's

servicemen and women ever since. I commend the efforts of those six civilian agencies—the Salvation Army, Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association, National Catholic Community Service, National Travelers Aid Association and the National Jewish Welfare Board—that came together in support of our troops in creating the USO, bringing about its official incorporation in New York on February 4, 1941.

The USO has strong ties to Guam. Burgeoning with U.S. military personnel following the liberation of the island, the USO first came to Guam in the early 1950s. Delivering entertainment and laughs to those serving on Guam, the USO's work on Guam was but a small glimpse of its work lifting the morale of servicemen and women around the world.

The combat zones of the past included Korea, Vietnam and Kuwait. Today the USO brings entertainment to our men and women serving in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa among many other places. For 65 years, wherever you found America's military, you found the USO, no matter the location or the danger.

The USO not only brings entertainment, a piece of home and a smile to troops deployed abroad through its shows, but serves as a "home away from home" for servicemen and women in 124 centers around the world. I am pleased to state that this proud tradition will soon be resurrected on Guam. The USO will re-open its Guam branch on March 23, 2006. With the military presence on Guam steadily growing, the USO has once more answered the call to service. With growing unease in Asia, the strategic location of Guam is increasingly valued. The men and women who serve on the island provide stability to the region and security to our Nation. The USO will once again ensure that these men and women, their families and their guests nonetheless always have the support they need. No doubt this branch will also bring to Guam many of the USO's trademark shows.

Let me take this chance to say, on behalf of the people of Guam, welcome back to the USO. As we say on Guam, Hafa Adai and Si Yu'os Ma'ase (thank you) for their work.

Our Nation enjoys a spirit of brotherhood, of service and of charity that is a reflection of a national value of selfless service. The USO embodies this national value. And the people who are the USO live this national value. Over 12,000 volunteers donate over 450,000 hours annually thereby allowing the USO to serve our Nation's greatest servants. Not to be forgotten are the celebrities and entertainers that often headline USO tours, lending their time and talents to honor those people who provide them the very opportunity to live the American dream they have realized. And providing the foundation upon which the USO can operate are countless thousands of U.S. donors, both private and corporate, who make giving a centerpiece of their lives.

I join my colleagues in commending the USO and all of the men and women who over time and who now make up this great organization for the service they provide to those who serve our Nation in uniform. Like our military men and women, you too are heroes. You are what makes America great. God Bless the USO, God Bless our men and women serving around the world today and God Bless America.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the United Service Or-

ganizations, whose world headquarters are located in my district and this year will celebrate its 65th anniversary of serving the men and women of our armed forces.

At the direction of President Franklin D. Roosevelt the USO was formed in 1941 as a means of promoting troop morale by providing entertainment, recreation and support. Relying solely on charitable contributions and the generosity of individuals, the USO has served troops in each American conflict since World War II.

Perhaps at its most well known during World War II, the USO provided over 400,000 shows and performances to our armed forces, sending 7,000 performers overseas and performing as many as 700 shows in a single day. It was during this time that the great Bob Hope first performed for our soldiers. His famous USO career spanned six decades, headlining over 60 tours and delivering countless one-liners. In 1997, the USO successfully worked with Congress to designate Bob Hope the first honorary veteran of the U.S. armed forces.

Today the USO is still going strong. In 2005, the USO sponsored over 50 celebrity entertainment tours, visiting nearly 200,000 service members in over 30 countries. The volunteer base has grown to over 12,000 people who donate over 450,000 hours of service each year.

The USO, however, provides more than just uplifting entertainment to our troops. Over 750,000 handmade care packages were sent to service members deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan last year. Additionally, the USO has made communication to the home front more affordable and accessible through the Operation Phone Home which distributed over one million prepaid phone cards to deployed troops.

All of this would not be possible were it not for the dedication of the USO staff and volunteers who so graciously give their time and energy to help those who are defending our Nation. Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me in commending the USO and its members for all of their work and in congratulating them on 65 years of dedicated services to our troops.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 322, 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. MILLER of Florida. 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.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF A DAY OF HEARTS, CONGENITAL HEART DEFECT DAY

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 629) supporting the goals and ideals of a Day of Hearts, Congenital Heart Defect Day in order to increase awareness about congenital heart defects, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 629

Whereas congenital heart defects are structural problems with the heart that are present at birth;

Whereas such defects range in severity from simple problems, such as "holes" between chambers of the heart, to very severe malformations, such as the complete absence of one or more chambers or valves of the heart;

Whereas more than one million Americans have some form of a congenital heart defect and such defect is the number one cause of death in infants;

Whereas out of 1000 births, eight babies will have some form of a congenital heart disorder, and approximately 35,000 babies are born with such defects each year;

Whereas twice as many children die each year from congenital heart disease compared with childhood cancers, yet funding for pediatric cancer research is five times higher than such funding for congenital heart disease;

Whereas cardiovascular disease is the Nation's leading killer in both men and women among all racial and ethnic groups;

Whereas the United States has a severe shortage of cardiac centers that are fully equipped to provide care for adults living with complex heart defects;

Whereas almost one million Americans die of cardiovascular disease each year, resulting in up to 42 percent of all deaths in the United States;

Whereas the presence of a serious congenital heart defect often results in an enormous emotional and financial strain on young families who are already in a vulnerable stage of their lives;

Whereas severe congenital heart disease requires that families dedicate extensive financial resources for assistance and care both within and outside of a hospital environment;

Whereas congenital heart defects exceed more than \$2.2 million a year for inpatient surgery alone; and

Whereas February 14, 2006, would be an appropriate day to recognize A Day for Hearts: Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives supports the goals and ideals of A Day of Hearts: Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day to—

- (1) increase awareness about congenital heart defects;
- (2) encourage research with respect to the disease; and
- (3) support the millions of Americans who are affected by this disease.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

H. Resolution 629, offered by the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE), would support the goals and the ideals of a Day of Hearts, Congenital Heart Defect Day.

Today in the United States, heart disease and stroke, the basic components of cardiovascular disease, are the first and third leading causes of death for both men and women, accounting for nearly 40 percent of all deaths. Over 900,000 Americans die of cardiovascular disease each year, Mr. Speaker, which amounts to a death every 34 seconds. Even though this dangerous disease attacks those over the age of 65 most commonly, the number of sudden deaths from heart disease among people between the ages of 15 and 34 has increased dramatically.

Along with the individual effects of this vastly growing disease, there is also a widespread economic impact. The U.S. health care system continues to be hit with the cost of heart disease and stroke in the U.S. Coronary heart disease is the leading cause of permanent disability in the U.S. workforce, and there are over 6 million hospitalizations each year due to this disease. As our population ages, the cost of heart disease and stroke was projected to be \$394 billion in 2005, last year, which includes health care expenditures and lost productivity from death and disability.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all Members to support H. Resolution 629 with the hope that, because cardiovascular disease is preventable, increased awareness and research could enable us as Americans to cut down on the unnecessary deaths due to this disease each year in our country.

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

□ 1445

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

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution to recognize the goals and ideas of a Day of Hearts, and I commend the gentleman from Georgia for making use of Valentine's Day as a way of highlighting and bringing awareness to one of our major health problems and health issues.

Every year, eight out of every 1,000 children are born with some form of

congenital heart defect, or CHD. CHDs are the number one killer of infants in the United States, and while treatment is available for many of these defects, a number of them are not treatable. Sadly, too, many families lack the resources necessary to obtain proper treatment for even the most common and easily treatable defects.

Because CHDs are long-term or often lifelong afflictions, the life of a child who survives a CHD is made more difficult by restricted behavior and the laborious effort needed to carry out the daily tasks of life.

A Day of Hearts is an international effort to raise awareness of this all-too-common problem. CHD lacks the visibility of some of the diseases we all know well, yet the effects are no less tragic. Much progress needs to be made in fighting the disease and in finding and funding facilities that are dedicated to cutting-edge research related to all aspects of CHDs, especially factors that contribute to their occurrence.

In addition, developing countries are far behind the developing world in treating CHDs. Defects that are easily treatable here in the United States can be killers in those countries, and our sense of humanity can no longer tolerate easily preventable deaths from CHDs.

Mr. Speaker, February 14 is a day that many people around the world associate with love and companionship, and the enduring symbol of Valentine's Day is the heart. I can think of no day more appropriately tailored towards raising the public's awareness of CHDs than Valentine's Day. Therefore, I join in support of this important resolution and call upon all of my colleagues to support this effort so that hopefully we will generate the kind of awareness and the kind of resources that are necessary to fight this tragic and debilitating illness.

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to my distinguished colleague from the State of Georgia (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairwoman for allowing me to speak on this issue. I appreciate her leadership in this. I want to thank my Georgia colleagues and all colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have assisted in supporting this endeavor.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish a happy Valentine's Day to Sarah Anne Voyles. Sarah is a 15-year-old young lady who happens to live in my district. She is a special young lady who just happened to be born with a congenital heart defect who brought this whole issue to my attention.

As a physician, I practiced for nearly 20 years in my community and I understand the medical importance of being able to treat congenital heart defects. But as a Member of Congress the issue becomes all that more important as we work to bring attention to this remarkable challenge.

So I am proud to stand today and present and support H. Res. 629, a resolution that will identify today, Valentine's Day 2006, as a Day of Hearts, Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day.

What is a congenital heart defect? Well, congenital means it is present at birth, so it is an abnormality that is present at birth. It is a birth defect. It is a birth defect of the heart. It is a birth defect, though, that we don't often hear about.

It occurs during the development of the heart, which begins for a baby shortly after conception. These defects can involve the walls of the heart, or the valves of the heart, or the blood vessels, the arteries and veins that supply the heart itself. They are often able to disrupt the normal flow of blood in the heart, slowing that blood down or having it flow in the wrong direction or wrong place, or it might even block the flow of blood altogether. They also can be conduction defects, defects that make it so the heart doesn't beat in the correct way.

More than 35,000 infants, about one out of every 150 births, are born with heart defects every single year; and these defects can be very minimal in nature and not even be noticed by the family or the child or the physicians, or they can be life-threatening. Heart defects are among the most common birth defects, and they are the leading cause of birth defect-related deaths in the United States.

The good news is that with significantly improving treatment over the past few decades there are now more adults living with congenital heart defects than ever before, having been treated in their infancy for those defects. And this means that there are new medical challenges that we as a society will confront, and confront them we will.

So it is perfectly fitting and appropriate that we pause today and recognize Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day in order to do three specific things: One is to increase the awareness of congenital heart defects; two is to encourage research with respect to this disease; and, three, to support the millions of Americans who are affected by this disease.

So I join with the others and ask my colleagues to support this resolution and join me in wishing Sarah Anne Voyles, and all Americans living with congenital heart defects, a very happy Valentine's Day and a Day of Hearts for Congenital Heart Defect Day.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to my distinguished colleague from the State of Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY).

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Dr. Price and my other colleagues who have cosponsored this Day of Hearts resolution, recognizing congenital heart defects and the impact they are having on American society and American families.

As has been mentioned, approximately 35,000 babies are born each year with some variety of a congenital heart defect. Five years ago, my wife Celeste and I had a beautiful baby girl, and we named her Kathryn, and she was one of those 35,000 babies. She was diagnosed shortly after her birth with a complete atrial ventricular septal defect.

It was a normal birth. Afterward, during a regular checkup, our family doctor heard something that almost jumped through his stethoscope. As we later found out, he was holding back his own emotion as he heard this. So that launched us then on a path, a very intense, difficult, 3-month period, until she had her first surgery.

But one of the most encouraging things that happened for us then were other parents who found out we were suffering through this and who took initiative to call us, to extend a hand of friendship. Because when this happens to you, your world spins around 360 degrees. It is very hard to know who to turn to and where to go. So the support network of parents who simply took their own initiative to contact us was very deeply meaningful and helped us through this very difficult time.

Kathryn, as many of your saw this past weekend, is a very vibrant, happy, 5-year-old. She wears a pacemaker, which obviously causes some security difficulties here and there, but, nonetheless, we are grateful to the advances that medicine has given us in the last 30 years to be able to deal successfully with this form of defect.

I am just really thankful that Congress is taking the initiative today to actually propose a Day of Hearts, not only to bring more emphasis to the issue, because it does affect so many families, but to potentially help spur additional research into the potential of finding a cure, or at least helping parents who have to deal with the management of this issue for a lifetime.

Thank you, Dr. Price, for proposing this; thank you to my other colleagues who have cosponsored this; and I urge passage of H.R. 629.

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

Mr. Speaker, I think it is especially appropriate that today on Valentine's Day, when we celebrate love and affection from the bottom of our hearts, that this House passes a resolution that seeks to provide protection from our hearts being damaged from disease. I urge all Members to support the adoption of H. Res. 629.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H. Res. 629, supporting the goals and ideals of a Day of Hearts, Congenital Heart Defect Day in order to increase awareness about congenital heart defects. I think it's fitting that on Valentine's Day, we can discuss a resolution that will help protect our hearts.

Heart disease can affect every aspect of your life: your ability to work, your ability to get adequate insurance, your ability to exercise or play sports, and your ability to have children,

not to mention your ability to enjoy your life and live it to the fullest.

Estimates suggest that about 1 million Americans have a congenital heart defect. If time in the hospital and recuperating from heart conditions could be measured in years of life, over 91,000 life years are lost each year in the US due to congenital heart disease. For inpatient surgery alone, charges for care exceed \$2.2 billion every year.

Even our most vulnerable and innocent citizens are not exempt from the risk of heart disease: around 35,000 babies are born with a heart defect each year. Out of 1,000 births, 8 babies will have some form of congenital heart disorder, although for the most part, these are mild. Severe heart disease generally becomes apparent during the first couple of months after birth. Doctors know to watch for certain clues, including when babies are born blue, have very low blood pressure, breathing difficulties, feeding problems, or poor weight gain. In addition, most minor defects are diagnosed on a routine medical check up.

We've made significant improvements in the treatment of congenital heart conditions, from preventive treatment, to surgery, to research, to education and outreach. In the 1960s and 1970s the risk of dying following congenital heart surgery was about 30 percent and today it is around 5 percent.

However, recent statistics show that heart disease is still the No. 1 killer of American women, and heart failure is on the rise in the elderly. This bill is relevant and timely, and a noble effort to bring much needed awareness and crucial outreach to men, women and children across the Nation. Knowledge can make all the difference in quality of life, and a Day of Hearts is the perfect way to start the conversation and spread the word.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 629.

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.

RAYMOND J. SALMON POST OFFICE

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4152) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 320 High Street in Clinton, Massachusetts, as the "Raymond J. Salmon Post Office".

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4152

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

SECTION 1. RAYMOND J. SALMON POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 320 High Street in Clinton, Massachusetts, shall be known and designated as the "Raymond J. Salmon 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 "Raymond J. Salmon Post Office".

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4152.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4152, offered by the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), would designate the post office building in Clinton, Massachusetts, as the Raymond J. Salmon Post Office.

On April 16, 1923, Raymond J. Salmon was born in the town of Clinton, Massachusetts. In his younger years, Ray served his country as a Technical Sergeant in the U.S. Army in World War II. In 1950, he began his political career by working for Congressman Phillip Philbin of Clinton, Massachusetts, and served as his Chief of Staff until 1970. While working on Capitol Hill, Ray managed to complete law school and be admitted to the bar in 1952.

After several years as a sole practitioner, Ray was appointed the Clerk Magistrate of Clinton District Court in 1976, and he remained in this position until his retirement in 2000.

His service in this capacity did not go unnoticed by his community. He was loved and revered by the citizens of Clinton, and he remained involved in many other community activities. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus, the American Legion, Turner Veterans, the Polish American Veterans, the Hibernian AOH Master of Ceremonies, President of the National Exchange Club, Exalted Ruler of the Clinton Lodge of Elks and President of the Clinton Democratic Town Committee.

It is an honor and privilege to be able to recognize such an unselfish and giving member of the community by passing H.R. 4152 and recognizing the efforts of such a committed individual.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Government Reform Committee, I am pleased to join my colleague in the consideration of H.R. 4152, legislation naming a postal facility in Clinton,

Massachusetts, after Raymond Salmon. This measure, sponsored by Representative JAMES MCGOVERN of Massachusetts, was unanimously reported by our committee on November 16, 2005. H.R. 4152 has the support and cosponsorship of the entire Massachusetts delegation.

Mr. Salmon, a native of Massachusetts, was a graduate of Clinton public schools, Saint Michael's College in Vermont and Suffolk University Law School. He was a congressional staffer who worked for former representative Phillip Philbin from 1950 to 1970. He was a veteran and an attorney seriously and actively involved in many aspects of community life in the neighborhood and community where he lived. He gave a great deal of himself for the benefit of others with consistency and regularity.

I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, to urge the swift passage of this bill.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman TOM DAVIS and Ranking Member HENRY WAXMAN of the House Government Reform Committee for their leadership on moving this important resolution through the committee and to the House floor for its consideration today.

I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4152, which would designate the United States Postal Facility at 320 High Street in Clinton, Massachusetts as the Raymond J. Salmon Post Office.

Mr. Speaker, by designating this Federal post office today, we honor a great American. Raymond J. Salmon was born on April 16, 1923 in the small town of Clinton, MA. As a young man, Ray responded to the call of duty during World War II and became a member of the United States Army serving as a Technical Sergeant. Returning home from the war, Ray began work for Congressman Phillip Philbin of Clinton, Massachusetts, in 1950, and he remained in public service as the Congressman's Chief of Staff until 1970.

During his time as a Hill staffer, Ray completed law school, was admitted to the bar in 1952 and was a sole practitioner until 1977. While practicing law, Ray was appointed the Clerk Magistrate of Clinton District Court in 1976 and remained loyal to his position until his retirement in 2000. Ray brought honor and an enthusiasm to his position, and everyone in town knew and admired Ray for his character and love of public service. Actively engaged in the community, Ray was a member of many civic groups, including the Knights of Columbus, American Legion, Polish American Veterans, and the Clinton Elks Lodge.

Mr. Speaker, if you ever have the opportunity to travel to the town of Clinton, you will be hard-pressed to find someone who was not fond of Ray. Clearly, his spirit lives on throughout this small, tight-knit community. By designating this facility as the Raymond J. Salmon Post Office, we honor not only this truly great individual, but the community he served and the people who knew him so well.

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I urge Members to support the passage of H.R. 4152, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire). The ques-

tion is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4152.

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.

HOLLY A. CHARETTE POST OFFICE

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 989) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 57 Rolfe Square in Cranston, Rhode Island, shall be known and designated as the "Holly A. Charette Post Office."

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 989

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

SECTION 1. HOLLY A. CHARETTE POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 57 Rolfe Square in Cranston, Rhode Island, shall be known and designated as the "Holly A. Charette 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 "Holly A. Charette Post Office".

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

□ 1500

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I might consume. Mr. Speaker, S. 989, offered by the distinguished gentleman from Rhode Island, Senator REED, would designate the post office building in Cranston, Rhode Island, as the Holly A. Charette Post Office.

United States Marine Corps Lance Corporal Holly Charette, a Cranston resident, was killed on June 23, 2005, while serving our country in Iraq. Charette served as a mail clerk at the Marine Camp Blue Diamond in Ramadi, which is the headquarters battalion of the Second Marine Division.

Holly Charette was recognized by every soldier who had the pleasure of receiving mail from her, as she always greeted them with a smile and with a

kind word. She was known for her ability to sort through thousands of letters and parcels, identifying each name with a face, never letting down those who relied on her. In fact, Holly Charette was quoted as saying, I never really thought too hard about being a mail person, but it is really an important job and people depend on me.

There are a lot of stresses involved, but it is really worth it at the end of the day. After her service in the military, Charette had planned to apply at the U.S. Postal Service, where she could continue to serve the citizens of the United States. About her future plans, she stated, It will not be the same as being a marine, but at least I am still in uniform.

I would urge all Members to come together and to honor this dedicated young woman in her efforts to serve our country. I thank Senator REED for his diligence in bringing this important measure forward.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN).

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, last June I had the sad duty of coming to the floor to announce the loss of a brave marine in Iraq, Lance Corporal Holly Ann Charette, a citizen of Cranston, Rhode Island.

Today, I am proud to honor her service as we dedicate a post office in her memory. I would like to thank my friend and colleague, Senator JACK REED, for introducing this measure, as well as the Government Reform Committee for bringing it to the floor today.

After the loss of Holly Charette, I was touched by the memories shared by her neighbors, friends, and family. One common theme that emerged was that Holly's smile and personality cheered all those around her. Those who knew her well spoke of her optimistic outlook on life and her ability to make the most of any situation.

She aimed to help others, and that dedication to service encouraged her to join the Marines. In Iraq, Holly held an administrative job, and her duties included serving as the mail distributor for her camp.

She was exceptionally well suited to that assignment, not only because of her outstanding organizational skills, but also because of her aspirations to one day become a postal worker. Despite the procedures and physical challenges of the position, she always maintained her professionalism and sunny disposition.

She recognized the importance of that task and worked so hard so that she could brighten the days of her fellow marines with the messages of their loved ones back home.

However, Holly's service was not without risk. As one of few women at

her post, she also traveled into Fallujah to perform searches of female Iraqis, a task that men were prohibited from doing. It was returning from one such trip that Holly's convoy was attacked by insurgents.

Three men and three women were killed that day, and 13 men and women were wounded. This sacrifice reminds us of the courage of our men and women in uniform who are faced with ongoing dangers in Iraq. It also underscores how important it is that we as Members of Congress do everything in our power to protect those who defend our Nation.

Designating a post office in memory of Lance Corporal Holly Ann Charette is a fitting tribute to a woman who touched the lives of so many. When her friends and family visit the facility at 57 Rolfe Square in Cranston, they will be reminded of her smile, her cheerful personality, and her dedication to helping others.

It will also remind future generations of the sacrifice of one exceptional person who gave so much to her Nation. I ask my colleagues to honor Holly Charette, a truly amazing woman by supporting this legislation today.

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

As a member of the Government Reform Committee, I am pleased to join my colleagues in the consideration of S. 1989, legislation naming a postal facility in Cranston, Rhode Island, after Holly A. Charette.

This measure, sponsored by Senator Jack Reed, was introduced on November 10, 2005, and unanimously reported by our committee on February 1, 2006.

A 2001 graduate of Cranston High School East in Cranston, Rhode Island, Holly Charette was a cheerleader, athlete and active student in high school. A year later she enlisted in the United States Marines, where she was assigned to Headquarters Battalion, Second Marine Division, Second Marine Expeditionary Force.

She held an administrative position, keeping records and delivering mail to fellow soldiers. Sadly, she was killed on June 23, 2005, when her convoy was ambushed by a suicide bomber as it departed from Fallujah.

Lance Corporal Holly Charette, who was awarded the Purple Heart posthumously, will be remembered as a fine marine and soldier, someone who dearly wanted a career in the U.S. Postal Service when she completed her tour of duty.

A soldier in Operation Iraqi Freedom, she enjoyed delivering mail to her fellow soldiers and fighting for her country.

I commend my colleague, Senator REED, for seeking to honor her sacrifice by naming a post office in her hometown.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is so important in reality that we take note of this very young person who had a serious sense of duty and sense of commit-

ment, even to the extent of saying that when I leave I want to continue to serve my country in one way. And one way that I can do that is to make sure that the communication continues, that the letters and parcels and packages that people use to communicate with each other are in fact delivered?

I do not think one can give any more than giving their life in service to others and in service to humanity. I am very pleased to urge swift passage of S. 1989 and commend both gentlemen from Rhode Island for their introduction of it.

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I would urge all Members to support the passage of S. 1989, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1989. The question was taken.

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. 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.

SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING INDICATORS, 2006—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Science:

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with 42 U.S.C. 1863(j)(1), I transmit herewith a report prepared for the Congress and the Administration by the National Science Board entitled, "Science and Engineering Indicators—2006." This report represents the seventeenth in the series examining key aspects of the status of science and engineering in the United States.

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, February 14, 2006.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 4297. An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 201(b) of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2006.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 4297) "An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 201(b) of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2006," requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. KYL, and Mr. BAUCUS, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 109-59, the Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, appoints the following individuals to serve as members of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission:

Paul Weyrich of Virginia.
Patrick E. Quinn of Tennessee.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H. Con. Res. 322, by the yeas and nays;

S. 1989, by the yeas and nays.

SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE USO TO OUR ARMED FORCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 322, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 322, as amended, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 407, nays 0, not voting 25, as follows:

[Roll No. 8]

YEAS—407

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

Payne Sabo Tanner
Pearce Salazar Tauscher
Pelosi Sánchez, Linda Taylor (MS)
Pence T. Taylor (NC)
Peterson (MN) Sanchez, Loretta Terry
Peterson (PA) Saxton Thomas
Petri Sanders Thompson (CA)
Pickering Schiff Thompson (MS)
Pitts Schmidt Thornberry
Platts Schwartz (PA) Tiaht
Poe Schwarz (VA) Tiberi
Pombo Scott (GA) Tierney
Porter Scott (VA) Towns
Price (GA) Sensenbrenner Turner
Price (NC) Serrano Udall (CO)
Pryce (OH) Sessions Udall (NM)
Putnam Shadegg Upton
Radanovich Shaw Van Hollen
Rahall Shays Velázquez
Ramstad Sherman Vislosky
Rangel Sherwood Walden (OR)
Regula Shimkus Walsh
Rehberg Shuster Waters
Reichert Simmons Watson
Renzi Simpson Watt
Reyes Skelton Waxman
Reynolds Slaughter Weiner
Rogers (AL) Rogers (NJ) Weldon (FL)
Rogers (KY) Smith (TX) Weldon (PA)
Rogers (MI) Smith (WA) Weller
Rohrabacher Snyder Westmoreland
Ros-Lehtinen Sodrel Wexler
Ross Solis Whitfield
Rothman Souder Wicker
Roybal-Allard Spratt Wilson (NM)
Royce Stark Wilson (SC)
Ruppersberger Stearns Wolf
Rush Strickland Wynn
Ryan (OH) Stupak Young (AK)
Ryan (WI) Sweeney Young (FL)
Ryun (KS) Tancredo

NOT VOTING—25

Bishop (UT) Hinchey Moran (VA)
Brown, Corrine Hunter Owens
Campbell (CA) Kilpatrick (MI) Sullivan
Chandler Kuhl (NY) Wamp
Davis (FL) LaHood Wasserman
Ford Leach Schultz
Fossella Lee Woolsey
Gibbons Lipinski Wu
Gutierrez Miller, Gary

□ 1854

So (two-thirds of those voting having responded in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the concurrent resolution was amended so as to read: "Concurrent resolution expressing the appreciation of the Congress for the contributions of the United Service Organizations, Incorporated (the USO), to the morale and welfare of the members of the Armed Forces and their families."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 8, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. KUHL of New York. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 8, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

HOLLY A. CHARETTE POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia). The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the Senate bill, S. 1989.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1989, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 408, nays 0, not voting 24, as follows:

[Roll No. 9]

YEAS—408

Abercrombie Davis (IL) Hulshof
Ackerman Davis (KY) Hyde
Aderholt Davis (TN) Inglis (SC)
Akin Davis, Jo Ann Inslee
Alexander Davis, Tom Israel
Allen Deal (GA) Issa
Andrews DeFazio Istook
Baca DeGette Jackson (IL)
Bachus Delahunt Jackson-Lee
Baird DeLauro (TX)
Baker DeLay Jefferson
Baldwin Dent Jenkins
Barrett (SC) Diaz-Balart, L. Jindal
Barrow Diaz-Balart, M. Johnson (CT)
Bartlett (MD) Dicks Johnson (IL)
Barton (TX) Dingell Johnson, E. B.
Bass Doggett Johnson, Sam
Bean Doolittle Jones (NC)
Beauprez Doyle Jones (OH)
Becerra Drake Kanjorski
Berkley Dreier Kaptur
Berman Duncan Keller
Berry Ehlers Kelly
Biggart Emanuel Kennedy (MN)
Bilirakis Emerson Kennedy (RI)
Bishop (GA) Engel Kildee
Bishop (NY) English (PA) Kind
Blackburn Eshoo King (IA)
Blumenauer Etheridge King (NY)
Blunt Evans Kingston
Boehlert Everett Kirk
Boehner Farr Kline
Bonner Fattah Knollenberg
Bono Feeney Kolbe
Boozman Ferguson Kucinich
Boren Filner Kuhl (NY)
Boswell Fitzpatrick (PA) Langevin
Boucher Flake Lantos
Boustany Foley Larsen (WA)
Boyd Forbes Larson (CT)
Bradley (NH) Fortenberry Latham
Brady (PA) Fossella LaTourrette
Brady (TX) Foxx Leach
Brown (OH) Frank (MA) Levin
Brown (SC) Franks (AZ) Lewis (CA)
Brown-Waite, Frelinghuysen Lewis (GA)
Ginny Gallegly Lewis (KY)
Burgess Garrett (NJ) Linder
Burton (IN) Gerlach LoBiondo
Butterfield Gilchrist Lofgren, Zoe
Buyer Gillmor Lowey
Calvert Gingrey Lucas
Camp (MI) Gohmert Lungren, Daniel
Cannon Gonzalez E.
Cantor Goode Lynch
Capito Goodlatte Mack
Capps Gordon Maloney
Capuano Granger Manzullo
Cardin Graves Marchant
Cardoza Green (WI) Markey
Carnahan Green, Al Marshall
Carson Green, Gene Matheson
Carter Grijalva Matsui
Case Gutknecht McCarthy
Castle Hall McCaul (TX)
Chabot Harman McCollum (MN)
Chocola Harris McCotter
Clay Hart McCreery
Cleaver Hastings (FL) McDermott
Clyburn Hastings (WA) McGovern
Coble Hayes McHenry
Cole (OK) Hayworth McHugh
Conaway Hefley McIntyre
Conyers Hensarling McKeon
Cooper Herger McKinney
Costa Herstein McMorris
Costello Higgins McNulty
Cramer Hinojosa Meehan
Crenshaw Hobson Meek (FL)
Crowley Hoekstra Meeks (NY)
Cubin Holden Melancon
Cuellar Holt Mica
Culberson Honda Michaud
Cummings Hoooley Millender-
Davis (AL) Hostettler McDonald
Davis (CA) Hoyer Miller (FL)

Miller (MI)	Rangel	Sodrel
Miller (NC)	Regula	Solis
Miller, George	Rehberg	Souder
Mollohan	Reichert	Spratt
Moore (KS)	Renzi	Stark
Moore (WI)	Reyes	Stearns
Moran (KS)	Reynolds	Strickland
Murphy	Rogers (AL)	Stupak
Murtha	Rogers (KY)	Sweeney
Musgrave	Rogers (MI)	Tancredo
Myrick	Rohrabacher	Tanner
Nadler	Ros-Lehtinen	Tauscher
Napolitano	Ross	Taylor (MS)
Neal (MA)	Rothman	Taylor (NC)
Neugebauer	Roybal-Allard	Terry
Ney	Royce	Thomas
Northup	Ruppersberger	Thompson (CA)
Norwood	Rush	Thompson (MS)
Nunes	Ryan (OH)	Thornberry
Nussle	Ryan (WI)	Tiahrt
Oberstar	Ryun (KS)	Tiberi
Obey	Salazar	Tierney
Olver	Sánchez, Linda	Towns
Ortiz	T.	Turner
Osborne	Sanchez, Loretta	Udall (CO)
Otter	Sanders	Udall (NM)
Oxley	Saxton	Upton
Pallone	Schakowsky	Van Hollen
Pascarella	Schiff	Velázquez
Pastor	Schmidt	Vislosky
Paul	Schwartz (PA)	Walden (OR)
Payne	Schwarz (MI)	Walsh
Pearce	Scott (GA)	Waters
Pelosi	Scott (VA)	Watson
Pence	Sensenbrenner	Watt
Peterson (MN)	Serrano	Waxman
Peterson (PA)	Sessions	Weiner
Petri	Shadegg	Weldon (FL)
Pickering	Shaw	Weldon (PA)
Pitts	Shays	Weller
Platts	Sherman	Westmoreland
Poe	Sherwood	Wexler
Pombo	Shinkus	Whitfield
Pomeroy	Shuster	Wicker
Porter	Simmons	Wilson (NM)
Price (GA)	Simpson	Wilson (SC)
Price (NC)	Skelton	Wolf
Pryce (OH)	Slaughter	Wu
Putnam	Smith (NJ)	Wynn
Radanovich	Smith (TX)	Young (AK)
Rahall	Smith (VA)	Young (FL)
Ramstad	Snyder	

NOT VOTING—24

Bishop (UT)	Gutierrez	Owens
Bonilla	Hinchev	Sabo
Brown, Corrine	Hunter	Sullivan
Campbell (CA)	Kilpatrick (MI)	Wamp
Chandler	LaHood	Wasserman
Davis (FL)	Lee	Schultz
Edwards	Lipinski	Woolsey
Ford	Miller, Gary	
Gibbons	Moran (VA)	

□ 1910

So (two-thirds of those voting having responded in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate 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. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from this chamber today. I would like the RECORD to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 8 and 9.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, personal reasons require my absence from legislative business scheduled for today, Tuesday, February 14, 2006. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on H. Con. Res. 322, a resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the contribution of the USO to our service men and women of our

armed forces (rollcall No. 8) and "yea" on S. 1989, the Holly A. Charette Post Office Building Designation Act (rollcall No. 9).

URGING SENATE ACTION ON IMMIGRATION

(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, this country is in dire need of immigration reform and tighter border security. Officials at all levels of government and across party lines have felt this need. However, instead of acting, we are sitting back and debating the details of amnesty or no amnesty, guest worker or no guest worker, et cetera.

I call on my colleagues in both the House and the Senate to move political positioning and think about the men and women that they represent. There will undoubtedly be areas of disagreement, yet this must not stop us from moving forward to secure our borders this year.

Our constituents deserve to know that they are safe and that they can live out their lives without the threat of terror at their doorstep, and they deserve nothing less.

MEDICARE PART D AND COMMUNITY PHARMACISTS

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

Ms. HERSETH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss the crisis facing our community pharmacists, particularly those in rural communities. Of all the health care professionals struggling with the implementation of the new Medicare drug benefit, pharmacists appear to be the most negatively affected.

Guess what? Pharmacists are facing another blow. The recently enacted cuts to the Medicaid program are achieved by changes in the way we reimburse pharmacies for prescription drugs.

The choices made during the budget reconciliation process once again targeted our Nation's pharmacists without asking for corresponding sacrifices from the pharmaceutical manufacturers and the PBMs.

This one-two punch is not only bad policy, it is outrageous. Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt praised pharmacists last week for their "heroic" efforts in shouldering the burden for implementing Medicare Part D.

Their reward? Drastic pharmacy reimbursement cuts in the Medicaid program that will have a devastating impact on our communities, disproportionately impacting the poorest and sickest Americans that will no doubt put hundreds, if not thousands, of small businesses out of business.

It is time this body quit taking the path of least resistance and base our

health policy decisions on what is good for our constituents, communities and small businesses, not the powerful drug and insurance companies. I respectfully and urgently ask my colleagues to address this important issue.

PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

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

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, last year, the President's budget zeroed out the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant program, and this was devastating to the drug task forces around the country. Byrne funds are the primary source of funds for drug task forces and are critical in combating methamphetamine abuse.

Congress restored \$410 million of Byrne funds, but this is way short of the \$1.1 billion of authorized spending that was allowed. The State of Texas was forced to eliminate drug task forces, and other States are now considering doing so.

The President's 2007 budget proposal again eliminates Byrne funds. Unless Congress restores these funds at an adequate level, we will lose the drug task forces in nearly all of our States. This is our most effective means of combating methamphetamine abuse. For every \$1 that we spend on education and prevention, we get \$9 at the back end and save costs on imprisonment, crime and all the things that are attendant to methamphetamine abuse.

Meth is sweeping across the country, and we certainly urge the Congress to restore these funds as rapidly as we can.

□ 1915

RESPECT RELIGIONS

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the Pakistan Caucus, it saddens me to see the loss of life that has occurred and the violence that is raging throughout the Muslim world and as well in Pakistan.

It would seem appropriate that the Danish Government and the Prime Minister would spend less time pointing a finger at fundamentalist Islamic activities and groups and really speak to the hundreds of millions of Muslims around the world who are peace-loving and believing in humankind and, of course, the world humanity.

It is appropriate to admit mistakes; it is appropriate to announce the fact that I am appealing to the Muslims who believe in peace and harmony in the words of the Koran. It would be appropriate to say that we made a mistake in degrading the religion, that we do have a respect for diversity and religion.

It would not be to undermine the fact of the first amendment, to be able to

acknowledge that a mistake has been made. It would be the same way of acknowledging if the degradation of other religions were to occur and many voices would rise. Why not admit that the cartoons were degrading of a religion. It did not show the appreciation of religion and, in fact, we can all do better.

We have a respect for each other's differences, and we join together in harmony and world peace. I would ask the Danish Government to stop hiding behind the first amendment or at least the premise of free speech and deal with the question of religious diversity and appreciation.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CONAWAY). 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.

GUNS IN THE WORKPLACE

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

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, in the last year the gun lobby has continued to defy common sense by pursuing a radical agenda in Congress and in State legislatures. Last year Congress passed legislation to give the gun industry unprecedented immunity from litigation and other legal action.

Thanks to this new law, dishonest and corrupt gun dealers will be held accountable for their negligence. Almost 2 years ago, Congress let the ban on assault weapons expire, and this year's budget cuts bullet-proof vest grants for police departments. Congress is allowing criminals to better arm themselves, and now the budget is taking away protection from our police officers.

But sadly, the gun lobby isn't done defying common sense with legislation. The NRA is currently lobbying for States to prohibit employers from banning guns on their private property. It does not matter if someone works in a school, day care center, bar, or even a facility that produces hazardous materials. The NRA wants to let them come to work with a loaded gun in their car.

In fact, the NRA is suing companies who ban guns in the workplace. Let us set the record straight here. I have no problem for a legal citizen to be able to purchase a gun. But allowing loaded guns in day care centers, parking lots, that does not make sense. Right outside of chemical plants, again, makes no sense. This is a recipe for disaster.

The NRA and its allies say that workers bringing guns to work and leaving them in their parked cars makes for a safer workplace, but they never explain how. Last month, an employee of a post office in California opened fire at a mail processing plant, unfortunately killing six people.

Having loaded guns in cars outside the facility has not saved one life. In fact, I cannot think of a single workplace shooting that could have been prevented by loaded guns being kept in company parking lots. But I can think of numerous scenarios that would make a shooting more likely with guns on the premises.

What happens when a criminal learns that parked cars, often left unattended, contain loaded weapons? What is stopping them from breaking into cars and using those guns for crimes? Criminals break into parked cars to steal stereo speakers. They would not hesitate to take a loaded gun. What if an employee brings his or her gun into their place of work. A gun could be misfired or end up in the hands of someone else.

Worse yet, somebody who isn't legally allowed to own a firearm could gain access to a co-worker's gun. Studies show that guns are already the third greatest workplace safety hazard, behind vehicles and heavy machinery.

In fact, 17 people are killed by guns on the job each week. A study done by the University of North Carolina revealed that killings are five times more likely to occur at job sites where guns are allowed in workplaces than where they are prohibited. The NRA has targeted State legislatures for this ridiculous campaign.

The Florida legislature is considering making it a felony for employers to ban workers from having guns on the company property. Similar laws have passed in Alaska, Minnesota, and Oklahoma. I fear it is only a matter of time before they bring their cause before Congress.

Fortunately, the business community has rallied against the NRA on this matter, and for good reason. Businesses know that if they fire someone, who is to say that person is not going to go out into the car and get their gun and come in and try to do the mayhem against an employer. Are they going to have a safe room for someone that has been fired to go there? The liability costs are going to also be involved in private companies.

Also, layoffs and firings are a tough reality in today's economy. How will companies handle giving employees bad news when they may have loaded guns in their cars? Seems to me the latest initiative of the NRA creates a lot more problems than it solves.

Mr. Speaker, instead of being a rubber stamp for the NRA in 2006, let us focus on laws that keep guns out of the hands of criminals and terrorists. It is time for common sense, not misguided extremism.

SIMPLIFIED USA TAX, SUSAT

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

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, tonight I would like to talk about our current Tax Code and its dis-

content, a tax system that has stifled economic growth, has encumbered our resources and miles of red tape and needlessly burdened working Americans.

Our Tax Code is too complicated and is riddled with obvious inequities. It punishes savings and investment, reducing economic and job growth; and it burdens domestic industry struggling to remain competitive.

As a member of the Ways and Means Committee, I have long advocated a tabula rasa approach to the Tax Code, a complete overhaul grounded in first principles. Our objective must be to replace the current antiquated tax system with one that can sustain a free capitalist society in the 21st century. That means a Tax Code that is simple, fair, and stable.

The new Tax Code I have developed, the Simplified USA Tax Act, or SUSAT, puts the right incentives in place to grow our economy and ultimately raise our standard of living. In fact, many of the provisions included in my bill were recommended by the President's advisory panel on Federal tax reform as part of their growth and investment plan.

My proposal has three key components. First, it simplifies the code by a factor of about 75 percent. Second, it takes the taxes off of savings to promote thrift and avert a national savings crisis. Third, it makes America significantly more competitive, thereby creating better jobs within our borders.

The Simplified USA Tax starts out with just three simple low rates: 15 percent at the bottom, 25 percent in the middle, and 30 percent at top. Through a payroll tax credit to all wage earners, SUSAT effectively lowers the income tax rates to about 7 percent to 17 percent for nearly all Americans.

Under my proposal, and this is one significant departure from the President's panel recommendation, everyone gets a deduction for the mortgage interest on their home. In addition, the SUSAT tax allows charitable donations and tuition deductions. To further ensure that the new Tax Code would be progressive, my proposal also permits all families to take a generous family credit and qualifying families to take an additional refundable work credit. These two credits simplify and improve the current child credit and earned income tax credit.

I believe the Tax Code must also give Americans a fair opportunity to save part of their earnings. By taking the taxes off of savings, we will increase the savings rate and ultimately reduce the cost of capital.

My proposal encourages savings by allowing everyone to contribute to an unlimited Roth IRA. It also repeals the individual and corporate alternative minimum tax, Federal death and gift taxes. Mr. Speaker, as you can see, the individual tax system, under my proposal, is designed to be much simpler than the status quo.

The tax return will be short: only a page or two for most people. But more importantly, the tax return will be understandable. My proposal also contains a new and better way of taxing corporations and other businesses that will allow them to compete and win in global markets in a way that exports American-made products, not American jobs.

All businesses would be taxed alike at an 8 percent rate on the first \$150,000 of profit, and at 12 percent on all amounts above that small business level. All businesses will be allowed a credit toward the 7.65 percent payroll tax that they pay under current law.

One of the most pro-growth elements in SUSAT is that all costs for plant and equipment and inventory in the United States will be expensed in the year of purchase. This is important because investment and state-of-the-art equipment is critical to manufacturing in a global economy.

The other key component of SUSAT that will make American business more competitive is that it is border adjustable. In other words, SUSAT would end the perverse practice unique among our trading partners of taxing our own exports. All export sales income is exempt and all profits earned abroad can be brought back home for reinvestment in America without penalty.

Because of a 12 percent import adjustment, all companies that produce abroad and sell back into U.S. markets will be required to bear the same tax as companies that both produce and sell in the United States. This policy would finally take away the bias in favor of imports built into our current tax structure, which, in my view, contributes to our record trade deficit that continues to rise to record-breaking levels.

For too long, the Tax Code has been a needless drag on the economy. This is a curious paradox, and certainly not fair to those Americans whose living standards are lower because of it. The time has come for fundamental change.

In the coming weeks, I will outline more details about this tax system and why we need to move forward today with tax reform.

□ 1930

THE PEOPLE'S HOUSE FOR SALE

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, the real estate bubble may be bursting in some markets around America, but here in Washington, D.C., real estate is still a great investment.

You may have missed the listing, but it appears that the U.S. Capitol, the People's House, was bought with a down payment of a mere \$1.6 billion, \$1.16 billion from lobbyists here in

town. Or at least that is what the special interests spent on lobbying the Republican Congress in the first 6 months of 2005.

And what exactly does about \$1 billion from lobbyists get you these days in a home like the People's House?

If you are an oil and gas company, you have done \$87 million in lobbying expenses. What does it buy you? \$14.5 billion in subsidies from taxpayers. \$14.5 billion from taxpayers in subsidies so you can just do your business plan. They spent \$87 million and got a \$14.5 billion gift from the taxpayers.

\$87 million will also allow to you pump about \$65 billion worth of oil and gas from the Gulf of Mexico, and you do not pay a single royalty, costing the taxpayers \$7 billion. That is \$7 billion that could pay for child support collections, \$7 billion that could pay for college education, \$7 billion that can create new broadband expansion, everything that we would be doing. \$7 billion could pay down the deficit.

No, taxpayers have been asked to forgo all the royalty that is owed to them, and the oil and gas companies walked away with it, \$14.5 billion in taxpayer subsidies. All the while, while energy is about little north of 60 bucks a barrel. That is right, 60 bucks a barrel. We are subsidizing big oil and big energy companies who also have made record profits.

Now, I think that is great. I think Exxon Mobil should make all the money they want to make. But why are subsidizing them when they are making record profits to do nothing but their business plan? I don't know of another family that has their family budget subsidized by the rest of the taxpayers to this level. \$87 million investment and contributions got them \$14.5 billion in taxpayer subsidies and basically a pass on \$7 billion they owe the taxpayers for having drilled in the Gulf of Mexico.

But that is not just alone in the energy sector. Let us talk a look at the health care sector. They have given about \$173 million in contributions, lobbying activities, all types of expenses. Drug manufacturers saw an extra \$139 billion in profits over the next 8 years from the prescription drug bill. HMOs, \$130 billion in additional profits through Medicare overpayments. There is actually a section in the prescription drug bill called the HMO slush fund for \$10 billion. Where else can you get an investment like that? You cannot get an investment that gives you 100 percent return on your money on Wall Street.

My grandmother used to say, with a deal like this, where you basically give \$173 million and you get \$132 billion profit, such a deal is what my grandmother used to say. Nowhere except in Washington, D.C., in a Republican Congress can you give \$87 million and get \$14 billion in return. Give \$173 million and get \$132 billion in return. That is close to a hundred percent return on your money.

So what do the American people get out of this blue-light special and how do we get out of this? We have created a structural deficit to the system and a system that works against the American people and the taxpayers, whether you are a senior citizen who is struggling with this prescription drug bill which is total chaos but has guaranteed and locked in profits for HMOs and pharmaceutical companies, or whether you are a consumer going to pump paying close to three bucks a gallon, and yet we are also paying on April 15 subsidizing the big companies. Yes, there are 30 different insurance forms for a senior citizen to try to figure out which drug they can get matched with.

Now do you think the oil and gas companies fill out 30 different forms for oil and gas leasing or for their \$14.5 billion in taxpayer subsidies? No, they do not. Now there are over 100 questions for a kid who is just trying to apply for a student loan for about \$2,000, yet we do not force oil and gas companies, pharmaceutical companies, HMO companies to fill out forms like that when it comes to the subsidies we are providing these companies.

It is time to end corporate welfare as we know it. The People's House and the Speaker's gavel when it comes down it is intended to open up the People's House, not the auction house. In the last 5 years, this place has looked like an auction house, whether it is oil and gas companies, whether it is HMO companies, whether it is pharmaceutical companies. In fact, last year, we had a corporate tax bill on the floor. It was supposed to solve a \$5 billion problem. By the time the Republican Congress was done with it, \$150 billion it cost the taxpayers. Time and again, we are paying for the types of wheeling and dealing and what goes as business as usual.

If you go out to the north side of the lawn here at the People's House you will see the for sale sign, and the lobbyists have paid a little over a billion dollars and gotten everything money can buy. So it is time in this election that we turn the People's House back and that gavel back to its rightful owner, the American people.

PROTECTING FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS OF MILITARY CHAPLAINS

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

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, prior to the break I came on the floor and announced that we had sent a letter in October of this past year to the President of the United States signed by 76 Members of the House, 3 United States Senators asking the President of the United States to use his constitutional authority as Commander-in-Chief to guarantee the first amendment rights of our chaplains in the military, whether they be Muslim, Jewish or Christian, to pray in their faith and their tradition.

Tonight, I am on the floor to give an example of what is happening in our military. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, in the 3 years that I have talked to chaplains from the Navy, from the Marine Corps, from the Army, Air Force, that there is a prohibited rule that they should not pray in the name of Jesus, if they happen to be of the Christian faith, outside of their church.

Give you two examples. Last year, I spoke to a Navy chaplain in Hawaii who had been asked to pray at a remembrance service for Marines killed in Afghanistan and Iraq. At the close of his prayer, he closed in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. About an hour later, he got a phone call from a Marine Major that asked him to please, in the future, outside of his church not to pray in the name of Jesus Christ.

He was so upset, Mr. Speaker, that he went to a Jewish rabbi who was a friend of his, and he asked the Jewish rabbi, are you offended when I pray in the name of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ? The Jewish rabbi said, absolutely not. This is your faith and your tradition, and you should pray as you see fit.

Mr. Speaker, 3 weeks ago, I spoke to a chaplain in Iraq. His name is Jonathan Stertzbach. He happens to be an independent Baptist. He is a chaplain, and he was asked by a commander of a unit to pray over the grave of a shoulder who professed to be a Christian who had been killed in battle. It so happens in the Army that this chaplain had to submit his prayer in writing to the senior chaplain. The senior chaplain, Mr. Speaker, struck through the words Jesus Christ. The young chaplain whose name is Jonathan Stertzbach, I talked to him by telephone, said, Congressman, I could not pray if I could not pray as I thought my Lord wanted me to pray. It so happens that the company commander, before he removed himself, asked him if he was going to be at the service and if he was going to pray. And he said, sir, I have asked to be removed because my prayer has been struck down. The Major told him, you go to the funeral. You are going to pray as you see fit.

Since that time, it so happens that a newspaper in America called Chaplain Stertzbach and he did comment about what happened, and so now he has been removed from his chapel in Iraq.

I have written to the Inspector General, General Stanley Green. I have asked him to look into this matter.

Mr. Speaker, I would be on the floor of the House tonight if this was a Jewish rabbi, if it was a Muslim cleric, and protect their rights to pray as they see fit. That is what America is all about, is the first amendment rights to pray, to speak as we see fit.

I hope that my colleagues in the House will join the 76 of us who have signed this letter and say to the President of the United States, protect the first amendment rights.

We are not talking about having altar calls. We are just talking about

in certain ceremonies and services that they pray as they think their faith and tradition asks them to pray.

Mr. Speaker, I will ask, as I close, God to please bless our men and women in uniform and ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform and ask God to please bless America.

DARFUR RESOLUTION

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this evening I introduced a bipartisan resolution expressing the disapproval of the Arab League's decision to hold its 2006 summit in Khartoum, Sudan. The resolution also calls on the Arab League, the government of Sudan, the Sudanese rebels and the world community to do all they can to end acts of genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan.

Recently, the Arab League announced its decision to hold its annual summit in Khartoum. Doing so will only lend credibility to a country that is currently under sanction by the United States. The Sudanese government continues to allow acts of genocide to occur in the Darfur region and deliberately obstructs the African Union's ability to stabilize the region.

Mr. Speaker, the current situation in the Darfur region of Sudan is dire. The U.N. estimates that as many as 180,000 have died, many of starvation and disease, and up to 2 million have been displaced.

The Darfur conflict is an ongoing conflict in the Darfur region of western Sudan, mainly between the Janjaweed, a government-supported militia recruited from local Arab tribes, and the non-Arab rebels in the region. The Janjaweed has been implicated in a campaign of murder, rape and intimidation sponsored by the government of Sudan.

Mr. Speaker, I do not need to remind this House of the horrors that we have turned a blind eye to in the past. The U.S. still will not recognize the Ottoman Empire's genocide of over a million Armenians from 1914 to 1921.

It took us far too long to join the fight against the systematic state-sponsored persecution and genocide of the Jews of Europe during World War II by Nazi Germany. And of course our shameful disregard for the 937,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus that died at the hands of organized bands of militias during the Rwandan genocide.

As the leader of the free world, we have a moral obligation to do all we can to stop genocide in all its forms. It was in 1998 when President Clinton said, and I quote, never again must we be shy in the face of evidence describing the failed U.S. response to the Rwandan genocide. Well, here we are, 8 years later, standing on the sidelines once again in the face of undisputable evidence.

So in light of the current situation, why would the Arab League decide to have their annual summit in Sudan? I understand that the site of the Arab League summit is determined by an alphabetical order rotation. However, genocide calls for more than business as usual, and that is the attitude that the Arab League is now using.

If there is one organization that has influence over the Sudanese government it is the Arab League. Member countries have a responsibility to rein in the Sudanese government and to do everything in their power to stop this genocide now.

I believe the Arab League's decision to hold this 2006 summit in Khartoum constitutes an economic and symbolic reward and could even encourage the government of Sudan to continue to allow acts of genocide and other mistreatment against the people of Darfur.

Mr. Speaker, the Arab League has a choice to make. Ignore a genocide and go forward with their planned summit or break the alphabetical tradition and send a message to Khartoum to do all it can to end the acts of genocide, to allow international peacekeepers to protect the innocent and to hold the Arab militia responsible for these acts accountable. This is an opportunity for the Arab League to lead. It is time for them to send the right message to the Sudanese government.

I would urge my colleagues to join my resolution. It is bipartisan, expressing disapproval of the Arab League's decision to hold its 2006 summit in Khartoum. It is time to send a strong message that the Sudanese government should be reprimanded, not rewarded for their support of genocide.

DORIS MILLER—TEXAS SAILOR

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, I have talked much on this House floor about our veterans, both those of today and those of the past. Tonight I mention another one of them.

Doris Miller was born in Waco, Texas, on October 12, 1919. He was the youngest of three sons born to Henrietta and Connery Miller. He was a good kid. He enjoyed playing with his brothers and was always helping around the house, especially in the kitchen. In school, Miller was a good student. He was also a fullback on the football team at A.J. Moore High School in Waco, Texas. They called him the raging bull because of his size. He was 5 foot 9, but he weighed over 200 pounds.

Growing up, Miller worked on his father's farm until he enlisted in the United States Navy at the age of 20 as a Mess Attendant, Third Class. He quickly advanced to Mess Attendant, Second Class and First Class, and subsequently he was promoted to Ship's Cook.

After training at the Naval station at Norfolk, Virginia, he was assigned to the ammunition ship USS *Pyro*; and on January 2, 1940, Dorie, as his shipmates nicknamed him, was transferred to the battleship USS *West Virginia*. When he was not cooking he was boxing with his buddies, and he became the ship's heavyweight boxing champion. He was serving on the battleship *West Virginia* that December morning in 1941 when the Japanese surprise attack took place.

As the bright rising and violent sun came up on the morning of December 7, 1941, Dorie was already awake and collecting laundry when the battle stations alarm sounded throughout the ship. Pearl Harbor and Hawaii were under attack.

He ran on deck to help his fellow wounded soldiers. In the midst of the chaos, an officer ordered him to aid the critically wounded captain of the ship. While struggling back to the bridge and then amid horrendous and heavy fire and bombs, Dorie came upon a machine gun whose gunner had already been killed. Dorie, rescuing his captain, made sure that he was protected and immediately began firing this machine gun at Japanese airplanes.

□ 1945

He continued firing until the crew was ordered to abandon the ship. Miller had never been trained to operate a machine gun, but he was credited with shooting down at least two Japanese planes, probably more than that. Later he said, "I just pulled the trigger and she worked fine."

In the spring of 1943, Dorie Miller was assigned to the USS *Liscome Bay*, an aircraft carrier in the Pacific, and he was on board November 24, 1943, when the aircraft carrier was sunk by a submarine; 646 sailors were lost at sea, and Dorie was one of them.

Before he died, Miller was honored for his brave acts at Pearl Harbor on December 7. He was awarded the second highest medal in the Navy, the Navy Cross, for his extraordinary courage during that battle. It happened that Admiral Chester Nimitz, another Texan, presented the award to Miller personally. And he said of Miller, "This marks the first time in this conflict in this war that such high tribute has been made in the Pacific fleet to a member of this race, and I am sure that the future will see others of this race similarly honored for these brave acts."

Admiral Nimitz mentioned Miller's race because he was black. The Navy had been integrated, but segregated responsibilities. So Miller, since he was black, he was assigned to being a cook on the ship. He was not required to be topside manning that .50-caliber machine gun on December 7, but he was there. He voluntarily helped protect his ship and protect his captain. By the way, Mr. Speaker, in the movie "Pearl Harbor," Cuba Gooding, Jr., portrayed Doris Miller in his actions on December 7.

Mr. Speaker, every February our Nation celebrates Black History Month to recognize the contribution that African Americans have made to our country. This Black History Month, as we note accomplishments of African Americans, we take time to salute their military accomplishments as well. We honor the loyal duty of heroes like Doris Miller. He was an extraordinary American and a sailor. He received many awards for his bravery during the attack on Pearl Harbor, and he acted above and beyond the call of duty. He could have certainly qualified for the medal of honor for his courage. He was a man of valor, and Doris Miller is entitled to respect and gratitude of our country.

There were many of the World War II Greatest Generation that gave their youth and their lives for our Nation. Mr. Speaker, over 400,000 Americans, young men and young women, died in World War II protecting our Nation and the concept of freedom. Dorie Miller was one of those Americans. And that's just the way it is.

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

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

THE POLICY OF ROYALTY RELIEF

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA).

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today Americans woke up to the unfortunate news that because of the actions of this Congress, the major oil companies that are drilling in the Gulf of Mexico are in all likelihood not going to be paying any royalty on billions of dollars, some \$65 billion worth of oil, that they will be extracting from the Outer Continental Shelf of this country and on which they would be expected to pay some \$7 billion in royalties; and, in fact, they may not be paying that. It may go even further that some of the majors have suggested that they are not required to pay any royalties on oil extracted from the Outer Continental Shelf. In that case, the cost to the taxpayers would be maybe \$35 billion, \$35 billion in lost revenue to this country at a time when we are running record deficits, at a time when we are telling people we cannot afford to help them with their home heating oil, at a time we are making basic cuts to basic education; and it goes on and on and on and on.

The fact of the matter is the policy of royalty relief that the Congress passed was an unwise policy when we passed it. But the oil companies convinced this Congress to do so, and they have convinced the administration to allow it to continue. Although the Bush administration opposed the further extension in expansion of the oil royalty relief program that was in their most recent energy bill that was just signed by President Bush, unfortunately, his opposition did not go to such an extent that he insisted that it be taken out of the bill.

So what do we have? We have the major oil companies securing leases on land that is owned by the public, land that is owned by the taxpayers of this Nation, to go in and to drill those lands. And in exchange for that, they said that they would not go in there and drill unless we gave them royalty relief, unless we took away the royalties that they were entitled to pay to the landowners, the taxpayers of this country, for the privilege and the right to drill those reserves.

These are some of the most important reserves in this country. They are some of the more important reserves in the world. There is a huge amount of competition for drilling for this. At the time, it was suggested that nobody would bid on these leases, that nobody would participate, that nobody would raise the capital to do so if they did not have royalty relief. The fact of the matter is I think the record will show that at the same time they were arguing that, they were already in the construction of the rigs that were necessary for deepwater drilling and that the decisions had already been made. Some companies decided they would bet on the gulf. Other companies decided they would go to the Caspian Sea. But the fact of the matter is the competition was hot and heavy.

For this Congress to have then just given away those royalties is a horrible mistake, and it is a mistake that the Congress must correct. Nobody, even the proponents of royalty relief, believed that there was going to be a complete escape from the royalties owed to the taxpayers for the development of this oil. They believed, as the administration has said, that at a minimum they were not going to get oil royalties relief, they were not going to get relief from the payment of the rent to the taxpayers if oil was over \$34 a barrel. Well, as we all know, the world price of oil today is hovering around \$60 a barrel. It has been as high as \$70, and it has been in the mid-50s, back and forth.

The fact of the matter is these very same oil companies that are seeking a royalty holiday, freedom from the payment of these royalties, have just reported the biggest profits in the history of these companies, in the history of the world in the oil industry. And at the same time, they are suggesting that they have no obligation to pay the taxpayers of this country what is due

them for the privilege of drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf.

Today, some of us introduced legislation to prevent any future royalty holidays for the oil companies, to seek and direct the Minerals Management Service to renegotiate these leases so that it does include the provisions of a minimum of a trigger but hopefully even a better royalty policy than that, and if those companies do not want to cooperate with that renegotiation, then they should be barred from future bids on the Outer Continental Shelf.

Now, to their credit, some of the major oil companies are suggesting that, in fact, they do owe the royalties, that there is a trigger mechanism. But Kerr-McGee and apparently some other companies have decided that they are going to challenge the whole law. They believe they are not obligated to pay any of these royalties, there is no trigger in this law. If that is the case, the taxpayer is just going to be hung out to dry by the major oil companies, and the major oil companies are going to abscond with the natural resources that belong to the people of this country.

It is wrong and Congress ought to correct it.

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

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

WITNESS TO AFGHANISTAN'S PROGRESS

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

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

There was no objection.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, while leading a congressional delegation to Afghanistan, I was struck by the progress that the Afghan Government is making toward establishing a democracy, as well as with the enthusiasm and the determination of the Afghan people to finally and deservedly live in a free society.

The purpose of this trip, which also included stops in Iraq and Kuwait, was for Members of Congress to see firsthand the efforts being made toward U.S. goals of bringing stability and democracy to these nations.

In Afghanistan, where the prospects for reform once looked bleak, a transformation has occurred which has resurrected freedom, established legitimate leadership, and reinvigorated the population.

It is difficult to imagine that a mere 5 years ago the Taliban government

was thriving in this nation, exporting terrorism and promoting archaic extremism. Today media, cultural, business, and political leaders are free to meet, to discuss, to demonstrate and guide policies which are reforming their nation's economy, opening the political process, and liberating society from the fundamentalist laws which enslaved their nation.

This overwhelming progress has been made under leadership of President Hamid Karzai. Having met with President Karzai, I am assured that he is a capable and determined individual and he is able to continue to guide his nation into a transition to a modern democracy. To help facilitate this, Karzai and the Afghan Government are seeking to implement the Afghan Compact, which is a commitment to achieve specific goals relating to security, to the rule of law, to human rights, to economic development, to the elimination of narcotics trade within 5 years.

The task ahead remains difficult. It remains lengthy. But with the sustained help of the United States and other international donors and especially the demonstrated optimism and the resilience of the Afghan people, I am confident that the goals of this compact will be realized.

The progress being made in Afghanistan also has serious implications for our own Nation's security. Our congressional delegation conveyed to Afghan leaders that Congress remains deeply concerned about the mounting bloodshed in this Nation and over the ongoing narcotics trade which supplies over 90 percent of global opium and heroin.

My colleagues and I were also able to meet with high-ranking U.S. military officials, including Commanding General John Abizaid, to discuss the current military situation on the ground. I left impressed with our military's success against the insurgents and confident in our decisive victory over it.

Afghanistan was the first foreign front in our campaign to eradicate terrorism, and the success that we have had in eliminating the Taliban and establishing a democratic government is monumental and undeniable. In this area, however, our job is not complete, and America must not yield in our commitment to our troops and to their noble efforts. Standing side by side with its Afghan counterparts, our military will continue to actively seek out and destroy terror elements and work toward establishing complete stability and a transparent rule of law so that Afghanistan will never again be a safe haven for terrorists.

At a time when many are questioning the legitimacy of U.S. efforts abroad, Afghanistan serves as the perfect example of why our efforts to bring stability, freedom, and security are crucial, just, and attainable. Clearly, the new Afghanistan is emerging as one of our closest allies in our fight against extremists.

While meeting with the Speaker of the Afghan Parliament, he and I dis-

cussed the critical partnership which is developing between our two nations. Both nations are committed to furthering our alliance, which has already borne much fruit, with the knowledge that neither nation's goals will most effectively be realized without the friendship and deep cooperation of the other.

In our meeting, the Speaker expressed his hope that the Afghan people will serve as a "bridge to democracy for other peoples of the region."

I share the Afghan Speaker's hope, and I am confident that the inevitable spread of freedom and democracy will protect and preserve the American way of life here at home and make it available to those currently oppressed abroad.

The undeniable progress that continues to be made in Afghanistan makes peace, security, and prosperity all the more assured and protected—for Americans as well as Afghans.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment concurrent resolutions of the House of the following titles:

H. Con. Res. 71. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that there should be established a Caribbean-American Heritage Month.

H. Con. Res. 315. Concurrent resolution urging the President to issue a proclamation for the observance of an American Jewish History Month.

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

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

LIHEAP AND NATURAL GAS PRICES

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring attention tonight to an issue that both the House and the Senate have been debating. Low-income Americans are struggling to pay for heating bills this winter. Thankfully, this winter has not been as cold as expected, and heating bills have not increased as greatly as feared.

Less noticed, however, is that our low-income Americans also struggle to pay cooling bills. When the 90- and 100-

degree heat rolls around this year, the situation is going to become very critical very quickly. Air conditioners run on electricity, and a lot of electricity comes from natural gas. Natural gas prices have more than tripled in the last 3 years, from \$3 to \$4 per thousand cubic feet to \$10 to \$15.

These costs are really hitting home as State public utility commissions, PUCs, are increasing fuel charges on electric bills. The need for relief is going to be intense this summer, but the Federal Government's Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, also called LIHEAP, is going to do next to nothing to help. For example, over 60,000 Houston area families got their power cut off in the summer of 2001 and only 14,443 people received 2001 cooling assistance statewide in Texas.

□ 2000

How can that be? The problem is that the LIHEAP formula is completely biased toward heating costs and ignores cooling costs. Many people believe that LIHEAP is a cold weather State program only. In the Northeast, the Midwest coalition lobbies for it and my Northeast and Midwest colleagues talk most about the program.

The media tends to cover LIHEAP funding issues only during the winter months. The shocking facts are that 3 percent of LIHEAP funding goes toward cooling homes in the summer, and 74 percent goes toward heating homes in the winter. Incredibly, LIHEAP spends three times more on administrative costs than it spends saving lives from heatstroke.

States like Texas, Florida and California that have large low-income populations vulnerable to hot weather get almost no funding. Low-income people in New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania receive eight or nine times as much LIHEAP per low-income resident.

In Texas, we have 3.7 million people who are eligible for LIHEAP due to income, but only 4.5 percent receive any assistance. The State of Texas canceled its Low Income Energy Assistance Program as electric bills were on their way up, and our constituents have nowhere to turn.

The cold weather bias is unacceptable, because hot weather kills just as many or more people than cold. According to the National Weather Service, which uses media reports and local government information, from 1985 to 2000 there were 2,596 fatalities caused by heat, an average of 235 per year, and 462 fatalities caused by cold, an average of only 24 a year.

It is scandalous that LIHEAP provides 3 percent of the funding for cooling, and hot weather kills 19 times more people than cold weather. However, a peer-reviewed study at the University of Delaware shows that over 1,000 people die from heat in the 15 biggest cities alone in the average summer, well over either government estimate. So neither National Weather Service nor the CDC data tells the full picture.

Reported causes of death are unreliable. The American Meteorological Society found several peer-reviewed academic studies showing that heart attack and stroke rates increased during hot weather. These heat-related deaths are often attributed to those other causes like heart disease and stroke and are not recorded as heat-related deaths.

The society's study found cold snaps do not cause death rates to go up versus average winter death rates, but extreme heat causes death rates to go up dramatically in the summer. As a result, the LIHEAP program is clearly completely divorced from reality. Heat kills more, but LIHEAP ignores cooling assistance.

The LIHEAP program is so biased because the funding formula is outdated. LIHEAP is based on an obsolete formula that is only still around because of the political support. The tragedy is that this political calculation is contributing to hundreds of preventable deaths annually.

Here are a few of the factors that go into the current LIHEAP formula: A ratio of State and national low income households in 1979; residential energy expenditures in 1979; a State's annual average number of heating days between 1931 and 1980; the number of a State's households at or below 125 percent of Federal poverty in 1980; a State's increase in home heating expenditures in 1980; the increase in total home residential heating expenditures between 1977 and 1980; and also 75 percent of each State's 1981 crude oil windfall profits tax formula.

This is a formula that is just ridiculous, and we need to update it. As we can see, this information is over 25 years old and completely irrelevant to modern reality. The fact that the primary LIHEAP formula still uses data from the date of the disco is unbelievable. There is absolutely no excuse for the program to allocate life-saving money based on such a formula.

While supporters of the current formula defend it by pointing to the \$2 billion trigger, it is a red herring. Our Northeast and Midwest friends and colleagues insist the rising tide lifts all boats. Once the funding gets above \$2 billion a year, a new formula directs it, but Congress has seldom voted over \$2 billion.

It is true that there is a trigger and this obsolete formula goes away for appropriations over \$2 billion. However, Congress rarely goes over that \$2 billion dollar trigger, and when they do, they use accounting tricks to avoid the modern, fair formula.

For example, members in the other body are trying to move \$1 billion in LIHEAP funding from the reconciliation bill from fiscal year 2007 to 2006. That would mean a total appropriation of \$3 billion, including what Congress has already done, which should help for cooling.

However, the reconciliation bill put \$750 million of that extra \$1 billion into a "contingency" account that uses no formula and the White House can do whatever it wants with it. His-

tory tells us that Southern states and cooling needs will see very little, if any, of that money.

Unsurprisingly Southern members have placed a hold on the bill.

The only solution is changing the LIHEAP formula.

The House Energy and Commerce Committee nearly accomplished a fairer formula during the energy bill debate, where my amendment would have lowered the "trigger" to \$1 billion to make a difference.

Northeastern and Midwestern members protested and offered a compromise to increase the authorization to \$5 billion, which many of accepted at the time as a good faith offer.

However, the budget reconciliation bill revealed the true motive to deny funding for cooling assistance and to deny much needed LIHEAP funding for Southern, mid-American, and Western states.

Along with my colleagues CHIP PICKERING, MIKE ROSS, CHARLIE GONZALEZ, MICHAEL BURGESS, and many others, we will continue to push for justice in the LIHEAP formula.

We can no longer allow Congress to use a 25 year old formula to ignore hundreds of preventable deaths every year—it is unconscionable and outrageous.

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

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

AMERICA IS NOT WINNING ON THE TRADE FRONT

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON).

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

There was no objection.

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, America is not winning on the global trade front. Last Friday, the U.S. Department of Commerce announced the United States has the largest trade deficit in our history. So many more imports are coming in here than exports, and every American can affirm that every time they go to shop.

At \$725 billion in the red in 2005, that is three-quarters of a trillion dollars, our trade deficit is growing at a rate of more than \$1,500,000 every minute. This total is more than 18 percent higher than one year ago.

Sectors such as agriculture, as well as manufacturing, which once sustained a thriving economy here, are now withering. For every billion dollars in deficit, we are shedding a minimum of over 10,000 jobs. Workers' wages are not rising, their pensions are being cut, health care costs are going

up, and this is a major contributing factor.

Our manufacturing sector is deteriorating. Since the year 2000, 3 million more manufacturing jobs, good jobs, have been outsourced. The 2005 deficit in autos, trucks and automotive parts is \$138 billion, the worst ever. Those are dollars we used to put in our own pockets, the pockets of our workers, the pockets of our shareholders, the pockets of the executives. This industry was once at the cutting edge of the world and the mother of invention. Today, we have become an assembly line for imported parts.

Our Trade Representative, Ambassador Portman, comes from my home State of Ohio. He should be intimately aware on a global scale that it is just not a level playing field that parts producers and other exporters face. Yet the deficit in the auto sector, which once provided a path to the middle class for millions of Americans through living wage jobs, keeps going more and more in the red, another 20 percent just last year. It seems every week we hear about another plant shutting down, more layoffs, the most recent set of companies, Delphi.

In agriculture, which used to be America's savior, our global trade balance in agricultural products showed a mere \$27 billion surplus in 1996. That has gone down from \$27 to \$4 billion, and it is projected we are going to become a net food importer. America, the richest agricultural nation in the world, a food importer? That is what is happening.

Yet the agreements that this administration has signed, including CAFTA, will encourage countries like Brazil and El Salvador to undermine one of our most promising agricultural sectors, ethanol, because CAFTA will allow Brazilian ethanol transhipped through Central America to undermine that promising agricultural sector of our economy.

And what is the Bush administration through Ambassador Portman doing to stop these hemorrhages? Nothing. Just issuing reports. There is no new enforcement actions, no special bilateral talks with countries with which we are massing these huge deficits. Today's Congress Daily reports Ambassador Portman issued a report reviewing China's trade practices; China, a most undemocratic nation that represents an alarming chunk of this growing trade deficit that we have amassed. Indeed, our trade deficit with China is at an all-time high, over \$200 billion, dollars we used to put in the pockets of American workers.

Mr. Portman did note that the trade relationship between the United States and China "lacks equity and balance." Yet his report does absolutely nothing to change it.

By contrast, my bill, the Balancing Trade Act of 2006, H.R. 4405, would require action in the face of consistent deficits of more than \$10 billion with a single country. With 21 bipartisan co-

sponsors so far, this bill will require action from any administration.

With the red ink getting deeper and deeper every minute, with American workers losing, with American communities losing, we need action, not more whitewashing. What a shame that Washington is so out of step with what is happening on every Main Street and every manufacturing and every agricultural sector of this country.

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

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

POINTING FINGERS WHILE ROME BURNS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that, while Rome burns, the administration spends its days pointing fingers at each other. As the continuing disaster in the Gulf region continues to burn and to fuel its own fire, we now have administration officials, both ex and those who are still in office, raising the question of who knew what when, while those of us in the Gulf region, in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, are continuing to contend with the tragedy of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In fact, there are 44 States around the Nation where Katrina survivors languish without opportunities to return home.

Rather than the administration having real concrete solutions, such as the right of return to the region, where FEMA provides a return ticket to all those families who are desiring to come and be reunited with their family members or to come home, there is no answer at the end. Rather than offering non-concrete solutions, solutions that are just whitewashing, of course, the administration protects its own.

They protect Secretary Chertoff, who for one was not in charge, not because former FEMA Director Brown said so, but because I know so. Because within 2 days of the storm, I dialed, as a member of the Homeland Security Committee, Secretary Chertoff's number over and over again. As someone familiar with the region, I understood that disaster was at hand. You could not get one return phone call from the Secretary to a member of the Homeland Security Committee.

It might be that I was a Democrat and therefore did not count. But thousands upon thousands of people were being sent to their death if they could not get any additional help. We lost 1,000-plus. There are 4,000 still missing, and there has been no definitive response from this administration.

Testimony of former FEMA Director Brown in the last 48 hours has indi-

cated that this administration, along with the President of the United States, well knew that the levees were spilling over. They knew how catastrophic the storm was going to be 48 hours out, and it was sufficient time for this administration to call for military resources and other resources. We know that there were deployed military vessels off the coast that could have provided for evacuation of thousands upon thousands of individuals. We also know that no response was given. In fact, according to the testimony, under oath I understand, of former Director Brown, one of the staff persons of the FEMA office flew over the levees and saw them spilling over.

The irony of all this the response was "we didn't know whether it was just a leak or whether or not the levees had broken." My friends, there are those who can drown in a teaspoon of water. The fact that the water was spilling over was enough reason for them to act.

What about the aftermath? What about the fact that now in Hope, Arkansas, isn't it interesting, quite funny, if you will, hope, hope and dreams of Americans, in Hope, Arkansas, 10,000, 10,000 mobile homes are now languishing in disaster. \$431 million was spent for these mobile homes that are now sitting there, the wrong size, sinking in the mud. And now, in addition, adding insult to injury, the \$431 million, which no one knows whether there was any bid criteria, any criteria whatsoever for the purchase of these particular mobile homes, was there any bidding, was this a no-bid contract, was this another waste of money from the taxpayers, by FEMA, these homes are now languishing in Hope, Arkansas, as indicated by our colleague from Arkansas, languishing there, not being able to be utilized by the thousands who, one, want to come home and, two, are in the region.

Mr. Speaker, it is both a crime and it is a shame. As I said earlier, Rome is burning. The administration was at fault, Secretary Chertoff was at fault, as were all of those who sat and did nothing while people died.

It is imperative that we not whitewash the House of Representatives report, that we have a full 9/11 inquiry report and that we immediately address the question of removing FEMA from the Homeland Security Department and making it a full, free-standing department.

Unlike Mr. Brown, I am not interested in pitting natural disasters against man-made disasters. 9/11 stands as a horrific disaster in the history of America. What I am looking forward to is that they stand equal in the eyes of this administration, equal in the eyes of resources, equal in the eyes of Americans being able to count when they are in need that there will be the Federal Government to provide them with resources, to provide them with assistance.

All of this name calling and finger pointing and who was in charge and

who was not gives no comfort to those who are still suffering, such as Alvin, who is not getting any money for rebuilding his house.

Mr. Speaker, I believe Mr. Chertoff should be held accountable and, if necessary, should resign; and, likewise, FEMA should be moved out into an independent, free-standing department.

□ 2015

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Dakota (Ms. HERSETH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. HERSETH addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

BLUE DOGS FOR CHANGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MATHESON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minor-party leader.

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed always an honor to have an opportunity to speak on the floor of the House of Representatives.

And tonight I join with fellow members of the Blue Dog Coalition. The Blue Dogs, as you know, is a group of moderate to conservative Democrats in the House of Representatives, a group that has taken positions on many issues over the years, and a particular issue which the Blue Dogs have a solid reputation on is that of promoting fiscal responsibility for this country.

And that message is needed now more than ever, and the Blue Dogs are going to continue to speak out in terms of what we think is the right thing to do for this country and particularly for future generations in this country.

You know, I just had a new addition to my family about a month ago, had a little boy born into my family. And the day he was born, he already owed over \$27,000 to the United States of America. Because if you take our national debt and divide it over our whole population, that is about how it calculates out.

And that little boy entered this world with that kind of debt hanging on him not having had anything to do with that debt. He was not around when the money was spent, was not involved in the decision-making that created that debt. And I find it appalling that we allow this to continue to take place and grow in terms of a problem.

I see this as a moral obligation we have to future generations, and for me

personally I see it in my own new son. What is disturbing is the trend that we are on right now, because there are going to be times when the economy is good and times when the economy is bad, and sometimes revenues are going to be up and sometimes revenues are going to be down.

And there may be times when a deficit occurs for valid reasons. But when you are in a deficit situation, what you want to do is you want to have a plan for working your way out of that debt. The concern I have is that we do not see that plan on the horizon. What we see instead is an ever-increasing amount of debt over time.

Let us put it into context. From 1789 until the year 2000, the total debt that was incurred by this country was \$5.63 trillion. But by 2010, the total national debt will have increased to just under \$11 trillion. So we will have doubled the 211 years' worth of debt in just 10 years.

You do not need to get out your calculator to figure out that that is not a good trend, and it is increasing at way too fast a rate. So now more than ever it is time for us to stand up in a statesman-like way and make the decisions that are going to be tough decisions if we are ever going to get a handle on being fiscally responsible.

That is what we are here to talk about tonight as the Blue Dog Coalition. I have been joined by some of my colleagues from the Blue Dog Coalition. I am honored to be associated with all of them.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to call on them at this time, and I would like to first recognize my colleague from the great State of Tennessee (Mr. TANNER).

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

I have been here before with the Blue Dogs because it is about the only opportunity we have to discuss what we all believe, as Mr. MATHESON said, a trend line that is leading us to a financial Armageddon. There is no other way that one can look at it.

I have been talking about and writing about the fact that our country is currently borrowing more money faster than any previous political leadership in the history of the United States.

To give you some idea, and I wish I were making some of this up, but if anyone cares to go to the Web site of the public Treasury, www.publicdebt.treas.gov, you can see for yourselves there what I am about to talk about.

What happened in this country, basically, is two things: one is we embarked on an economic plan for America in June of 2001 that assumed various things that would happen in the future. In so doing, the outlook was for a \$5 trillion surplus over the next 10 years.

We all know what happened on 9/11 in the year 2000, some 2½ months after this economic plan was adopted. The economic plan has not changed, but everything else in the world has.

So what we did was we reduced revenue in 2001, and we have increased spending; and we have not gone back and tried to adjust for this new world that we live in.

So what is so disturbing about this is since 2001 the debt held by non-governmental agencies has increased by \$1.4 trillion. Now, if that were not bad enough, you know how much of it we borrowed from foreigners? Almost 90 percent: \$1.16 trillion has been borrowed from foreigners, primarily Asia, China and Japan, who together own over \$1 trillion worth of IOUs from Mr. MATHESON's little boy and others, me, everybody else in this country that is a citizen.

So what we are trying to alert the American people to is that this country has a broken economic game plan, and we do not like the remedies that are being prescribed for this deal by the current administration and the current Congress.

Now, I said the other night, half jesting, it is so bad now and getting worse by the second, I am going to tell you in a minute how much we are borrowing every second, that if China attack Taiwan, we would have to borrow the money from China to defend Taiwan. I say that tongue in cheek; but if you look at where we are, we do not have the money, and we do not have the ability to seemingly right this ship of state.

Now what are the consequences? There are consequences to actions. What are the consequences of this unprecedented borrowing that has taken place here in the last 48 to 60 months? Unless one is able to repeal the laws of arithmetic, interest rates must go higher. Every reputable economist says that. What does higher interest rates mean? Well, it means more finance charges on every American's credit card. It means cars and homes cost more. All of the things that we buy on time will cost more. And it crowds out private investment that creates new jobs in this country, because the interest rates cripple one's ability to invest in new plants, new equipment, modernization, all of those things.

That is the consequence of a willful and deliberate plunge into debt that is taking place here in Washington, DC. It eventually will mean higher taxes.

Did you know that \$16 out of every \$100 that comes to Washington now goes not for health and education and troops, it goes to pay interest? Now, this inability of the government to invest is going to catch up with us.

There are three things, basically, American families, my friend the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) says, three things, basically, that American families live by: one is live within your means; second is pay your debts; and the third is invest in the future. In other words, save money for your kids' college education or for your retirement or something.

Your government is not doing any of the three. We are not living within our

means, deficit spending every year for the last 4. We are not paying our bills; we are borrowing the money. We are borrowing the money to fight the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, and giving the soldiers who return home the bill with interest.

If that is not immoral, I do not know what is. These guys and women, too, are giving their lives sometimes, their legs, their arms, everything else. And what do they get from us? They get a bill when they get back with interest for what they did for this country.

And the other consequence of this is what our friend from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) said earlier tonight. We are having to zero out the drug task forces in this country that are the front line to try to keep our young people from getting hooked on these drugs like methamphetamine and so forth that will rob not only them of their future but will rob this country of their ability to contribute to a free and strong land.

The other thing is, when we continue to do this, we degrade the tax base so that more and more money that comes here is not available for any investment by the government in infrastructure or human capital.

What do I mean by that? I mean infrastructure, that only the government can do, whether it is dams, roads, bridges, airports, all of the things that allow private enterprise to move in and around the infrastructure and create jobs and create opportunities for our citizens. That is not being done because there is no money for it. It is going to pay interest on the national debt.

And when we do not do that, just go to any country on the face of the Earth that has no infrastructure and see how many people are doing pretty well. Nobody is, because there is nothing for private enterprise and entrepreneurship to build to.

The other thing we are not doing is investing in human capital. If this country is going to remain strong and free, the citizenry of this country must have a good education and must have good health care.

We are robbing ourselves of the ability to invest in education and health care because of this ever-growing burden of debt and interest that takes away from the tax base of the taxes we all pay. There has never been, if one reads history, there has never been a country that is strong and free with an unhealthy, uneducated population. It is not possible.

And yet as this trend line continues, as Mr. MATHESON said, this is exactly where we are headed. Now, again, you can go to the Treasury Web site and see what I am talking about.

Last year, the deficit was \$319 billion. To put that into something that hopefully we can all understand, that is \$26 billion a month, \$886 million a day, \$36 million an hour. By the time we finish this hour, this Blue Dog hour, we will have borrowed another \$36 million. It is \$615,000 a minute, and \$10,200 a second.

That is how much money we are borrowing. Last year, the fiscal year 2005, the net interest last year we paid was \$184 billion. Do you know how much interest checks are? That is \$15 billion a month in interest, \$511 million a day in interest, \$21 million an hour in interest, \$354,000 a minute in interest, and \$5,900 a second that we are paying in interest because of this growing debt.

I was trying to put this in some kind of context; I guess this is about the best I can do. If you have \$1,000 bills, \$1,000 bills, and you stack them like that, to get to a million dollars, it will be about a foot high. To get to a billion dollars, \$1,000 bills stacked like that, it is as high as the Empire State Building. And a trillion dollars is 1,000 bills, 1,000 times the height of the Empire State Building.

It is staggering. It is the most unaccountable, irresponsible activity that I know any political leadership in the history of this country has engaged in knowingly, willfully, and deliberately. And it is going on tonight, and it will go on when this budget is presented on the floor here. Because there is no accountability.

We do not have any hearings particularly on holding people accountable. You have heard a lot about that. Well, the Blue Dogs have tried to do a couple of things. The first thing we did, or tried to do, to fix it was to reinstitute PAYGO rules. That is something every American family does. If you decide you want to spend some money, you either have got to raise the money to pay for it or you have got to cut the budget somewhere else that is of a lesser priority and fund it that way.

PAYGO rules were allowed to expire. The majority will not let them come back here, and that is one of the reasons that we keep digging deeper. The other thing we have recommended, or tried to recommend actually, is that in addition to the PAYGO rules, and we are going to do this, we are going to unveil an accountability plan, the Blue Dogs are, that is going through every Federal agency, the IG reports, to pick out the programs that are ineffective, duplicitous, or otherwise do not work and cut them. And we will have that coming out. We are working on it right now.

□ 2030

The lack of accountability here, the lack of responsibility here, cannot go on; and the American people need to really pay some attention to this. We have a birth tax of \$27,000. That is hideous. It is not right. And this generation has got to bear most of the blame. My generation has to bear most of the blame because we are simply not doing the three things that American families do every day, and that is live within our means, pay your debts and invest in the future.

If we do not change this, Mr. Speaker, then I fear more tonight for my country's future than I ever have in the 60 years I have been on this earth.

Mr. MATHESON. I appreciate those comments from my Blue Dog colleague, Mr. TANNER. He is one of the leaders of the Blue Dogs, and he has been a real voice of reason in Congress. I appreciate him taking the time tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize my Blue Dog colleague from the State of Georgia, Mr. BARROW.

Mr. BARROW. Mr. Speaker, I want to address an issue that is important to all the families that I represent; and it is just being abandoned in this 2007 budget proposal submitted to Congress. I am talking about support for our local police officers and law enforcement agencies, men and women on the frontlines of homeland security, protecting our communities and patrolling our neighborhoods.

Large cities in my district like Savannah are dealing with a rise in violent crime. At the same time, many of our smaller rural communities in Southeast Georgia and all around the country are fighting an epidemic of meth labs. Mr. Speaker, we cannot afford to let drugs and violent crime continue to go up in this country. For more than 14 years, homicide was on the decline in this country. That changed last year. According to the latest figures from the FBI, homicide rose by 2.1 percent in the first 6 months of 2005, the first increase since 1991. That is unacceptable, and these cuts in this budget are unacceptable.

The COPS program, cut by \$376 million. During the '90s, we figured out what works in reducing crime. More police officers on the streets makes them safer and reduces crime. The COPS program helps our community hire, train, retain and equip our police officers. But this budget cuts this program by 78 percent.

The Byrne Justice Grant Program, completely eliminated. Byrne JAG grants help State and local law enforcement agencies identify and break up regional drug syndicates. This budget completely eliminates that program. Why would anyone want to do that?

If you think that a rise in violent crime is an issue that Congress should ignore, then this budget is for you. If you think we ought to be cutting back on the tools we give our police officers to keep our neighborhoods safe, then this budget is for you.

In the short time since the President dropped this budget, I have discussed this budget with sheriffs and police chiefs all across my district; and the verdict is unanimous. These budget cuts are hurting and not helping local law enforcement. We need to do more, not less, for our police officers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose the proposed budget cuts to the COPS program and to oppose the complete elimination of the Byrne JAG grants. Our local police deserve all the tools that we can give them to protect our families. We need to give them more help, not less.

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, I think what you heard here, Mr. TANNER

first alluded to it and then Mr. BARROW gave a more elaborate description of proposed reductions in local law enforcement funding, and that is the example of the squeeze that is on. The deficits that we are incurring and the increased interest costs, and, by the way, interest expenses are one of the fastest growing components of the Federal budget today. And with that increased interest cuts you are squeezing other programs.

Some of these programs mean a lot. Local law enforcement grants are something that I think most people in Congress think are a good idea. And the notion that we have a budget presented to Congress that zeros that out is something that is not going to be received well here, I would think. But, again, it is a reflection of the pressures that these increasing deficits are putting on the situation; and that is why it is just another example of why it is so important we try to get a handle on this program.

I now recognize my colleague from Florida, Mr. BOYD.

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend and colleague, Mr. MATHESON from Utah, who is our distinguished leader of the Blue Dogs, a group, Mr. Speaker, that I am very proud to be a member of. I joined when I first came to Congress in January of 1997, and I am proud of the work that they do in trying to bring to the attention of the country and of the Congress the importance of the economic model and making sure that the government meets its obligations to the community and is willing to pay for those obligations.

Mr. Speaker, we live in the greatest country on the face of the Earth. I like to tell my constituents back home when I speak to Kiwanis Clubs or civic clubs that we have 5 percent of the world's population. That is about one of every 20 people in the world live in America. And we control 25 percent of the world's wealth.

We got into that position in a relatively short period of time. It is less than 230 years this year we have been a Nation, and we have done it by creating an economic model that is unsurpassed in the world.

That economic model really to me, when you break it down, does one thing. It always strives to expand the middle class and move as many people as you can out of the bottom rung and into the middle class where they can be productive members of our society. In the process, you narrow the gap between the very rich and the very poor; and that served us well over the years.

I remember talking to my parents when I got old enough to register to vote and asked them about why they happened to be registered Democrats. And they said, well, they thought that, coming out of the Depression in the 1920s and 1930s, that the Democratic party under the leadership of Franklin Delano Roosevelt really laid the groundwork for making this country

the greatest economic and military machine on the face of the Earth.

Expand the middle class, Mr. Speaker, to expand the middle class you have to have a well-educated and healthy population, and those are functions that our government has to be involved in. We have to be providing a good educational system for our children. We have to ensure, if we are going to stay competitive in the world, Mr. Speaker, that each generation is better educated than the previous generation. You have to have a good health retirement system. You have to have a good income retirement system.

Prior to the implementation of Social Security and Medicare in this country, if you reached the age of retirement, age 65 in America, there was a great chance, over a 50 percent chance, that you would be below the poverty level. Less than 10 percent of our folks today live below the poverty level because of this great economic model that we have created which strives to expand the middle class. Social Security and Medicare were important components of that.

Why do I talk about the expansion of the middle class and the economic model? This government has a budget which talks about how it funds its community responsibilities, community obligations, and that budget proposal was just presented by the administration to Congress in the last couple of weeks. And that budget proposal for the coming fiscal year which starts on October 1 proposes to spend \$2.47 trillion.

Let me say that again. It proposes to spend \$2.47 trillion. But its collections to pay for that \$2.47 trillion amount to \$2.15 trillion. That is a budget deficit of approximately \$318 billion. That is after we spend all of the Social Security surplus masking the much larger deficit.

But the problems do not stop there. The budget does not even address the costs of the war effort in the Middle East, in Iraq and Afghanistan, in the coming year. It does not address some other issues which we know as a Congress and a Nation that we have to address, such as the alternative minimum tax exploration and some other tax issues like that.

So what we have before us as a Congress presented by the administration is a budget that really is not a very useful document for us to start with.

Mr. Speaker, my wife and I own a farm, a family farm that has been in my family for over 175 years. And it is not always easy on the farm. It is a small business. And this past week at home I spent a good part of the week doing a budget.

Why do I do a budget? I do my budget to take to my creditors so they can provide us the funds we need to run our little small business. I spent a good many days on that budget and did the very best I could to present to my creditors just as accurate a picture as possible of what I thought the revenues

would be and the expenses would be for the coming year. That is honesty in budgeting. And out there in the country our constituents have to do it in running their own homes. They do it in running their own businesses, and they certainly have to do it in running their own local governments and school boards.

We certainly could expect that the Federal Government could be honest in presenting this budget to the American people. So I would hope, Mr. Speaker, and I would ask my colleagues to join in as we have this discussion about accountability and honesty in budgeting, that we can as a Congress be a little more honest with the American people about what the cost of some of these programs are that we are involved in and how we are going to pay for them.

I do know something for a fact, Mr. Speaker, that you cannot increase spending, cut taxes and cut the deficit all in one lick. The math does not work. I learned that in grade school. It is a simple mathematical calculation. You cannot increase spending, cut taxes, and decrease the deficit. It just cannot be done, and that is what evidently this budget pretends to do.

So I hope as we so have this discussion for the next 30 minutes or so that we can delve into some of these issues and have a little straight talk. Let us shoot straight with the American people about what the budget issues are.

Mr. MATHESON. I appreciate those comments. I do think people should expect an honest budget. I think we all know we are going to have troops in Iraq during the next fiscal year; and the fact that this budget does not list a dollar to fund that, in and of itself, tells you that this budget is not an accurate reflection of the expenses that this government is going to face in the next year.

That is not being honest. That is not being straight with people. We know we are going to incur that expense. We ought to acknowledge we are going to incur that expense, and we do not do it, and I think that is something the Blue Dogs feel real strongly about in terms of having honesty and integrity in the budgeting process and the budget numbers.

Part and parcel of that is that we ought to have planning for contingencies. I suspect when Mr. BOYD was developing the budget for the family farm, for his business, that he had a line item in there called contingency, because you know that something else is going to come up. You do not know what it is going to be. You do not know when it is going to be. It could be weather related. It could be something that you cannot even anticipate, but you know there is going to be an expense that comes up that you cannot identify today but it is going to happen. You cannot estimate with absolute accuracy down to the dollar what it is going to be, but you know there is going to be something.

And based on your experience and based on your judgement you guesstimate what it is going to be. And when you go to your bank, if they are helping you finance it, they want you to do that, and they are going to work with you to make sure that is a good estimate of what a contingency might be. We do not do that in the Federal Government, but I am sure you do that when you are planning your own budget.

Mr. BOYD. Absolutely we do do that. I think most people who run a small business understand that. Most folks who run local governments understand that. But there is something else in this budget that we are looking at that we received from the administration in the last few days that really belies any thought of sensibility.

□ 2045

A couple of examples: the veterans medical portion of the budget, we know those are issues that we have to deal with and we have not dealt with very well in the past. In that budget that we were presented are significant fees, increases in copayments that the veterans will have to pay. The Congress has rejected that soundly over all the years that I have been here. So I would not expect that the Congress would increase the fees on the veterans; but yet that is in the President's proposal that he sent up.

Student loans cut significantly. I do not think Congress is likely to cut student loans. I certainly hope they are not, but that is in the budget. Those are the kinds of things that we ought to be honest with the American people about, what the costs are, and how are we going to raise the money to make sure those costs are paid for.

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER).

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about accountability again. Another consequence of what we have done in the last 48 to 60 months with this unprecedented borrowing has not only degraded tax money coming here that could have been used for foster children, the poorest, most neglected and abused citizens in our society, but what we are doing is we are not fulfilling the congressional role in the scheme of things in this country.

We do not have any hearings about accountability. I saw on television the other night on one of the shows bundles of money that they were handing out in Iraq. They played football with them, and they asked the guy, well, where is the audit for that. He said it is nonexistent. We do not know where the money has gone.

We see Katrina. We see in Hope, Arkansas, 12,000 house trailers sinking in the mud at the Hope airport. That is total incompetence.

What is really disturbing is the Government Accountability Office reports that 16 out of 23 Federal agencies cannot produce an audit. What we want to

do, if we are allowed the opportunity to do so, we want to get every one of those Inspector Generals in here and make them tell us what they did with the money. The Congress does not even ask, now what you did with the money that we appropriated to you to the executive branch. We have got basically a one-party government here. They do not ask them; and if they did ask them, they could not tell them.

This is outrageous. There is not a businessperson in America who would go to their comptroller and say here is an item of \$20,000, what is that for? I could not tell you; I do not know. Nobody will put up with that, and yet the American people are putting up with it in this town every day.

We just borrowed another \$18 million, by the way, since we have been talking.

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, I know this accountability issue is one that we are all very concerned about. I saw some reports today that in the FEMA response to the Katrina and Rita disasters and other storms of 2005, which were dreadful and particularly dreadful for the people on the gulf coast, but one of the tools they used to help the folks was a \$2,000 credit card that FEMA passed out. I read some reports today that many of those, maybe as many as 30 or 40 percent of those credit cards, were received with fraudulent Social Security information; and, also, the expenses on some of those cards were for some very unreasonable items like tattoos and massages and things that we would not think that necessarily the taxpayer ought to be paying for.

So we do need oversight, and one of the things that I am hopeful for is the majority party in this body had an election here a week or so ago, and there is a new majority leader on the Republican side here. It is my hope and I am sure the hope of the Blue Dogs that we can work with him in a way that we have not been able to work with the leaders in the past to try to address some of these issues, because this issue of one-party rule and lack of oversight into the administration's activities is costing the American people greatly. I think it is time that we addressed it and try to do something about it.

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, I think that really centers on a fundamental issue about the way our Constitution was set up. This is not supposed to be driven by party when it comes to oversight.

When they wrote up our Constitution, they created the three branches of government. We all learn this in grade school. It is called the checks and balances. There is an institutional role for the legislative branch to play. We legislate but we also keep an eye on the executive branch and on the judicial branch, and we do that through oversight. We are supposed to be asking questions. It is all what makes the government accountable. It is pursuing good government. It is not looking for

a scandal or anything like that. This is just basically making the trains run on time, ask the right questions.

We know that is not happening right now, and so you mentioned 16 out of 22 major agencies cannot even give you a clean audit of their books. The government cannot tell you where they spent \$24.5 billion in the last fiscal year. That is enough to fund the entire Department of Justice, and we do not know where the money is, and Congress is not asking the questions.

It should not be a party issue. We all ought to be asking these questions; and I know the Blue Dogs, as such as anybody in this Congress, are ready to work with anybody because it is an America-first issue, not a Democrat or Republican issue. It is about putting this country in the right position and doing the right thing.

So this issue of accountability and oversight that my two colleagues have been talking about rings real true with me in terms of what the Framers of the Constitution asked us to do. That is our role here. We took an oath to uphold that Constitution. My concern is the non-oversight. I hope we do take action. I hope this conversation helps spur some action in this body, because it is the right thing to do.

Mr. TANNER. Certainly it is the right thing to do. We take money involuntarily away from people in the form of taxation and appropriate it to the executive branch and then do not even ask them what they did with it. If we ask them, they could not tell us. That is outrageous, and the American people ought not to put up with it, and I hope they will not for too much longer.

Let me say one other thing about the consequences of these deficits. We have raised the debt ceiling, and we are going to have to raise it again either this month or next month. It will be the fourth time we have raised the debt ceiling in 4 years, and the consequences of this, not only are we degrading the tax base because we are diverting more and more to interest, but 90 percent of these interest checks are now being sent overseas, not even staying in this country.

When one is dependent upon foreign interests that do not see the world as we do for their finances, that creates a vulnerability, a financial vulnerability, for our economy, number one; but, two, I think it is a national security issue.

If one reads history, as we all do from time to time, one will see that there are two things that a country cannot survive if they allow themselves to get into that situation. One is for a country to remain strong and free it must have the inherent ability to feed and clothe its citizens, agriculture. If one is dependent upon a foreign source for one's food supply, one is necessarily at risk when that supply chain is interrupted. We know that. You read history.

The second is economics. When one is dependent upon someone else for their

funding, any interruption in that supply will sink that country economically.

Someone in the administration testified that it was naive to think that China, which holds \$300 billion worth of our paper now, Red China, they say it would be naive to think that the Chinese would do anything to hurt their economic short-term interests. I think it would be naive to think they would not. That would be the cheapest war they ever fought against the United States.

My dad told me one time, I tell you something, Son, he said, It is easier to foreclose a man's house than it is to shoot your way in the front door. When we are dependent upon China and China can say to us, U.S., back off, whether we are demanding that they conform to trade standards, we know what the trade imbalance is with China, or whether or not they make a move on Taiwan and we say you cannot do that, they are getting themselves in a position to say, U.S., stay out of it, or we are going to roll Wall Street and we can do it.

That is the financial vulnerability that puts this country in grave jeopardy. If we lose control of our own economic self-interests, we have lost part of our freedom; and this mortgaging of our country to anybody on Earth that will let us have money on the cheap, 90 percent of last year's deficit was financed from offshore. When we allow that to happen, we are playing Russian roulette, so to speak, because anytime they want to, when they get a critical mass, they can really put the squeeze on us, and there is not a thing on Earth we can do about it.

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, you can foresee a situation that would put us in a dependent situation with agriculture and funding like we are with oil. For instance, I think 60 percent or so of our oil consumption in this country comes from another part of the world. Many of those people, like you said earlier, do not necessarily have our best interests at heart. So we have it within our own ability to stay out of that situation with the economics, and we really need to get this turned around and stop this deficit spending to the tune of 400 or \$500 billion a year. If we do not, then we can foresee a situation down the road where it could be an economic wreck here.

Mr. TANNER. The other thing that the supporters of this economic plan for our country say, well, do not worry about it; as a percentage of the gross domestic product, it is not historically too high. Well, when it was higher was World War II, and we did deficit spend and we borrowed a lot of money; but you know who bought the debt then? Americans, the war bonds, the savings bonds. They are not buying it today. They do not have the money to buy it because the middle class you talked about earlier is shrinking, not growing. It is shrinking. So we are not even financing our own debt.

I had a fellow call me on the phone the other day and said, I am afraid we have gone from the greatest generation to the greediest generation, and if our forefathers had borrowed money like we have seen in the last 48 to 60 months, at this pace, I guarantee you we would not have the standard of living that we have enjoyed in this country up to now. You said it pretty well awhile ago when you said this country was built with investment in infrastructure and human capital, and we are robbing ourselves of the ability to do that.

We do not have the drug task forces. If there is anything on Earth we need to do in this country it is to try to alert the young people to the dangers of that, and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) spoke, I thought, very eloquently about that. It is zeroed out.

We are eating the seed corn, so to speak, with regard to our investing in the future. I go back to three things every American family does: live within your means, pay your debts, and invest in the future, whether it is for your retirement, kid's college education or something. Leave the place better than when you found it.

This is the first time I can remember when people who are in power of this government are knowingly, willfully, and deliberately leaving this country worse off than they found it financially.

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, I think you said it very well. We do have a tendency here to be very selfish, this generation, unlike the Greatest Generation, which came out of World War II and paved the way for us to be a great country.

But the Blue Dogs have a plan. We have a plan that talks about some very basic principles that would put this country back on sound footing in terms of its budgeting for its government and funding its priorities, and would the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MATHESON) care to share those points with us?

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to do that, and I think I would put it in the following context. This is not easy to balance this budget. It is going to require a lot of really tough choices, tough political choices.

What the Blue Dogs have decided is we need to put in a structure for this institution and for the White House, for the President and Congress to work within a structure that is going to guide us on the path of fiscal responsibility because without that structure it is just too easy to deficit spend.

□ 2100

That is what has been going on around here. It will take some tough choices. We do not deny that at all. We are ready to work with people, but it will have to be all of us working together to take on those tough choices.

So what the Blue Dogs have done is they have tried to establish a 12-point proposal to set up a structure that ad-

resses some of the issues we have talked about here tonight. For instance, I talked about contingency planning when my colleague, Mr. BOYD, plans his family business budget, which we called one of our 12 points for a rainy day fund, or the Federal Government plans for things that you cannot articulate at the start of the year.

Thirty-five States in this country have rainy day funds. Apparently, we thought that was not appropriate for the United States of America, but we know every year something happens. Natural disasters may happen. We do not know what it is going to be, but we know we ought to plan. That is one of our 12 points.

We talked about accountability earlier, the fact that you can't get a clean audit from most agencies. One of our 12 points is, you know what, any Federal agency that cannot give us a clean audit and properly balance their books, we freeze their budget at the previous year's level. They are stuck. That has some real teeth in it, and that is going to motivate that agency to do the right thing and give you a clean budget.

Another point of the Blue Dog 12-point plan is going to be acquiring a balanced budget amendment for the Constitution. Now this will be appropriately written with exceptions for times of war and natural disaster. But I think that is something we need. As I said earlier, we need a structure. We need something to force Congress and the White House to move toward a balanced budget, and that balanced budget amendment in our Constitution is a key component of making that happen.

Another part of the 12-point plan is something called pay-as-you-go. Now, we throw these terms out a lot. People may not know what that means, but it is a pretty basic concept. That means if you have got something new, a new program you want to spend money on, guess what, you have to pay for it. You can do it by taking money away from a another program or raising revenues.

Same thing if you reduce revenues someplace, you have got to pay for it by cutting spending or raising revenues someplace else. It is something that every family deals with in their household budget, what every business deals with. It is a responsible way to look at things.

This isn't a new idea. This is something that the Congress was working with before. In fact, these rules were in place from 1990 until 2002. Then they expired, and while the Blue Dogs have advocated putting the pay-as-you-go rules back in place, we can't get a vote out here on the floor of the House to do that.

Because as I said earlier, in the short term, it is a lot easier to govern if you do not have to make the tough decisions and you would rather deficit spend. But if we put those rules back in place, it is going to force people to make the tough decisions.

As an aside, I might add, Alan Greenspan who just retired after 18 years as

head of the Federal Reserve, and he has such a great reputation in terms of his economic model, he made a rather prophetic statement back in 2001. This is just when we finished a couple of years of surplus. He was testifying before Congress.

He said, "With today's euphoria surrounding the surpluses, it is not difficult to imagine the hard-earned fiscal restraint developed in recent years rapidly dissipating. We need to resist those policies that would readily resurrect the deficits of the past and the fiscal imbalances that followed in their wake."

He sure was right, because by November of 2005 he came back before Congress, and in testimony he said, "Our budget position is unlikely to improve substantially further until we restore constraints similar to the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990, which were allowed to lapse in 2002." That was the pay-as-you-go provision that existed before.

So we have proof. We have a track record that shows that these rules worked. Without these rules, we have seen us spin into tremendous fiscal imbalance. It is another one of the Blue Dog points. There are 12 points. I thankfully may not go through all 12 of the points tonight, but I wanted to highlight some of the ones that we have talked about tonight, and ones that I think anyone in this country, regardless of political party understands, and they know it is the right thing to do.

I encourage, again, any colleague in the House of Representatives should know the Blue Dogs want to engage them on this issue.

If these 12 points that we have come up with aren't the perfect solution, and somebody has a better idea, we welcome the chance to have a dialogue with them. Because these are not easy issues, and we have got to work together to work this one out. But I think the 12-point plan represents a thoughtful process and a good start for setting up a structure that will force this institution to put us back on the path to fiscal responsibility, and so we can avoid increasing, and I will close with coming back to the comments I started with.

That is not increasing the problem of that birth tax, that we called it, that was employed on the son I had just 3½ weeks ago, that my wife had actually, my new son, came into this world owing \$27,000. That is not right, it is not fair, and we have got to do something to make sure we do not grow that anymore.

Mr. TANNER. Now you have got a part of another \$36 million that we have borrowed since we started talking, and 90 percent of that is coming to us from overseas.

Mr. MATHESON. I appreciate my Blue Dog colleagues joining me tonight. This is an issue we feel strongly about, and we are sincere when we ask our colleagues on both sides of the

aisle to work with us on this because we think it so important to the future of this country.

NATIONAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to come before this body this evening and to talk for a few minutes about some things that are very important to us here in the House.

You know, we stand here many times, many evenings, and we debate the role of government here in this body. We certainly have heard it here tonight, as our colleagues across the aisle have talked about their desire to see things done differently as we look at our budget process.

Certainly there are those of us like me who think that government is overgrown. While there are others in this body that think that government cannot do enough, there are those of us who want to prioritize and reduce the budget, and there are those who do not want to prioritize or reduce the budget. They feel like something to do is to keep the status quo and raise taxes and approach our responsibilities in that way.

A couple of points I did want to touch on, as they have talked about the budget and talked about the deficit and talked about the concerns that we have for that, is we look at the overall economic security of this great Nation.

One of the things that we did when we passed the Deficit Reduction Act, which was a plan brought forward by the majority in this House that would reduce what the Federal government spends and yield a savings for the American people, what happened with that Deficit Reduction Act was, yes, we did achieve a reduction in what the Federal Government spends. This is the first time in about 20 years that this has happened. We had a reduction in our discretionary spending.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is noteworthy that we received not one Democrat vote for that bill for reducing spending. While it is easy to say, and certainly makes for great discussion and conversation, that the deficit is too big, and that we are spending too much, the proof is in the pudding.

The proof is, when it comes time to vote, are you going to vote to raise taxes and spend more and keep the status quo, or are you going to vote to make some reductions, to get in there and prioritize that budget and decide what is going to be the best way to allocate the resources of the Federal Government, because we have to bear in mind it is not our money, it is not this government's money. It is the taxpayers' money.

The taxpayers are overtaxed. They are paying too much. They want Uncle Sam to get his fingers out of their pocket, off their paycheck, and leave that paycheck to them.

I will remind my colleagues across the aisle also, they talk about we have to raise taxes to pay for this. Well, 2004, 2005, the U.S. Treasury received \$274 billion more than they had estimated in revenues.

Mr. Speaker, there is a reason for that, and it is because tax reductions work. We know that they work. You lower those rates, and the economy, this great, wonderful engine of the U.S. economy, works. It works. We certainly have seen that happen. The reductions that were passed in 2003 have certainly paid off.

There is another point I would like to address that did come up. A couple of the colleagues said, we need to have some honesty as we look at this budget process. I am not going to disagree with that. I certainly think as we get ready for Presidents' Day and thinking about President Lincoln and the moniker Honest Abe that he carried with him, we certainly need to remember that and have honesty. But part of that honesty is looking at this and reminding the American people one of the reasons we are faced with the budget we have is because of this huge, enormous bureaucracy, huge bureaucracy that grew out of 40 years of Democrat control of this body, a bureaucracy that basically is a monument to them.

It is so difficult and people have such a tough time working through the bureaucracy, whether it is paying your income tax, figuring out that process, figuring out that Tax Code; whether it is the local university, trying to get over here and get the bureaucracy to help them with some program that is needed for that university; whether it is our local community and county governments trying to figure out how to work with different agencies and comply with different regulations.

It is a cumbersome, overgrown, bloated bureaucracy; and certainly as we address the issues of oversight through the ratings tools, through the President's management initiative, through the CFO act, those are all accountability measures that have come into play since Republican control of this body took place in 1994.

So there is plenty that we can discuss and we will look forward to discussing over the next month as we look at the budget, look at the process, look at the need to put those parameters in place that will help us get the budget under control and still address the areas of responsibility that we have.

One of those areas of responsibility that I think we all can agree on and certainly should be agreeing on is that of national security. There is truly a reason that our founders included the words "provide for the common defense" in the preamble to the Constitution. They knew that national security was an imperative in order for this Nation to be able to survive. They knew

that in order for children to dream big dreams, in order for small businesspeople to be able to go out and take that idea that they have and grow it into something that is wonderful, that creates jobs for their community, that yields back and gives back to that community, that security was an imperative. It is an imperative.

Tonight, several of my colleagues and I are going to take a few moments and talk about guarding this Nation and talk about the issue of national security, because we as a party, we as a majority, are focused, first and foremost, on that issue. Mr. Speaker, I cannot think of a single better time to do this than on Valentine's Day, because there is nothing more important or caring that we can do for our children, our grandchildren, our neighbors and those we love than to fight to be certain that every child has the opportunity to grow up in a safe, a free and a secure world. It is one of those foundational building blocks. And we Americans are free today because of the sacrifices that our parents and our grandparents chose to make for them, for us, and on our behalf. Until this world is a far different place, it is very clear that we must continue our support for a strong military and defense presence. That is the only way that we are going to be able to be certain that our kids inherit the America that we know today.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to look at some issues, as I said, of national security. We are going to look at the border security issue; we are going to look at the war on terror and how important it is for us to win in this war on terror and how important it is for us to realize that it is going to be a long war, that it is about freedom, and it exists not only in faraway lands like Iraq and Afghanistan but it is something that we have to address on our border, our Nation's border, as we look at the issue of border security.

The first Member who is joining me tonight, Mr. KELLER from Florida, has just returned from spending several days down on our southern border working with some of the border guards and the security agents that are there. Mr. KELLER is going to talk with us about some of the activity that is taking place on our Nation's southern border.

□ 2115

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, if you would have told me when I was in college that one day my idea of a romantic Valentine's Day evening would be standing around giving a speech on border security, I would have probably drank a cup of hemlock back then. But here we are, and I am happy to drink this cup of water beside me.

Mr. Speaker, I have just returned from the Mexican border, and I am here to report my findings.

We were 5,000 feet up in the mountains along the border California shares with Mexico at 2:00 A.M., freez-

ing in 30-degree weather, with the wind howling in our faces. Eight shivering young men, illegal aliens in their late teens and early 20s, sat on the cold ground in handcuffs, grateful to be caught. One of them pleaded with a border patrol agent to find his girlfriend, Maria, who was still stuck out on one of the cliffs.

Illegal aliens like the ones I saw in handcuffs continue to enter the United States from Mexico at the rate of 8,000 per day. Today, we have 11 million illegal aliens in the United States. Illegal immigration presents a huge problem. That is why I decided to spend a week along the southern border to see firsthand how bad the problem is and, more importantly, what Congress can do to fix it.

Last year, our Border Patrol agents arrested 1.2 million illegal aliens attempting to enter the United States from Mexico. Significantly, 155,000 of those arrested were from countries other than Mexico. They included illegal immigrants from Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan. This poses a very serious national security problem according to CIA director Porter Goss. I spoke with Border Patrol agents who had apprehended suspects on the terrorist watchlist.

One night, while I was riding along with the Border Patrol, two illegals from Pakistan were captured. One convicted sexual predator was caught trying to cross. So were wanted murder suspects, drug dealers and smugglers.

If the job of a Border Patrol agent sounds dangerous, imagine the risk to people who actually live along the border. I sat down in the living rooms of four different families who own ranches along the border. One couple, Ed and Donna Tisdale, documented on home video 13,000 illegal aliens crossing their property in 1 year alone. The Tisdales had their barbed wire fences cut by illegals running off the family's cattle. When their dogs barked to scare off intruders, the dogs were poisoned.

Another rancher told me about numerous break-ins at his home while his family slept as illegal aliens searched for food and clothing. One morning his daughters had gone out to feed their pet bunnies, only to find them skinned and taken for food by illegal aliens trying to escape to a nearby highway.

The economic impact of these illegal crossers who are successful is catastrophic. Illegal immigration costs taxpayers \$45 billion a year in health care, education and incarceration expenses. The cost of the estimated 630,000 illegal aliens in my home State of Florida is about \$2 billion a year, meaning every family in my congressional district pays a hidden tax of \$315 each year and yet still faces artificially depressed wages because of illegal immigration.

So how do we fix the problem? Well, first, we need to crack down on employers who knowingly hire illegal workers. Jobs are the magnet attracting illegal aliens across the border, and the U.S. House has acted to make it

mandatory for employers to check the paperwork of new hires or else face stiff penalties. Now it is time for the Senate to act.

Second, we complete construction of a double fence for 700 miles along the border near highly populated urban areas. For example, San Diego saw a steep reduction in crossings from 500,000 down to 130,000 when their double fence was completed.

Third, where mountains and rugged terrain make completion of a double fence impossible, we need to have a virtual fence. That is, Congress needs to appropriate money for infrared cameras that allow agents to see the entire border in day and nighttime.

Finally, we need more Border Patrol agents. Although Congress has already tripled the number of Border Patrol agents since the late 1980s, more are still needed.

Mr. Speaker, one million immigrants come to America legally each year; and my staff members spend the majority of their time helping those who want to come to our country to work hard and play by the rules.

We are protected from dangerous people entering the country at our airports. IDs are checked against the terrorist watchlist, and baggage is screened. Who is doing checks on the 8,000 people who arrive here illegally each day? Who is our last line of defense? It is a Border Patrol agent in a green uniform working alone.

At 2:00 a.m. tonight, after all of us are asleep, he will be once again working somewhere near the top of a cold 5,000-foot mountain along the California-Mexican border. He will get a radio call telling him to approach a group of illegals who have been spotted by an infrared scope and are located near the top of that mountain. He will track their footprints in the dirt and make his way toward them. As he approaches, there is something he does not know. Are these illegal aliens a group of harmless teenagers who are scared and freezing, or are they heavily armed, dangerous drug traffickers like the ones who have killed so many of his colleagues? Either way, he will approach them because it is just another day on the job.

Mr. Speaker, I have a message for that Border Patrol agent. The United States Congress knows you are there. We appreciate your service, and help is on the way.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentleman from Florida; and I thank him for reminding us of the importance of protecting that border so that we do provide for the common defense, we do have a secure Nation, and we are alert and watching. As he has mentioned so well, his State of Florida, the area that he represents, their estimated cost of dealing with illegal entry into this country is \$2 billion a year, and that is for those that choose to enter this country illegally.

The gentleman mentioned some of the things that we have done, employer

verification, looking at continuing to secure the border, whether you are looking at a wall or whether you are looking at technology, but putting that surveillance into place.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am going to yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), who is on the International Relations Committee and the Terrorism Subcommittee. Judge POE likes to remind us that it is just the way it is time and again as he comes to this floor and reminds us of the importance of viewing immigration and appropriate and proper immigration, abiding by those laws and what an important component that is to this Nation's security and how important it is that we abide by those immigration laws as we are right now battling in this war on terror.

With that, I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. POE. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

We have spent much time in these halls discussing many purposes of government. Tonight we have heard much about the budget, how to spend taxpayer money, how the money should be spent, how it should not be spent, discussed projects big and small.

And many Americans consistently ask themselves the question, what is the purpose of government? Why do we have government at all? That is certainly a valid question to be asked, especially of our Federal Government.

And you said it well when you mentioned the preamble of our U.S. Constitution, that one purpose of government is to provide for the common defense. It is the first duty of government to protect us, to protect its citizens. Building roads and bridges, having commissions, maybe that is important. Well, maybe it is not. But the first duty of government is to protect the people that live within our borders, the U.S. citizens. Government does a pretty good job of that, especially locally, from our local police to our Federal officers, capturing outlaws, sending them to jail where they need to be. And we do a pretty good job on the international basis. We are fighting the war on terror in Iraq and Afghanistan and other parts of the world. Our military is the best military that has ever existed. And so the government does a fairly good job of that duty of protecting us.

I spent all my life basically in the criminal justice system. I started out as a prosecutor in Houston, and then I spent over 20 years on the bench trying criminal cases, just as Judge CARTER, who is here tonight. He has tried his share of outlaws.

And the rule of law is something that we all believe in in this country, that the law is the standard of conduct. And the law in this country is you do not come into the United States of America illegally, regardless of your purpose. And we know people are doing that anyway. We know, of course, that those narcoterrorists come across the

southern border, especially the southern border of Texas, bringing in that cancer to sell. They make a lot of money doing that.

We know that people come here illegally, over 5,000 a day across the Texas border, illegally coming into the United States for various purposes. And we suspect that probably the next terrorist attack that occurs in the United States is not going to be because somebody flies into Reagan National down the street here, gets off the airplane, looks around and decides, I wonder what damage I can do to the American population. That is probably not going to happen.

That next terrorist is going to come across the open porous border, South Texas and Mexico, because those borders are open. And every country in the world knows that we have an open border, and that is why so many people are coming in.

Give you one example: 2005, in Maverick County, Texas, they had about 8,000 people illegally come in from Mexico that were captured. They had over 20,000 people illegally come in from Mexico from other countries other than Mexico, almost four times as many coming into the United States from other countries other than Mexico. They were from Korea. They were from China. They were from Brazil. They were from countries all over the world coming here. Every country knows we do not protect our borders to keep people illegally, that wish to come here illegally from coming into the country.

So the duty of government is to protect us, protect the sovereignty and the dignity of this country. Everybody wants to live in the United States. I do not blame them. I mean, this is the greatest place on earth to live. But everybody cannot live here, so we have got to have some rules, and those rules have to be followed, and it is the duty of our government to enforce the rule of law and make sure that people respect the dignity of this country. So we have a lot of concerns about that.

And maybe we should refocus the purpose of government. Maybe we should ask the question profoundly, what is the duty of government? And then we should expect the answer to be, to protect us, to protect our borders, to protect our national security, because that is the duty of government. And that is just the way it is.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. The gentleman from Texas is correct. That is the way it is. That is the duty of government. And as the gentleman stated so well and so eloquently, the business of government is protecting this country, as well as that being a duty.

And one of the things, Mr. Speaker, that we have altered is the way that we do business here in America by tightening some of our immigration rules. Looking at drivers' licenses, tightening our drivers' license requirements to prevent those documents from being used in ways that they are not sup-

posed to be used. The Judiciary Committee has led on that issue, and Chairman SENSENBRENNER has done a tremendous amount of work on strengthening our border, taking steps to strengthen that.

Certainly our party as a whole is focused on the national security issue as one of the central issues that we must address. That is one of the reasons that we as a party fought to get the PATRIOT Act passed. We know that on 9/11 our security net had significant holes in it and it had to be fixed and addressed, and we now hope that our colleagues across the aisle will join us in supporting the reauthorization of the bill. It has been successful, and there are things we need to do to continue that focus on this issue.

A gentleman who is spending a good deal of time working on our homeland security issues and looking at the global war on terror and America's response there is the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER), or Judge CARTER as we do like to refer to him. He is on the Homeland Security subcommittee, on the Appropriations Committee, and he is going to speak with us for just a few moments about what is being done to address some of our homeland security issues.

Mr. CARTER. I thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee and all those who gather here today to talk about our national security.

One of the things that has been bothering me here recently, there was a movie that just came out called War of the Worlds, and in that movie they were flipping cars around and the space invaders were coming around, and you saw the fear and panic on the faces of the people on the streets as this made up story of the invasion of our country from outer space.

And I could not help but be struck by the fact that we saw exactly that same live and in color fear on 9/11 when those people were watching those buildings burn, and all of a sudden the first one came crashing down. And we saw films on television of that absolute panic of American citizens as they ran in abject fear from the falling of those buildings, the attack on our Nation.

□ 2130

We saw films of people leaping from windows.

This is what our national security is all about. As Judge POE said, it is about protecting the American citizen. While this is the subject of such conversation all over our Nation today, let us do not forget we have got to protect ourselves.

Now, I, like Judge POE, have been dealing with law enforcement most of my adult life. I have tried a substantial number of felony criminal cases. One of the things that we always would do that we worked into law enforcement is we wanted to have interagency cooperation. We wanted to be able to let the DEA and in Texas the Texas Highway Patrol work together on a drug

case, work in cooperation, share information. But as we approached a view of how we were going to secure this Nation, we discovered that we had a lot of agencies in this Federal Government and in the State governments that really were not coordinating, working together. Tools that we have used for years in criminal justice were not being used for securing our Nation. So some brave folks got together here in the Congress, and they wrote the PATRIOT Act.

This PATRIOT Act, because of partisan politics, in my opinion, and the fact that this is a world where everybody likes to criticize everybody else, we forgot about those people panicking in the streets of New York now, and we are starting to tear up a document that makes sense. And I think it makes sense to the American people. I think it makes sense to say I would sure like to know that every agency that is involved with somebody who might want to attack me or my family in this country talks to each other, shares information, does not have bureaucratic boundaries set up which prevent them from doing this.

The FBI should share information with the CIA. The CIA should share information with the DEA. And all other codes for the various groups that are up here, they should get together and share that information. The PATRIOT Act set up those procedures to do that. Does anybody have a problem with that? I cannot imagine an American citizen having a problem with that.

Do you not want your FBI agents and your prosecutors, the people who work on this stuff, to talk? Do you not want them to be able to communicate, share what they have got?

Now, if I think somebody is planning on blowing up a building, just like I am really concerned about somebody who might be worried about smuggling drugs into this country and I want to have a surveillance on that facility where I think this illegal activity or this terrorist activity is taking place, I do not see anything wrong with being able to have procedures set up, which we have used in fighting the war on drugs for years where you go in and take a look and then you back off until the perpetrators get there and then you go in and make your raid.

But you can put a title on that, a sneak and peak warrant, and it sounds horrible. It sounds terrible. It sounds like the government is sneaking around peaking on private citizens. No. Why should you let them know when you are not there that you have been there? Go get them when they are there. We are here to stop these people. Why should we have to conduct investigations and tip off the people we are investigating? Does that make sense? So we have proper legal proceedings that have gone on in this country for a decade or so in fighting the war on drugs and the war on crime. We are using this in the war on terror. That is part of the PATRIOT Act. I do not see

why the American public would feel like they were intruded upon at all. Law-abiding American citizens are not intruded upon at all by this.

Some people are just shocked that the PATRIOT Act actually looks into business records. How do you think you finance people to come over here, train to fly a 747 or a 727, and crash into a building without some money? If that money is being done for terrorist activities, why would you not want the investigating agencies to have the ability to go into business records and find out about these things? It certainly makes common sense to me, and it is something we have used. In fact, many of you may recognize now in your life there was a time you could come into this country and deposit money or you could go down to the bank and deposit any amount of money you wanted to in the bank. But there were people coming from other sources with huge sums of money that they were laundering through our banking system for the drug business.

So what did we do? You have to report every \$10,000 deposit and every \$10,000 withdrawal. Nobody got all upset about that in the United States. That is dealing with people's business records. But it helped us find out where the drug dealers were, and it helped to keep their dirty money out of our legitimate system. Now we want to know where the terrorists' money is, and I think it is appropriate that we look at those records.

Now, does it make sense to you that you have to hunt for somebody to issue a warrant when there is a criminal procedure, a criminal procedure that is going on all over the entire United States, that you have to go to just one particular jurisdiction to get it when it affects all jurisdictions? No, it does not make sense. You should be able to seek a warrant anywhere there is jurisdiction. The PATRIOT Act allows that to happen on terrorist activities.

This is a good law enforcement tool. The warrant still has the same checks and balances and protections and probable causes that are there for anybody. But why do you have to hunt down a judge in Arizona when you can find one in California when it all affects the same territory?

The PATRIOT Act increased penalties on these terrorist crimes. Now, I personally am a penalty guy. I believe in penalties. I have sentenced a person to 20 years in prison for one rock of crack cocaine because I believe punishment works. That is my personal philosophy, and some Americans might not agree with it. Our county happens to have the lowest crime rate in the United States, but that is my argument. But the point is the terrorist penalties have been enhanced by the PATRIOT Act. That is good. That helps us use another tool to keep people who want to harm our wives, our children, our husbands, our communities, give them extra punishment for what they do. Those who harbor those who would harm us we also have tools to go after.

This is the goal of the PATRIOT Act. That is what it was established for. It is a good tool. It is a tool that is effectively helping us. One of the major reasons that all those who deal with these issues talk about them right now, today, is because we have been able to protect this Nation since 9/11. Nobody is sitting here telling you that everything is perfect; but if you throw away your tools and you put up the things that help you solve the problems, in my opinion, for political reasons, it concerns me greatly that the real purpose of homeland security is lost, and that is protecting our families and our way of life.

The USA PATRIOT Act should be renewed. We should continue this tool for the American agencies that deal with terrorism and law breakers and making sure that when our kids go to bed at night, they feel a little bit safer.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for his comments. He is so correct in talking about the importance of the PATRIOT Act and being able to protect our families.

And I appreciate so much that he and the other speakers tonight have talked about the implications of what happens here on our homeland and the importance of keeping that homeland safe, keeping that homeland secure, and have talked about the great work that is done by our first responders, by our local law enforcement members, that community that works so diligently; the work that is done by our border guards and those who are patrolling our borders. Because, yes, indeed, national security means that we secure this great Nation. Because this is a war on terrorism; it is going to be a long difficult war. And it is the reason, Mr. Speaker, that we have taken military action in Afghanistan and in Iraq, and it is the reason that we are working to reshape that region of this world. And we are making progress. And I know it is frustrating sometimes when we feel like we are taking two steps forward and one step back. But, indeed, there is a mighty work that is being done, a very good, consistent and productive work that is being done by the members of this great Nation's military.

And tonight we are joined by the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. DRAKE). The thing that is so wonderful about Mrs. DRAKE's district is the presence of the military that is there, whether it is our men and women of the naval forces that are out there working or those in the Air Force who are flying.

So from land to air to sea, you have it all covered, and we appreciate your constituents. And, Mrs. DRAKE, I join you in wishing the families of all of those men and women who are deployed a wonderful Valentine's Day. And I join you in standing here tonight to say "thank you" that they are working to be certain that these children grow up in a safe, free, and secure America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Virginia.

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee for yielding to me.

I am very proud to join her tonight on Valentine's Day to wish all our men and women of the service a happy Valentine's Day, but especially those and their families who are separated today and not celebrating Valentine's Day together because they have put duty and the defense of our Nation first.

We live, as we know, in a completely different time; and we face a totally different threat. Our enemies do not wear a uniform. They do not represent a nation. They do not own tanks and aircraft. What they are is a global terrorist network that represents a violent extremist philosophy, one that places no value on life. What they seek to destroy is our way of life, the very fabric of our civilization.

We realize that they have established goals. Their short-term goal is to take Iraq. Their mid-term goal is to take the Middle East. And their long-term goal is to take the world. They seek and they have vowed to use nuclear, biological, and chemical warfare.

Our brave fighting men and women understand this threat. They have volunteered to defend this Nation. Recently, I met a member of our military, a young man. He looked at me and he made a very simple statement. He said, Think about this war on terror as if it were a football game. And the question that I want to ask you is would you rather play the game at home or away? Our goal is that we must fight this war, or play this game, as an away game.

I met another young man on my trip to Iraq and had a brief conversation with him. He looked at me and he said, Ma'am, I understand the threat. I know why I am here, and if I have anything to do with it, we will never have another attack on our soil. With that he asked me not to worry about him but to pray for him, and in a moment he was gone.

We as Americans do not fully understand this threat. Unless we have loved ones who are serving, our lives have not changed. We have not been asked to sacrifice for a war cause nor should we change our way of life because terrorists would like to do that for us. So it is hard to realize that we truly are a Nation at war.

We question why we bother with a small country that is so far away from us when we perceive that they have lived in constant turmoil and they have constantly fought with other people. But America is committed to winning this war. We have watched liberty and democracy spring in the Middle East, and we know in our hearts that all people yearn for freedom to raise their children, to be able to live without fear, without torture, and without tyranny.

I would like to share with America that this fall the House Armed Services Committee, under the chairmanship of Chairman HUNTER, conducted a bipartisan comprehensive review to prepare

our members on the committee for the QDR, that is, the Quadrennial Defense Review. This is a review that is done every 4 years by the Department of Defense to assess our national security posture.

□ 2145

Very importantly, this is the very first review that has been done post-9/11. This review is designed to ensure that the Department of Defense has a plan to transform itself to meet the threats we face in the 21st century.

The QDR seeks to achieve the following objectives: Defeating the terrorist network; defending the homeland; shaping the choices of countries who are at a strategic crossroad; and preventing hostile states and non-state actors from acquiring or using weapons of mass destruction.

Our goal is to develop a military that is more effective, more able to strike quickly. In the coming weeks, members of the House Armed Services Committee will be reviewing and assessing how to reshape our military to meet these present and emerging threats.

Our military and the people of Iraq have accomplished great successes. In less than 3 years, they toppled Saddam, they created their government, and they passed their own constitution. I think that is quite a feat. It took us 13 years to develop our Constitution. We amended it 27 times. It took us 120 years to give women the right to vote. I think we should be very, very proud of their successes.

So far, we have rehabbed over 2,800 schools; trained over 4,700 teachers; electricity, water and sewer are working in Iraq; as well as setting up independent TV stations, radio stations and newspapers. We have captured and killed many of their leaders, not all; we are shutting down as much of their money as we can; and our fighting men and women have engaged the enemy so that they do not have the time to wage war here on our soil and hopefully will continue to prevent an attack within our Nation.

I believe the first function of government is to defend our Nation, and I think the greatest gift that we give to our children and our grandchildren is freedom. On Valentine's Day I am very happy to thank the men and women of our military who give us those gifts.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentlelady from Virginia. I appreciate her comments about the QDR and the review that the Armed Services Committee, a committee on which she serves, is conducting.

I would think for those who are watching tonight, if they want to follow that process and learn a little bit more, they could go to the House.Gov website and then go to the Armed Services Committee and could get a bit more information about that process.

Mrs. DRAKE. That will be ongoing.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentlelady for her comments and for mentioning the good work that is tak-

ing place over in Afghanistan and in Iraq.

One of the things, Mr. Speaker, that we are learning more and more about every day is the fact that, as the military raises up over there, at the same time we are raising up and working to raise up the economic underpinning of that nation, the governmental underpinning of that nation, the educational underpinning of that nation, and working to be certain that they are indeed ready to take the reins and ready to succeed as they step toward democracy.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina, Ms. FOXX. She does such a wonderful job as she works with her constituents and works with us. Education is her forte, and I love listening to her stories about how she educates and works with her grandchildren and how special and how important they are and the lessons that she teaches them and how privileged they are to grow up in a safe, free land and their responsibility to be good stewards of that citizenship and that opportunity that is presented toward them.

I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina for some comments on addressing the global war on terror.

Ms. FOXX. Thank you, Congresswoman BLACKBURN, for your leadership and for providing these opportunities for us to share some of our thoughts.

Our colleague, Mrs. DRAKE from Virginia, does such a wonderful job in recognizing our military and serving on the Armed Services Committee.

Today, when I was coming into the Cannon Building, there were two gentlemen in uniform standing at the door taking some pictures, and I stopped to thank them for their service. I do that every time I see anyone in our military. I thank them for their willingness to serve. They were so pleasant and so excited. They had come home from Iraq for a few days, and they were spending some time here in Washington. One of them said that his mother came from Mt. Airy, which is in my district. They gave me their cards, and we are going to maintain e-mail correspondence.

You mentioned my grandchildren. I mentioned to them that, without any prompting whatsoever, about a year-and-a-half or 2 years ago my now 6½-year-old granddaughter and 9-year-old grandson, at night when I heard their prayers as they were going to sleep, began praying for our military people. It really touched my heart and the heart of their parents, because we didn't tell them to do that, they did it completely on their own. I hope that all of our military folks know, as I told these two gentlemen today, that there are millions of people in this country praying for them regularly.

I want to tie that into what President Bush says all the time. He believes, as I believe and I think most people in this country believe, that freedom is a gift of God and that we are

blessed in this country with the most freedom of any people and the most prosperity of any people and that part of our responsibility is to help spread that freedom.

I also was thinking that February is not only the month for Valentine's Day, but it is Abraham Lincoln's birthday, and pretty soon we are going to be celebrating George Washington's birthday, and Ronald Reagan's birthday was in this month. We have so much to think about in this month of what those men meant to helping to live up to the ideals of freedom and the values of this country and what they risked in their lives, particularly Washington and Lincoln but also President Reagan, who risked saying to the world the truth, as President Bush has done.

I want to bring us back to talking about the fact that we are at war and that it is appalling that many of our colleagues cannot seem to understand that, as Congresswoman DRAKE mentioned, and a part of that war is being able to gather intelligence so that we can fight it effectively. We do want to fight that war on their turf, not on our turf, and we want to keep them from attacking us again.

I have been very distressed in the last few weeks about the way the revelation about the National Security Agency's terrorist surveillance program, the hysterics that have been created from the other side of the aisle. I think that it is time that we talk about the myth that has been created about that program.

The allegations about that program, that it is illegal, are a myth. It is a legal program. The reality is that the President's authority to authorize this program is firmly based in both his constitutional authority as commander-in-chief and in the authorization for the use of military force which passed Congress after 9/11.

The allegations that the NSA program is a domestic eavesdropping program used to spy on innocent Americans are a myth. The reality is that this program is narrowly focused aimed only at international calls and targeted at al Qaeda and related groups. There are safeguards in place to protect the civil liberties of Americans. Allegations that the NSA activities violate the fourth amendment are a myth. The reality is this program is consistent with the Constitution's protections of civil liberties, including fourth amendment protections.

There are people who want you to believe this program is targeting average Americans, but nothing could be further from the truth. We need this program to help protect us and this country and to help protect our men and women who are fighting to keep this country a free country, and we need to do everything that we can that is legal, and I am convinced that the President is doing what is legal to protect us.

I think, again, that we want to call attention to the men and women who are fighting for us and remember them

in our prayers constantly and thank them for the sacrifices that they are making to keep this country free.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from North Carolina, and thank her for reminding us that this is a global war on terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) for some additional thoughts on the global war on terror.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding this time. I will be brief, as we have one more speaker.

Several of our colleagues tonight have talked about the war in Iraq and the global war on terror. I just want to add a little meat to that bone that says when we have a free Iraq, a democratic Iraq that is at peace with its neighbors, is no longer a haven for terrorists, that the war on terror will go on.

I would like to beef up that argument by a brief historical review of some of the things that our enemies have done outside of Iraq over the last several years.

In October 2000, the USS *Cole* was in Aden, Yemen, refueling, when a small rubber boat ran up beside it, set off a charge that blew a 40 foot by 40 foot gash in the side of the USS *Cole*, killed 17 young sailors and injured 39. Without provocation, without warning, these terrorists struck.

In Saudi Arabia, in 2003 and 2004, on May 12, 2003, suicide bombers killed 34 people, including 8 Americans, when they blew up a housing compound that housed westerners.

In May of the following year, 22 people were killed when terrorists attacked a Saudi oil company in Khobar, taking foreign oil operators hostage and leaving 22 dead, including one American.

June 11, the next month, in Riyadh, terrorists kidnapped and executed Paul Johnson, an American in Riyadh. Two other Americans and a BBC cameraman were killed by gun attacks.

Then in December of 2004, in Jeddah, terrorists killed five consulate employees at the U.S. consulate there in Saudi Arabia.

In Madrid, March 11, 2004, just before the elections in Madrid, in an attempt to affect the elections, which as history shows us this bombing did affect it, 13 rucksacks went off at a train station on four commuter trains almost simultaneously at the height of rush hour, killing 191 civilians and injuring over 1,800 people. The Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group has claimed responsibility for this tragic killing; again, an unexpected, unannounced, unprovoked attack on civilians.

Then in July of this year, this past year, July 7, I was actually in Kuwait on my way to Iraq when a suicide bomber struck again, this time in trains in London. Three different underground trains were blown up, killing some 56 people, injuring 700, again in an unprovoked, unannounced sneak attack using suicide bombers.

Finally, on November 9, 2005, in Amman, Jordan, at a wedding ceremony in the three hotels there in Amman, again suicide bombers blew up, killing 57 people and injuring 115 others in an attempt to create terror among those who oppose the violent Islamic Jihadist movement.

I remind my colleagues and others that we are in a global war on terror, no place in this world is safe, and while it is counterintuitive to talk about playing an away game, it is clearly in our best interests that we continue to fight this war in Iraq and around the world so that we don't fight it in the streets of America.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for reminding us this is an elusive enemy. It is not an enemy that is located in one place or an enemy that is stationary. It is an enemy that you will find spread out all across the globe.

As he mentioned, several of the attacks, whether you are talking about the *Cole* or the Saudi bombings or Khobar Towers or the World Trade Center, both of the bombings there, this is a very vicious enemy, and the global war on terror is a war that is being fought around the globe. The activity is centered in Afghanistan, it is centered in Iraq, and it is important that we keep our Nation safe.

Our final speaker this evening is the gentleman from Georgia, Dr. PRICE, who has certainly put a tremendous amount of attention on what it takes to keep this Nation safe and having the tools. Being a physician, he knows the tools of the trade are important, and it is important that our men and women in uniform, our men and women in our intelligence services, our first responders, having the tools they need to fight this war and be successful in this war. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

□ 2200

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased to stand with so many of my colleagues this evening and to talk about an issue that really is one of the central planks of our side of the aisle and the national campaign that we put forward before the American people. I thank you so much for your leadership.

I was going to talk at length about the National Security Agency and the issue that has come before us. I look forward to doing that at some point in the future. But I do just want to share a few comments about what we have heard tonight.

When I was young, I was a member of an organization, a group, that used to sing a song called Freedom Is Not Free, and the words were something like: freedom is not free, freedom is not free, you have got to pay a price, you have got to sacrifice for your liberty.

And I had the privilege of being with the American Legion Post 140 last night, just last night in my district, and met with these men and women. And they went around the room and each of them identified themselves and

their branch of service and the conflict and the war in which they served.

And I was so humbled to be in the company of such heroes. It just brings to the fore the incredible sacrifices that we as Americans have made over the past number of years for our liberty, for our freedom. I am so pleased with the leadership in the House, the Members who stood up this evening and talked about the difficulty that Americans have comprehending this war on terror; and we do, as you well know, because we do not think like terrorists.

We do not understand that mind. We do not understand the mind that would murder innocent individuals. We do not understand the mind that would chop the heads off of innocent individuals. That is just incomprehensible to us. So it does not come easily to us to comprehend the fact that we are in a war.

I was so pleased to hear Congressman CONAWAY talk about Iraq not being the end of this war. There are so many aspects to all of this war. So I am pleased with the leadership in the House, and I am pleased with the leadership of my colleague, the gentlewoman from Tennessee, who is willing to stand up and discuss these issues.

I also understood that this is not a Republican issue, it is not a Democrat issue. It is an American issue; it is an American challenge. And so my hope and prayer over the coming year is that all of the Members of the House of Representatives and all of the members of the Senate will embrace the challenge and the battle truly that we have to work together in this war on terror. I yield back to you, and commend you for your wonderful leadership in this area.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentleman from Georgia. I too remember singing that song: freedom is not free, you have to sacrifice for your liberty. I think that we all have sung that at camps as we were growing up. And how true and how meaningful it is as we talk about the men and women, whether they are working here domestically as first responders, as local law enforcement, as border security guards, protecting this homeland that we have, or whether they are fighting in Iraq, Afghanistan, around the globe. Whether they are deployed and away from their families, we know that they are doing this because they want to be certain that future generations grow up in a world that is free, is safe, is secure.

And we thank them for loving all of us enough to make that sacrifice and be willing to put their lives on the line. And we wish each of them a happy Valentine's Day. We wish their families a happy Valentine's Day, and we hope that they all know that we love them too.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOHMERT). Under the Speaker's an-

nounced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for half the time until midnight.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be here on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives again.

As you know, we have our 30-something Working Group that Leader PELOSI has formed over 3 years ago. And we meet constantly on issues that are facing the American people, and we ask the U.S. House of Representatives to address those issues in many cases. And there is an awful lot, Mr. Speaker, that is going on here in Washington, D.C.

I must say that I am really, really pleased at the innovation workshop we had earlier today that allowed Americans to be able to get a view of what the Democratic side has to offer in the area of innovation. And we are going to talk a little bit about that tonight.

But we are also going to talk about the ongoing costs of corruption and cronyism and incompetence in this institution that has brought about bad policies for the American people and affects the very lives of the American people that we are trying to serve.

As we work to try to better ourselves here in this Congress, we continue to point out the fact that we are not working in a bipartisan way to be able to get the best results for Americans. And we are going to talk about that also, Mr. Speaker.

I think it is important to point out the fact that we want to wish everyone here, not only in the U.S. House of Representatives but throughout our Nation, a happy Valentine's Day. And Mr. DELAHUNT is here, one of our esteemed colleagues. We are so glad tonight, Mr. DELAHUNT, that you can join the 30-something Working Group on this Valentine's night.

I know a nice man like you had to call a couple of folks and wish them happy Valentine's Day, including your family members, and it is a good day.

Mr. DELAHUNT. It was a long process all day, Mr. MEEK. But I just about accounted for everybody that it was appropriate. And a happy Valentine's Day to you and to your family. I had an opportunity to meet your family recently, and they are great folks. They really are.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Well, without family where would we be?

Mr. DELAHUNT. That is right. That is what this is all about.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Do you know what is interesting, Mr. DELAHUNT, is the fact that we have the issues that are floating here in Washington, D.C., and it is just kind of hard to keep up with them. There are so many things that are going on, and so many things that are happening to the American people. It is important that we get our house in order, and this House and the Chamber across the hall, including the executive branch, of getting back to the business of the people of this country.

We have families in the gulf that had visited the Capitol last week, coming with demands for their government: do not forget about us; do not leave us out; do not leave us behind. And reports are being released, but not only a summary report from the partisan House committee that was formed here about some of the mistakes that the administration made and where this Federal Government failed Americans.

Another report that Secretary Chertoff is talking about, he was supposed to come before the Senate today of the Homeland Security Committee, and they canceled the committee meeting because of Senate votes, to get down to the bottom of why we still have not prioritized the emergency management response.

I also think it is important that we point out the fact that the partisan commission here in this House that is charged, Mr. Speaker, with getting to the bottom of what happened and what did not happen in the case of the response and preparedness for Hurricane Katrina fell short of its duty to be able to make sure that we had sound, concrete recommendations to be able to move forward.

We still ask, Mr. Speaker, here on this side of the aisle, for an independent Katrina commission so that we can really get down to the nuts and bolts of what happened in this natural disaster and the disaster that followed that was the Federal Government's response.

I think it is also important that we talk about our fiscal situation, and some of tonight and tomorrow we will talk about what has happened with the reconciliation, budget recommendations that passed through this House and through the Senate, and where we are falling short there and being straight with the American people as it relates to the Republican majority.

Mr. DELAHUNT, I think it is important to point out the fact that so many Americans under this administration and under this White House have found themselves left behind economically and also socially.

The President talked about his health care plan here in this Chamber, a health savings plan that is already not working, and the way it should work and could work for Americans because it is not the right prescription for coverage for families.

To set aside money, to ask Americans to set aside money that they do not have in the first place is an oversight in itself. So many American families are living from paycheck to paycheck. It is not because they were so unfortunate to have a job and a family that they could not afford some of the high prices they are paying for fuel at this time and heating costs and other energy-related costs, but to say that we will allow you to put money aside for a rainy day for when a family member gets sick, that is not insurance.

Right now there is legislation here in this Congress to stop the Veterans' Affairs Committee from going up on insurance rates against veterans. And I want to also, if I can point out a few of those articles today just in the local Washington Post, Mr. DELAHUNT, I think maybe we can talk about some of the things our third-party validators are talking about here in this town.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. MEEK, if I can. I think you made a reference to reports that are now being released, and you indicated that it is a partisan report. I think it is very important to explain that the report from the House committee that reviewed this, the aftermath and the prelude, if you will, to Katrina and what went wrong, was for all intents and purposes a Republican effort.

Two Democrats sat with our Republican colleagues; and in the aftermath of their effort, these two Democrats, both from Louisiana, have recommended that it is essential to create, as we did in the aftermath of September 11, an independent commission that reviews again the prelude, during, and the aftermath of the natural disaster that devastated this country in the form of Hurricane Katrina back on August 29.

Maybe like the 9/11 Commission, we can have an 8/29 Commission that all Americans can have confidence in—in its integrity. But I think, too, that we ought to review really the damning findings of the Republican effort that really, in my judgment, speaks to the incompetence of this administration.

You know, we use the word or the term "culture of corruption" frequently in explaining what is occurring here in Washington. But I think you might agree with me that it is incompetence combined with cronyism that really are the building blocks, if you will, of that culture of corruption that creates a huge cost to the American taxpayers.

I am speaking in terms of billions of dollars and multiple lost opportunities, dashed dreams, and unfortunately this, let me use the term "corruption tax," that even cost lives. And I think we have witnessed this because of what occurred by way of a natural disaster on August 29 and what has occurred in Iraq in the aftermath of our invasion.

And I do not want to delve tonight into the disagreement that I have in terms of the rationale for this administration to invade Iraq.

□ 2215

I do not want to talk about weapons of mass destruction. I do not want to talk about links to al Qaeda. I do not even really want to talk about the failures to bring democracy to far corners of this world according to the Bush doctrine. But I think it is important that we talk about the corruption that is ongoing and reveals itself on a frequent basis by reports coming from independent sources, coming from, actually, the special inspector general for

the reconstruction of Iraq and coming from trials that are now occurring in Federal district court.

But before we get to that I think it is important to review what went wrong with this administration's response for Hurricane Katrina. And again, I think we have to, in a sense of fairness, applaud some of our Republican colleagues who really said it better than you and I can say it, and I am sure they cannot be accused of being partisan since they are Republicans. But I thought what was particularly interesting to me was a quote in my hometown paper or one of my hometown papers, the Boston Globe. It was an observation by TOM DAVIS, who is the respected chair of the Government Affairs Committee.

He made the observation that President Bush is in Texas, Chief of Staff Card is in Maine, and the Vice President is fly fishing wherever. I mean, who is in charge? And I guess that is really the question.

We have had a Department of Homeland Security for several years with the ultimate Federal responsibility to prepare Americans for disasters, whether they are triggered by a terrorist attack or whether they come via a natural disaster; and the performance of this administration can only be described as a disaster, a debacle, if you will.

I thought it was rather ironic that today, as I was watching the news, the Secretary of Homeland Security, Mr. Chertoff, announced he was going to hire 1,500 disaster specialists. I guess my response was, what took so long? What took so long? How long has it been? Since 8/29, since August 29.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I can tell the gentleman what took so long. What took so long is that we have an administration and we have a Congress that did not give the proper oversight.

The Department of Homeland Security asked the questions when they should have been asked. The American people were told, trust us, trust us, trust us. When you talk about the Republican majority and really Homeland Security, FEMA, the White House, and oversight committees were not prepared to do what it was supposed to do and we failed the American people.

Now, let me just say this. The American people have been asked to trust the words of this majority time after time again. Trust us on the fiscal outlook for the country. Trust us on taking down the deficit. Trust us on making sure what they tell you is actually the reality. Trust us on your health care costs and your coverage. Trust us, trust us, trust us.

And almost in the same month the American people, it is revealed to the American people that it was not about them the whole time. It was about special interests having their opportunities and privacy through the executive branches in this Congress.

Now if I can just take a minute just to bring in third-party validators. You

talked about what you read in your hometown paper. I just want to put this picture right here. This is Secretary John Snow from the Department of Treasury. I want to put his picture there so folks know that this is not the Meek or the Delahunt report.

This is a report in a letter from the Secretary of the Department of Treasury to Senator MITCH MCCONNELL, and it says the administration now projects that the statutory debt limit currently at \$8.184 billion will be reached in mid-February of this year. At that time, unless the debt limit is raised or the Department of Treasury takes the authorized authority, extraordinary actions will have to be carried out, we will be unable to continue financing the government operations.

It goes on to say, I am writing you to request that the Congress raise the statutory debt limit as soon as possible or we will not be able to carry out government functions. That is basically what it is saying.

I have blown this letter up here because I think it is important. This letter is signed by the Secretary of the Treasury. Basically what he is saying in this letter is that, unless the debt limit is raised, the Department of Treasury will not be able to continue to finance government operations. Our government operations, not the government operations of a foreign country, not the government operations of the Republican party, not the government operations of the Democratic party, the government operations of these United States of America.

Now give me a couple more minutes. This came from the Secretary of the Treasury, the office right next to the White House, Mr. Speaker, appointed by the President of these United States and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. This is a letter that he wrote on December 29 of 2005, just the end of last year.

Better yet, Mr. Speaker, the American people are being asked, trust us with the money and the decisions. Let us have a treasurer here.

Mr. DELAHUNT is familiar with this chart. The President of the United States, George W. Bush, has borrowed more, and he could not do it by himself, he needed the Republican majority to do it, \$1.05 trillion from foreign countries. Foreign nations like China and Saudi Arabia and all of the countries that we are concerned about, we have borrowed more money in four years since 2001 to the present, to the end of 2005 than 42 Presidents combined, and that is \$1.01 trillion.

Now we had World War II, Mr. Speaker. We have had the Korean War. We have had World War I. We have had Vietnam. We had Gulf I. All of these wars, all of these conflicts, the Great Depression, a number of challenges to our country. This President and this Republican Congress has borrowed more, I cannot say that enough, has borrowed more from foreign nations in the history of our republic. And we can

say that from a standpoint as Democrats to say that we put forth a balanced budget recommendation here and it has actually happened.

I just want to make sure, and I know this is one of Mr. RYAN's charts here, but I am going to go ahead and say this is our debt right here now as you see it as of February 14, as of February 14 which is a special day on the calendar, and we talked about that a little earlier. This is what the American, this is what each American, if a baby was born when we started this special order here tonight, they already owe \$27,526.77 and counting.

So I go back to Secretary Snow's letter. Did the Democrats write this letter? No. The Democrats put forth recommendations of pay as you go. Is the Republican majority embracing that doctrine? No. Is the White House embracing that doctrine? No.

So when we start talking about fiscal responsibility and competence and saying no to corruption and cronyism that has an effect on the American people, this is the result of it.

You have got a letter. That is what the we are about. We are about shedding light on what is happening under this Capitol dome. If you let the majority tell you, oh, well, the Democrats have done this, that and the other. This is the biggest borrow-and-spend Congress in my opinion in the history of the Congress, borrow and spending in the worst way with interest.

Mr. DELAHUNT. If the gentleman would yield for just a moment, today I was at a hearing and the hearing happened to be on China. It was a subcommittee on which I serve as ranking member, and there was a reference made to the Bush doctrine.

Well, I would submit, given that President Bush has accomplished in one term more than all of his predecessors combined in terms of accumulating debt held by foreign nations, some of whom are particularly hostile to the United States, that we should describe the Bush doctrine as one of borrow and spend, not pay as you go, but borrow as you cut taxes. And I made the observation if you connect the dots how are we conferring a massive tax cut, 40 percent of which is reserved for 1 percent of Americans. Who is paying for that particular tax cut? Well, at least a trillion of it is being funded by Japan, China, Britain, the Caribbean, Taiwan.

And listen to this, that tax cut is also being paid for by money borrowed from OPEC, OPEC. That means that we are not just buying our oil from the OPEC cartel, but we are also borrowing money for them to support a tax cut for 1 percent of our affluent citizens. And then Korea, Germany, Canada and others makeup the difference. This is extraordinary.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, it is good to join the gentlemen.

As we are talking about the debt and we are borrowing this money from the Chinese, from the Japanese, from the

Koreans, from the OPEC countries, as we borrow that debt we have got to pay interest on that debt.

So as we are paying interest on that debt, this chart will show us that out of our priorities that we have in this country, the red is what we are paying in billions of dollars in the 2007 budget in interest, compared to education, compared to homeland security, compared to veterans.

□ 2230

So when we are talking about borrowing the money and what we are paying the interest on and what country we are paying the interest to, that interest money, the red, is going back to China. It is going back to Japan. It is going back to Korea.

Mr. DELAHUNT. It is going back to OPEC.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. It is going back to OPEC.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Along with the dollars we are using to buy oil at \$60-plus a barrel to heat our homes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Which is also going back to OPEC. So OPEC is benefiting from the high oil prices, high gasoline prices. They are benefiting from the net interest we have to pay on the money we are borrowing from them at the expense of education, homeland security, and veterans.

Let me just show you this, and let me just say this is a powerful, powerful, powerful group of information here that we need to share, and I have got to tell you something. I love this slide. I love this. I want to be friends with this slide.

Look what we can do. This says what else could the government do with the interest, the red that we just showed, what else could the government do with the interest that the country pays every day on the debt that we have. \$1 million in every congressional district per day. That means in the gentleman from Florida's congressional district, you get \$365 million; the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT), \$365 million for your congressional district; \$365 million for mine. I can tell you, with the health care priorities and education and veterans that live in my district, they would love to have an extra million a year.

With the debt every day, we could provide health care for almost 80,000 more veterans if we balance our budget, if we get our fiscal house in order here. We could improve Social Security solvency by almost half a billion dollars if we could begin to balance the budget.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Are you aware with the President's budget that 263,000 of our veterans will be denied access to veterans health care?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. It goes a little further. They are going to pay higher copayments, too; and what the majority has to understand, Mr. Speaker and what the Senate has to understand and what the President has to understand, this is not going to change. This is business as usual.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. A track record here.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. A track record, a pattern of those who have made youthful indiscretions in their lives, need it be on credit, need it be some sort of criminal activity, you can no longer have access. You used to have the capital, if you do not have a good credit record. Am I right?

Let me just tell you something right now as it relates to the United States. I am looking at Japan. You can put Japan in the State of Florida, and the State of Florida will swallow geographically Japan. But, better yet, look what they are holding of the U.S. apple pie. The bottom line is this is about, Mr. Speaker, the incompetence, cronyism and, in some cases, corruption of these individuals being able to get access into this institution and into the executive branch to be able to get what they want.

I want to drive the point on here. I want to make sure this is crystal clear. It has to be crystal. The bottom line is the only way that we will be able to have a paradigm shift not only in thinking but in policy and action on behalf of the American people and unless the American people like you say, the majority, they do not have to be the majority. The American people can make that change. They can say that we are willing to allow the Democrats to lead so that we can hopefully start taking care of some of these issues that we have to take care of here at home, with our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan and throughout the world so that we can get the respect of not only the world but our country, our own country.

Veterans, they signed up for all the right reasons, allowing us to salute one flag, as we see it now, are being asked to do more financially, meanwhile \$1.5 trillion in tax cuts for the wealthy, while we have individuals, while we are having veterans affairs centers closing in rural America and in urban America. They are closing. Some of them are only open on Wednesday now. But, meanwhile, we have individuals, we have the President every time he gets a chance he is talking about let us make the tax cuts permanent for people who are not even asking for it.

So this is very simple. This speech on what the majority, Republicans, say, well, trust us, we know what we are doing. We showed the letter from Secretary Snow. I think we already know this. We did not write this letter. The guy has said the fifth time, the Secretary is saying we will not be able to operate the government. That is one letter.

Here is the other one here. Forty-two Presidents, this President and Republican majority has borrowed \$1.05 trillion, but, better yet, saying let us make a bad idea permanent, let us drive this number up, let us put a two here instead of a one. It does not make sense. Only the American people can stop this crowd. \$27,526.77, the average

American owes right now. This is not brought to you, Mr. Speaker, by the Democrats. This is brought to you by the Republican majority and this White House.

We have to save this country, and the American people have to save this country, and we have to get the word out to them that all of the rhetoric, all of the big money machine.

And, look, here is another one. This stuff is just here. It is almost too much to share, Mr. Speaker. We do not have enough time to share what the Members and the American people, clients reward keeping K Street lobbyists thriving.

I never blame the special interests for what happens here, but I am going to tell you right now they have a tax shelter right now where \$100 billion in U.S. taxpayer dollars are not going into the coffers because they have an offshore deal with this administration and with this majority. Meanwhile, we are sitting around here trying to figure out how our veterans are going to get health care. Meanwhile, we are trying to figure how small businesses will be able to afford health care for everyday Americans to be able to buy into; and, meanwhile, we have troops still without body armor and the things they need to be able to fight on behalf of this country. So we ask everyday Americans to go out there and suck it up.

Meanwhile, the majority, the Republican majority, based on incompetence, some may say corruption in some cases as it relates to the White House, I mean, every day, I am sorry, every day we turn on the television. What is new? What is going on at the White House? What is being held back from the American people? What is being held back from the Congress? Who came to the Hill today and conflicted a story that they told just months ago about the fiscal outlook on the country?

Meanwhile, you have Members that come up to this well on the majority side and say we are doing fine, I do not know what these Democrats are talking about.

But it goes against logic. We have letters from their very own administration that are saying we have got to raise the debt limit because of our irresponsible policies.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. The fact of the matter is, as you just so eloquently put it and passionately put it, this money that we are borrowing is not going to fund education. It is not going to lower tuition costs. It is not going to fund No Child Left Behind. It is not going to fund the veterans. This money that we are borrowing from the Chinese and Japanese and the Caribbean and OPEC, the oil-producing countries, is going to fund corporate welfare to the oil companies, \$16 billion in corporate subsidies to the energy companies in the last energy bill, and billion upon billion upon billions of dollars that go to the HMOs and the pharmaceutical companies and all these other health care

providers who are getting all their money.

Your tax dollars, Mr. Speaker, are going for corporate welfare; and we do not have enough to give them so we have got to go to the Japanese to borrow them so we can give them to the wealthiest industries in the United States. This is craziness, and we need to stop it.

Mr. DELAHUNT. And the Chinese and OPEC.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. It is the cost of corruption and cronyism. It is the cost. Who pays it?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. It is the cost of the K Street project, and the average person that pays taxes foots the bill.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Can I just get a third party validator in it for you? Just today, NewYorkTimes.com, the Members can go on to it: Huge giveaways were in the works for the oil industry. Not the veterans, not the working Americans, and it spells it all out here. Mr. Speaker, I do not have a conspiracy theory, but it is right here. It is clear.

I do not know. I am so glad that I am not a member of the majority because I do not even know how I could come to the floor and defend this. How can I even shape my mouth to say this is good? But somehow there must be some sort of in front of the mirror in the restroom kind of I can do this, because this is wrong. The sad part about it is that the country is paying the price; and the folks that are wearing the suits, being driven around with tinted windows in cars and sedans and all, do not even know the price of a carton of milk because they have someone else go out and get it. They are getting paid by the U.S. tax dollar. Meanwhile, we are telling veterans, schoolchildren, U.S. cities, to suck it up.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Now, of course, we are presented with a plan that would cut Medicare and cut Medicaid. So if you are a senior in this country, and, of course, we are here representing the generation of 30 somethings, but if you happen to be getting close to that point in your life where you receive a Medicare card, be careful. Do not count on it.

A while back there was a speaker who preceded over this Chamber who said Medicare, let it wither on the vine. Well, I wonder if that particular submission to cut and slash Medicare is the beginning of the withering process. It just is not right. But, as we were saying earlier, a lot of it is just rank incompetence. But when you combine this magnitude of incompetence that we have witnessed surrounding Katrina and surrounding the reconstruction of Iraq, it easily evolves into corruption.

There was an audit done or at least a preliminary audit done by the General Accountability Office which, as Members know is a nonpartisan, independent agency to review government expenditures; and they discovered that the government has squandered mil-

lions of dollars in Katrina disaster aid, including handing 2,000 debit cards to people who gave phony Social Security numbers and used the money for such items as a \$450 tattoo.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Can you repeat that? I missed that.

Mr. DELAHUNT. A \$450 tattoo. Federal money also paid for \$375 a day beachfront condos and almost 11,000 trailers that were stuck in the mud and unusable.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Do you have the number on the trailers, how much that cost? Because I heard it today, and I am sorry to interrupt you, but I think this is a salient point that we need to make.

Mr. DELAHUNT. The GAO auditor, Gregory Kurz, told senators during a hearing that the amount of waste and abuse and fraud could be hundreds of millions of dollars. They just do not know yet.

□ 2245

As he indicated, FEMA may also have brought too many temporary homes, including 11,000 units that currently sit empty in sinking mud in Hope, Arkansas, while they are needed in Louisiana and Mississippi. It is the incompetence of the planning process that was nonexistent. Today, the Secretary of Homeland Security announces, I am going to address that, I am going to hire 1,500 disaster specialists. Good job, Mike, heck of a job.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I heard tonight on CNN earlier this evening that the cost of the 11,000 trailers was upwards of \$300 million. So basically what happened is FEMA is so screwed up, okay, because there are not many other ways to put it. They are so screwed up that they bought 11,000 trailers that they moved to Hope, Arkansas, and put them in a field that is full of mud. They sunk in the mud so they are not even good anymore. They will probably have to get rid of them.

Real estate people in Louisiana said that \$300 million could build 2,500 homes for middle-class people in Louisiana or in the gulf States. It could open up all of the schools in the gulf coast.

So when we come down here and we are talking about the debt, the deficit, and the recklessness and the irresponsible spending, reckless abandon for balancing the budget, that is one issue.

But another issue is look at the waste. My goodness, \$300 million to buy trailers that are now sitting in the mud in Hope, Arkansas, instead of actually housing people?

You mentioned Speaker Gingrich earlier. He was talking, and I read in the paper the other day, he is as critical of the Republican establishment in this House and in the Senate and in the White House as any of us are.

This is not about Democrat and Republican. This is about America functioning as a government in the 21st century with the communication capabilities that we have, with the technology that we have, with the know-

how that we have. To hear afterwards that experts were trying to tell folks in FEMA, and outside of FEMA, what would happen if there was a category 3, 4 or 5 hurricane that came into the gulf States. We knew.

What we are trying to say here is that the Republican majority in the House and the Republican majority in the Senate, in this administration, Republicans in the White House, do not know how to govern.

Now, because the whole philosophy is that all government from top to bottom does not work, it is worthless, it has no value, that is not true. That is just not true. We are saying that government needs to get out where it does not work, and it needs to be efficient and effective where it has responsibility.

Now, FEMA, for example, who else is going to coordinate between the gulf States and emergency response? Who else is going to protect us with Homeland Security, of which you are a committee member, Mr. MEEK? Who else is going to provide for the defense? Who is going to balance the budget? Government has some responsibilities to invest.

All we are saying is do it in a responsible manner. This nonsense is reckless, paying \$225 or \$230 billion in interest on the money you are borrowing from the Chinese Government, Japanese Government and the OPEC countries, and then basically raising tuition and underfunding No Child Left Behind.

In Ohio, No Child Left Behind is underfunded by \$1.5 billion a year. Cutting veterans benefits? Not funding Homeland Security? You know, this is not very visionary on behalf of our brothers and sisters on the other side of the aisle.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. RYAN, in the same breath, the President is talking about we want to embrace innovation. We want to prepare the next generation to lead. We want to make sure that we put our fiscal house in order.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Well, then, this number, my friend, the purple lavender, it is a nice lavender, it needs to be at the level of the red. The education needs to be up here, and the net interest on the debt needs to be down here. Then we will start talking about innovation.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. One other thing that I want to make sure that we add, Members, so that Members will know exactly, because I believe in third-party validators. I also believe in sharing information.

I know, Mr. RYAN, you will give this information out, but I want to make sure that folks understand and the Members understand. Because I know some Members are in their offices saying, I need to know this, Republicans and Democrats. I want to get a copy of this, and you can, www.housedemocrats.gov/30something. You can go on there. All of the charts that we have here tonight will be post-

ed, and the articles that we have will be in the news section so that the Members can get it.

Because I think it is important, Mr. DELAHUNT. It is one thing to do something and not know. It is another thing to do something and know. I will tell you supermajority and Republican leadership know. Okay, maybe some Members may be a little bit confused about what is actually happening, maybe.

It is easy, because there are a lot of things that are going on. But while we are driving up the debt, and the highest that it has ever been, and while that whole interest piece that you have there, Mr. RYAN, Mr. DELAHUNT, that is not to build schools, that is not to put the gulf coast victims into homes, that is not to help our veterans, that is not even to have world-class health care. That is to make tax cuts permanent for millionaires.

Mr. DELAHUNT. And to pay the interest and our debts off to the Chinese, Japanese, the Koreans and OPEC.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Well, can I interject, because I can, this may be going to build schools; but it is going to build schools in China, because they are making money off of us. It is going to build schools in Japan, which of course we want the kids all over the world to be educated and healthy. We were all for that. But you know, not because of the recklessness that the Republican majority has been exercising here.

Mr. DELAHUNT. If I can, just for a moment, just to digress, because we have been talking about Katrina and the fraud and the mismanagement associated with the Katrina spending, I think it is important to remember, too, that about half of the 700 contracts that have already been issued were issued on a no-bid basis, and they were issued to corporations that have obvious political ties. But that is a subject for another night.

But, again, it goes back to just incompetence and lack of planning.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Basic stuff, basic stuff.

Mr. DELAHUNT. And lack of due diligence. But it also exists, tragically, in a far greater magnitude, with American tax dollars that are being used to build schools, roads, hospitals, dams, and levees in Iraq. I mean, I have a major concern about the fraud and the corruption that is going on in Iraq with the use of American taxpayer dollars.

I don't know if either one of you, but I am sure many who might be watching this evening, witnessed the CBS news "60 Minutes" program that aired this past Sunday. It really was remarkable. They highlighted one firm called Custer Battles. Custer Battles was started by an individual with the name Scott Custer, a former Army Ranger, and Mike Battles, an unsuccessful congressional candidate from Rhode Island, who claimed to be active in the Republican Party and have connections at the White House.

They arrived in Baghdad without any money; yet within a year, they had \$100

million in contracts. They have now been charged with fraud and abuse, mismanagement, et cetera. They were supposed to provide some security services for the Baghdad airport. The security director at the airport communicated via e-mail and had this to say: "Custer Battles, this is the company, has shown themselves to be unresponsive, uncooperative, incompetent, deceitful, manipulative and war profiteers. Other than that, they are swell guys."

The number two man at the Coalition Provisional Authority's Ministry of Transportation, the American-run temporary government running the affairs of Iraq immediately after the invasion, had this to say: "It was the Wild West. There were \$100,000 bricks of \$100 bills. The money was a mixture of Iraqi oil revenues, war booty and U.S. Government funds earmarked for the coalition authority." This is a member of the administration.

When asked about Custer Battles' performance, the top Inspector General for the Army in Iraq reviewed it to see if the company was living up to its contract, such as it was. His name is Colonel Richard Ballard. When asked, he said: "The contract looked to me like something that you and I would write over a bottle of vodka. Complete with all the spelling and syntax errors and annexes, to be filled in later. They presented it the next day and they got awarded about a \$15 million contract." They were supposed to provide security for commercial aviation at the Baghdad airport, but the airport never reopened for commercial traffic.

Now, do you think that they canceled or voided the contract? No, they got another contract after that. It was for a bomb-sniffing canine team.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I just want to make a point, and then kick it to my friend, that all of that money that is wasted, KENDRICK, is going to this. Okay? There was \$100 million here, \$100 million there. No oversight. No oversight at all on behalf of this Republican Congress.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. They don't want oversight.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. That is the problem. Article I, section 1 of the Constitution creates the House of Representatives, and our job is to oversee everything, including the administration. So if they are at war, we should be overseeing this. And if there is a bunch of political hacks that are making money off this, then we need to go and bust them. We need to be involved. But this Republican Congress will not oversee what is going on in Iraq, and the hundreds of millions of dollars that Mr. DELAHUNT was just talking about, you are paying for, you are, I am, with interest, because we are borrowing it from the Chinese and the Japanese governments.

Mr. DELAHUNT. And OPEC.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And OPEC. And OPEC. Did I mention OPEC?

But this is an issue that, KENDRICK, we need to oversee what is going on

here and the Republican leadership does not want to provide the proper oversight. It is a waste of taxpayer dollars which goes to the interest on the debt, which we have to borrow from the Chinese and Japanese, which allows them to fund their economy.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. In my last 2 minutes, I am bouncing back to you to give the Web site address out, but I just want to make sure that we have a moment of clarity here. Mr. Speaker, we are not pointing these issues out as though we have not tried to stop these runaway majority borrow-and-spend Republicans here in this House.

□ 2300

For the RECORD, CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, I must add, not the Democratic Congressional Record, but the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Democrats have repeatedly tried to reinstate the pay-as-you-go philosophy. On March 30, 2004, Republicans voted 209 to 209 against Democrats, which killed the motion that was offered by MIKE THOMPSON of California to instruct conferees on recommendations as pay as you go. All right, that is the first example.

The second one, May 25, 2004, Republicans voted 208 to 215. Republicans voted 215 to reject a motion by DENNIS MOORE, another Democrat that voted on the pay-as-you-go principle.

November 18, 2004, Republicans took another vote to block former Member Stenholm's amendment to stop the debt limit from being increased. Time after time after time again. You can go on to our Web site. The Members can get this information. We have tried to stop this Congress. The only way you can stop this Republican Congress from doing what they are doing is make sure that we have more Democrats here in this House.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. www.housedemocrats.gov/30something. All of the posters that we had up tonight you will be able to access on the Web site.

Again, I think that is an important point. Democrats have consistently tried to put fiscal restraints on this runaway spending that the Republicans have been doing over the past few years here, trying to balance the budget here so we can get back on the right track and get back the surpluses. We have got our hands full. Housedemocrats.gov/30something.

Happy Valentine's Day to all the sweethearts out there.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Happy Valentine's Day, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. MEEK. We would like to thank the Democratic leader, Mr. Speaker; and, with that, it was an honor addressing the U.S. House of Representatives.

Members to use proper forms of address. The gentleman, for example, from Massachusetts is properly referred to as the gentleman from Massachusetts or Mr. DELAHUNT. It is not proper under the rules to use first names, and remarks should be directed to the Chair not in the second person.

BALANCED BUDGET PROPOSAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for the time remaining before midnight.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, as was stated earlier, I do consider it an honor and a privilege to come to the floor of this House to address you, Mr. Speaker, and to carry this message across the waves to the American people.

I would first take up the issue of a balanced budget, and I would submit that we can balance this budget, Mr. Speaker, and we do not need to do so by raising taxes. We need to do so by fiscal responsibility.

I raised an issue today, I testified before the Budget Committee here in the House of Representatives, and I laid out a scenario by which we can balance this budget for this year. And I also acknowledge that it is quite painful. It is not realistic from a political perspective, but I think it is important that the Budget Committee produce a balanced budget so that we can measure the pain to so many of the programs that would have to be cut.

But a simple version, and it is a quick version, it is not the thing that I would propose as a balanced budget, Mr. Speaker, but it is one the ways that we can easily understand the magnitude of the budget situation we have.

First of all, if you would reinstate the Bush tax cuts and calculate those back into the revenue side, it almost does not show at all on the bottom line as to whether we are running a deficit or a surplus in our spending; and I have a calculator in my computer that allows me to do that. It almost does not show on the graph when you calculate that.

But if you look what the Bush tax cuts have done, they have grown this economy and they have grown this economy at 3 percent or better growth each quarter for at least the last 10 consecutive quarters, and that is a growth rate that has been met or exceeded since the early Reagan years. And I would point out, Mr. Speaker, those early Reagan years were the years when we had high interest and high inflation. So this is a real growth in a very low inflation environment with a low unemployment environment with unemployment rates below 5 percent.

It is a very, very good economic time, Mr. Speaker; and it is as good a time as one could ask for. It is the best economic run that we have had in a long, long time. It eclipses any eco-

nomical run in the last 2 decades, and it also is a controlled growth. It is a growth that has not gotten out of hand, Mr. Speaker. It is a growth that grows from 3 to 4.7 percent quarter after quarter, with an inflation rate that is 2 percent or less and unemployment rates that are in the 5 percent and less range. That is where we want, not too hot and not too cold, a nice steady accountable growth.

And I would point out this that growth that we have in our economy is growing in spite of the fact that 3.5 percent, perhaps, of our GDP is going off the top to the litigation that goes on in this country. We have to overcome that and still grow at a rate of about 3 to 3.5 percent to match a targeted growth rate that will deal with population growth and to deal with inflation and help us develop our infrastructure in this country to accommodate the future as our infrastructure depreciates. That is what it is going to take to grow.

And what it is going to take to balance the budget, should we have the will to do that, would be to go into the nondefense discretionary spending. Recognizing that we have three large entitlements in our budget, and those are the spending that just goes on year after year that is growing at a rate of about 6.2 percent a year and that is aggregate, and that is Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. Those three entitlements are essentially, unless we change some of the parameters, Mr. Speaker, are the right now the untouchable budget items; and eventually this Congress will have to look at them. But those three entitlements will grow at about 6.2 percent of their aggregate. The interest rate will grow perhaps even faster than that in the outyears.

You add all those things up, and if you recognize that to make changes in that for this year is very difficult to do and also recognizing that we have defense spending that is critical to our national security and we need to take that off the table from a cut perspective and what is left is the nondefense discretionary spending. That is the items of all, everything else that we spend that I have not identified as being an entitlement of Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid defense spending, that nondefense discretionary spending. We will call that other.

To balance the budget Mr. Speaker, we would need to simply cut the nondefense discretionary spending by 5 percent, a real 5 percent cut, and that would be \$0.95 on the dollar. That would be asking Americans to get along with \$0.95 out of every dollar that they have right now, today, not grow in relation to inflation and not grow with any kind of a COLA.

Now, if I were looking at this from a business perspective, I would advocate that we just simply balance our budget in that fashion, Mr. Speaker. But I am also aware that the votes on the floor of this Congress will not accommodate

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOHMERT.) The Chair must remind

for that. So I will be seeking to put together a budget that looks at some of the other components and gets us to the point where we can reasonably, practically and, in fact, part of the equation here is politically balance this budget. It cannot and should not be done by simply raising taxes. By doing so it would stifle growth, and it would get a reverse effect beyond in the opposite direction that my colleagues who just got finished speaking would say.

I am just going to go backwards, Mr. Speaker, through some of the remarks that I heard made over this past hour and address some of them. I certainly cannot address them all, Mr. Speaker.

But the argument that all of the money that was spent, all, this is a quote, all that money is wasted, meaning the money that was spent for reconstruction in Iraq, all wasted? With no oversight, no oversight, Mr. Speaker? I take exception to a statement such as that.

I went over to Iraq with three of my colleagues last August and returned here about August 20 with the very mission in mind to take a look at where the \$18.5 billion that we allocated out of this Congress had been spent, where the practices were, where the projects were, how the money was being spent and what was the return on that investment. And Mr. Speaker, I brought a chart along with me, coincidentally, not knowing that would be the subject matter that was brought up here on the other side of the aisle this evening, a chart that illustrates where these project dollars have gone.

I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that these red dots on this map of Iraq represent 2,200, more than 2,200 completed projects in Iraq. And these projects will be road projects, they will be sewer projects, water, drinking water, potable water projects. They will also be some bridge projects and some pipeline work for the oil pipe lines that are there. You will see along on this border with Iran, the red dots along there, many of those are border defense stations. And what you will not see are the 250 planned border defense stations that are under construction or in planning around these other borders that we have. There is another 1,100 projects that are either in planning or under construction that do not show up yet on this chart, Mr. Speaker. I will have a chart that reflects the projects that are planned, the projects that are started.

Then this one reflects just the projects that are completed, over 2,200; and I visited a number of these. Of course, it would not be possible to visit them in their entirety, but I stopped up here in this region around Kirkuk and there went to the mother of all generators. I forget just how many kilowatts that generator does put out, but I remember what it weighed, 750,000 pounds, brought in on two large loads, and then the other loads would be the rest of the generating plant across about 10.7 kilometers.

Excuse me. It was more than that. It was a long stretch at least across the northern part of Iraq with that kind of a long trail of a convoy to deliver the generator and the turbine that drives that generator down to this location just south of Kirkuk.

□ 2310

And that being one of two huge generation plants that are now in a position where they are up and running in Iraq, this one is fed by a natural gas pipeline. Some of them are using different types of fuel; but up in this area around Kirkuk, there is so much oil that it actually seeps to the top of the ground in some places.

Where I come from, the area, we call it the prairie pothole region where we have these potholes of water that are collected because of the dips that are cut out in the prairie from the last glacier, well, the water that collects there reminds me of the oil; and certainly the oil is in smaller quantities that collects in the depressions within the desert up there around Kirkuk.

And that is not the largest oil location up around Kirkuk; but down here in the southern part, in the Basra region, there is far more oil. And I look at the system of collection, the well system, the collection system, the refinery system, distribution system. All of it is old, tired, dilapidated, has not been reconstructed or modernized in at least 35 years; and yet the oil production out of Iraq is greater than it was, Mr. Speaker.

We keep hearing, no, they are not producing as much oil now as they were then. Not true. The royalties that Iraq was receiving prior to the war were \$5 billion a year. The royalties that are coming from the oil that is pumping today are \$26 billion a year. That does not necessarily reflect that they are pumping five times as much oil, but it reflects that they are selling perhaps more oil than they did then and pumping more oil than they did.

The electricity that is being generated in Iraq is a number that is close to twice as much electricity at their peak days as it was on a standard day in Iraq at the beginning of the liberation back in March of 2003, Mr. Speaker. And as I measure project after project, benefit after benefit, it cannot be said that, and I will quote again, "all that money is wasted." How could all that money be wasted when we have 2,200 completed projects, 3,300 projects altogether, people that have potable water that never had it before, people that have flush toilets that did not flush before, they did not have water to flush in them?

Looking at the infrastructure that is there in places in Baghdad where they had the sanitary sewer, and I would point out for the lay person listening, Mr. Speaker, that a sanitary sewer is not really all that sanitary. That is what you run your sewage through. And yet that sewer was an easy place for some people to pull a waterline

through in those days before the liberation of Baghdad. So their drinking water in many areas was delivered through a black piece of plastic pipe that was pulled through the sewer itself, and they would pull it through, and then the distribution runs out to the locations where it was being used. And that is all fine as long as you keep your waterline in condition, and it does not ever get a leak in it, and you do not ever let the pressure go down.

But both of those things invariably happen; and when that happens, the pressure goes down in your drinking waterline, and the sewage then is drawn into that drinking waterline, and it then pollutes the drinking water. That has happened in a number of areas in Baghdad. We are reconstructing that. We are providing them with clean new sanitary sewer systems and sewer plants to be able to handle their systems in a modern fashion and an environmentally friendly fashion. So the Iraqi people that were living without services now have services.

I will say that the electrical service that was up to 10, 11, perhaps even 12 hours a day in Baghdad at the beginning of the liberation is down to less than that now, perhaps even as low as 4 to 6 hours a day. But the rest of Iraq was getting 2 to 4 hours a day, and now they are up to 10, 11, 12 hours of electricity a day. The next wave is to increase the generation capacity and the distribution so that Baghdad can get back up again to a level that they were before.

But overall there is more electricity being provided into Iraq today than there ever was. The demand is perhaps twice as great as it was, Mr. Speaker, because you know what happens when people get electricity. They figure out a way that they can put another appliance to work and plug it into a wall and use it. Like air conditioners that did not exist in any significant numbers, now they are there in significant numbers, tapped into that electricity.

We also know that satellite televisions were against the law in March of 2003, and today Iraq is replete with satellite dishes on rooftop after rooftop. In fact, I did a survey from the air by helicopter over the top of a region up in Kirkuk where many homes were built in about the same style, and I had done so over the rooftops of Mosul in the fall of 2003; and there my survey showed that about two-thirds of the homes then already had satellite TVs, and now I am seeing that in some of the neighborhoods in Kirkuk there actually are more satellite dishes than there are roofs.

So you will see sometimes two or even three satellite dishes on a single roof that look like they are single-family dwellings from the air. Everyone in Iraq has access to satellite TV, which means access to the outside world. There is access to Internet, cell phones. Those things have grown dramatically. Landline telephones have grown dramatically. The number of newspapers

are up to over 175 newspapers in Iraq. Television stations up and running, communication is flowing, free enterprise is robust in the streets of Baghdad. People that are running shops out there, making furniture out alongside the streets, set it out on the side of the street and sell it.

And, yes, Mr. Speaker, a bomb goes off once in a while, and it is sad and it is tragic. But the people of Iraq clean things up and they grieve and they go back to work, Mr. Speaker, because they are optimistic about the future of Iraq. They are more optimistic about the future of Iraq than the surveys show people are in the United States of America. What went wrong here where people that we say do not have hope have more hope than those of us folks that have the great blessing of living in the United States of America with all of this hope that we take for granted and cannot apparently appreciate?

So the effort that has been put forth there, Mr. Speaker, it is not all that money that is being wasted, not by a long shot, Mr. Speaker: 3,300 projects, all of them worthy and worthwhile. And, no, they were not all cheap. There was money that was spent for security, and there were some projects that were sabotaged that had to be reconstructed again.

There is a project over here on the Tigris River south of Kirkuk where there were nine pipelines that went across the Tigris River, and those pipelines were cut in the liberation operations with the U.S. Air Force. And we went back to patch those pipelines together, did so. They were sabotaged again. They were put across the river on a bridge, and so we undertook the effort to put them all underneath the bottom of the Tigris River. They are backfilling that now, Mr. Speaker, and it is nearly completed; and those lines will be opened up and running by, I believe the target date is February 28.

So another big day to turn those valves on and get that oil flowing south into parts where it can be converted back to cash and be able to help the funding in the great country of Iraq, this emerging free Arab country that has now at least brought forth the name of a prime minister, and I do not think formally has elected him yet. But on that day that that happens and they seek this duly elected parliament, Iraq becomes the most representative Arab nation in the world.

When they sit down at the United Nations and their representative speaks on behalf of the Iraqi people, it will truly be a voice of the Iraqi people, quite unlike the voice of much of the rest of the Arab world where the voice that speaks for the countries that represent those parts of the Arab world in the United Nations often is the voice of a tyrant that would cut the tongues out of its own citizens if they spoke up in criticism of the regime that is there in many of those countries.

But this country can become the lodestar of a free Arab people, an inspi-

ration to the rest of the Arab world, an inspiration that can cause the rest of them to see what Iraq is stepping into, what they are earning along with the coalition forces' efforts and sacrifice to be able to be that inspiration for the rest of the Arab world. And if that day comes, and I pray it comes, Mr. Speaker, we may well see freedom echo across the Arab world in the same fashion that it echoed across Eastern Europe when the Wall went down in Berlin November 9, 1989, on that glorious day that symbolized the end of the Cold War, a victory for the United States and the forces of freedom.

And the forces of freedom could not be stopped, Mr. Speaker. Almost bloodlessly they echoed across Eastern Europe, and we saw country after country be liberated.

□ 2320

Since that time, we have noticed that those who knew freedom the least hungered for it the most. The people on the east side of the wall stepped up to help all of our efforts, our coalition forces in Iraq, in greater numbers than the people on the west side of the wall.

The people on the west side of the wall had the privilege of living with freedom since the end of World War II. The people on the east side of the wall remember the days they weren't free. They remember the day of November 9, 1989, when they had that opportunity to grasp their own freedom, and within a couple of years that freedom did echo across Eastern Europe, and it needs to echo across the Arab world.

So, Mr. Speaker, I submit that there is a vision and mission in this overall War on Terror, and we need to do a far better job of articulating why we are in this war. I would point out that the loss of Americans on September 11 was right at 3,000 Americans. That is more Americans lost there than was lost December 7, 1941, in that day that would live in infamy.

We cannot forget September 11. We cannot forget that we were attacked without cause. We didn't provoke anyone who attacked us. They attacked us because they hate our way of life. They attacked the very center of western civilization.

And no amount of negotiation, understanding, no amount of sitting around and talking, is ever going to resolve this disagreement. These people want us dead. They have demonstrated that, and we saw the celebrations in the streets in other parts of the world as the Twin Towers fell. That should tell us that they will give us no quarter.

If anyone doubts that, take a look at Israel. Take a look and see the circumstances there when the Israelis thought they could trade land for peace, and yet they are still attacked. Hamas won the election there. That means the terrorists, the people who are sworn to annihilate the land of Israel, are running the government of the region that may or may not be a nation called Palestine.

That is a chilling concept, but it also should tell us that there is no negotiated settlement, we must defend ourselves. The Israelis have had to guard every theater, every bus stop, every hospital, every school, every synagogue, and still the infiltrators come in and detonate their bombs and blow their women and children to pieces.

That happens out of a deep hatred that we don't understand in this country, and I don't claim to understand it. But I know that hatred is directed at us. We saw it September 11. We saw it on 18 to 20 other attacks, including the USS *Cole*. We saw it in the U.S. embassy bombings in Africa. We have seen the first attack also on the Twin Towers, in other efforts shut off by good intelligence work in this country.

We cannot rest. Our choices though are guard every theater, every bus stop, every school, every hospital, every church, every synagogue and pull back into the shores of the United States and somehow think that we can protect every center in this country, and we won't be able to, and we will see the attacks come, and we will see our women and children and our men blown into pieces.

Or we can take this battle to them, we can fight this war where they are. But going out just to kill the enemy, Mr. Speaker isn't enough. It is not a solution. It is something that has to be done in certain areas of the world and under those circumstances where there are training camps and active leaders that are plotting and planning to attack and kill Americans, that must be done, Mr. Speaker.

But to go out and think that we could kill all of our enemies is the equivalent of realizing that we had a lot of flies on our porch and in our kitchen and then go out to the barn with the fly swatter and think we are going to take care of all those flies in the barn with the fly swatter. No. You can swat flies in the barn all day every day, and you will never accomplish the task. You have got to change the habitat that breeds that many flies. You have to clean the barn, Mr. Speaker, and you need to leave an environment in there that doesn't breed those flies, and then they will leave you alone on the porch and in your kitchen as well.

So I submit that the plan of the United States and the mission that has been laid out by our Commander-in-Chief President Bush is to create a new habitat, to promote a new habitat in the region. This is a habitat called freedom. We happen to know that where there is freedom, there isn't a habitat that breeds terrorists. We have never gone to war against another free people. It has never happened in the history of this country, and I don't think it has actually happened in the history of the world.

So to the extent that freedom can be promoted and we give people that opportunity to reach out and grasp and earn their own freedom, is also the extent to which we can be safer as a people, western civilization can be safer,

and the people in that part of the world can learn some tolerance for Christianity, for Judaism, for capitalism, for free enterprise, for this whole idea of western civilization that they seem to take such exception to. There are good people in that part of the world, Mr. Speaker, and those good people need to be empowered and we need to be supportive of them.

The allegations that were made here on the other side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, about corruption in Iraq with millions of U.S. dollars, we don't know that. And I won't tell you that you can go into an environment with a \$18.5 billion mission and spend every dollar that would be competitive with a project in the United States, because I know that some of that money had to go for security, and some of that money had to go for a high price to get the work done, because who would go into that environment and do that work? But, Mr. Speaker, that work was necessary. And to the extent that anyone has defrauded this government, yes, we need to search that out. We need to have oversight.

But Democrats in this Congress, Mr. Speaker, are not absolved from that responsibility. I did not hear a single solution come out here on the other side of the aisle, not one. All I saw was complaints, lamentations, objections, because all things that go wrong are all Republican responsibility according to the other side of the aisle, and, of course, if they were just in power, then everything would be all fine.

But we don't know what they would do, because they haven't proposed a solution, not a single specific solution. They are absolutely without an agenda. But they have enough energy, they have enough air velocity in their lungs to every night come down here and beat up on the people that are out here trying to move America ahead.

One statement was said that I will agree with, made by the gentleman from Florida. He said, "I am so glad that I am not a member of the majority." Well, to the gentleman from Florida, I want to say I am so glad you are not a member of the majority as well, and so are the majority of the American people who have seen to it that there is majority in charge in this Congress.

We do have our work to do, Mr. Speaker. I won't shirk that responsibility. I step up to it gladly. But we need to have our eyes wide open. We need to promote a responsible budget, and I will be promoting a balanced budget and a path we can get to a balanced budget in a way that we can get the votes in this Congress to get it done. If we do that, we can ensure financial security for our children and our grandchildren. But that financial security that can come with fiscal responsibility here in this Congress and a solid pro-growth tax policy isn't security if we have to be continually under attack from an enemy that the other side of the aisle would not have the will to challenge.

This President, our Commander-in-Chief, Mr. Speaker, has had the will to challenge. He has had the will to lay out the vision and he has had the commitment to stand in the face of a tremendous amount of criticism.

It has been a disappointment to me, Mr. Speaker, to hear that criticism. When I go to the hospitals and visit our wounded soldiers, when I visit our soldiers in the field in Iraq and over in the Middle East, when I stop at Landstuhl at the hospital there and land at Ramstein and go over to Landstuhl, Germany, to visit wounded in the hospital there, where I have been three times; when I go to Bethesda Naval Hospital to visit the wounded, generally the wounded Marines and the corpsmen that are there; when I go to Walter Reed to visit the wounded soldiers that are there, and I listen to them talk to me, Mr. Speaker, and there has been a certain Member of Congress from Pennsylvania that has gotten a lot of press relating to the public criticism that he claims comes from wounded soldiers, I have never heard a word of that kind of criticism from a single soldier that I visited, and I do not let a quarter go by without being to one of those hospitals to visit our wounded, and I will always go in a visit. As long as there are soldiers that need to be visited, I will visit them.

I have never heard one soldier tell me that he regretted volunteering for the United States militarily or that he regretted serving or he didn't believe in this mission or in this cause. Not one.

I had dinner a couple of weeks ago with a nurse who spent a year-and-a-half at Landstuhl and dealt with hundreds of wounded that came through. Most all of the wounded come through from Iraq into Landstuhl in Germany and then come to the United States.

I asked her if she had heard any of that sentiment about wounded soldiers regretting serving their country or not believing in this mission. And her answer was, no, she had never heard a single soldier utter such a thing. In fact, she said, almost all of them feel guilty that they were wounded and they can't be back with their troops. They want to take that responsibility of going back with their troops into the theater, back to Iraq, to finish their tour of duty. That is the kind of patriotism and dedication that comes with our military. And these are people that some of them have been burned badly, some of them have very severe wounds, some of them are amputees.

I have had more than one amputee tell me, "I am going to make the military my career. I am going to get this prosthetic, get my leg up and going, I am going to take the therapy, and I am going to make a career out of the military. I have come this far."

I had one tell me, "This wound where I lost my leg isn't going to change my life in any way except I am going to start a family now." That level of vision, that level of commitment, Mr. Speaker, is what we have out there.

Perhaps the best quality people that have ever gone to war for a country are the people that are out there defending our freedom today, and we owe them everything we have, all the support we have, all the best training, all the best equipment. But we owe them a voice of support here on the floor of the United States Congress, Mr. Speaker.

□ 2330

We owe them that voice in our national media. We owe them that voice in our schools, in our town squares, in our town halls, in our coffee shops, in our churches. Everywhere across this land we owe them a voice of support.

And I would point out that Clausewitz, the great writer, his philosophy on war, and I believe that was his work, "On War," stated that the object of war was to destroy the enemy's ability and will to wage war. Destroy their ability and their will.

But we are at war, Mr. Speaker. And our troops are over there in harm's way. And they are actively destroying the enemy's ability to wage war. And as they lose their ability, it destroys their will.

But what, Mr. Speaker, puts the energy back in our enemy? What gives them back their will as their will is destroyed on the battlefield in Iraq, that is being destroyed because their ability is being taken away from them? Their will is being replaced by the voices of some of the people that are quasi-leaders of the United States of America that make such statements as, and I will quote Howard Dean, the chairman of the DCCC, he said the idea that we are going to win in Iraq is just plain wrong. Well, how wrong can that be? How wrong can that be to encourage the enemy, discourage our military, to make that statement over and over again? And that voice comes out of people from the other side of the aisle day after day after day, a constant drum beat of despair.

It has been a constant drum beat of despair over here for the previous hour before I came to the floor, and it will be a constant drum beat of despair every single night that they have an opportunity to have this platform here on the floor of the United States Congress, Mr. Speaker. A constant drum beat of despair that encourages our enemy, discourages our own troops, and works to be counterproductive.

Clausewitz said the object of war is to destroy the enemy's ability and will to wage war. Well, the key to this, they are both tied together. Ability and will are tied together. If you have a lot of ability, you also have enough confidence to have the will.

As your ability diminishes, if you lose your munitions and if your troops are being destroyed, you do not have so many tools to work with anymore so you begin to lose your will; you lose your self-confidence.

But I would submit that it is even simpler than Clausewitz said. It is this simple, Mr. Speaker: war is never over

until the losing side realizes that they have lost. It is that simple. When the enemy understands that they have lost, that is when they will give up, not before. They have to realize that they have lost. That requires us to destroy their ability and their will to wage war.

But if their will is weak, and if their will is utterly weak, it does not matter how much ability they have, it does not matter how many tanks they have, how many IEDs they have, how many guns, how many soldiers. If they do not have the will to use them, the war is over.

So if we can win a war simply by sending a letter to the enemy that says, why do you not quit now, because we will not, and we have the ability and we have the will, so you need to have the understanding that it will not pay for you to fight, at that point the war could be over. If we convinced the enemy that they could not win, they would lose their will to fight.

Well, part of that will to fight comes from the voices here on this side of the Atlantic Ocean. And I point out, Mr. Speaker, that on an evening, as I was in the hotel in Kuwait, I was watching al Jazeera TV. On that television show came Muqtada al Sadr. I think we know who he is: Bushy beard, rotten teeth, leader of a militia that has been attacking Americans. He is a Shiaa rather than a Sunni.

And he was saying into the al Jazeera camera, if we keep attacking Americans, they will leave Iraq the same way they left Vietnam, the same way they left Lebanon, the same way they left Mogadishu. That should tell us what is going on in the minds of the enemy. They have been encouraged by the incidents of Vietnam, by pulling our troops out of Lebanon, about pulling out of Mogadishu. They think that Americans will pull out.

So the voice of the people here on the floor of this Congress, Mr. Speaker, echoes through al Jazeera, and in seconds it goes through the satellite dishes that are on the tops of nearly every one of those houses in Iraq, and down into the insurgent's homes, and they will hear the English voices, probably will not understand it, and it will come out in Arabic subtitles, and it will say wrong war, wrong place, wrong time. The idea that we are going to win in Iraq is just plain wrong.

Those kinds of quotes that we know from the other side have encouraged our enemy over and over again, and our enemy makes more and more bombs, extends this conflict longer and longer, and it costs American lives. That is the bottom line.

Our job is to convince them that they cannot win, destroy their will. And when they understand that they have lost, that is when they will quit, not before, Mr. Speaker. So it is imperative that we stick together on this. We had a debate in this Congress. It was a significant majority that endorsed the President's authority.

We are there. We are committed. And we cannot pull out. And we are winning. And the statistics are good. You know, we do not wage war by body count anymore, so we do not ever hear the casualty rates that are actually being inflicted on the enemy in Iraq. The numbers that I am about to give are numbers that are several months old. I have not been briefed on those numbers since prior to Christmas sometime.

But I will tell you that the Iraqis themselves on a monthly average for about a 3-month average were losing about 200 of their uniformed soldiers that were killed and most of them killed in action every month, Mr. Speaker, about 200. They were losing about 400 civilians every month.

The enemy was losing, between those killed and captured, taken out of the battlefield, about 3,000 a month. I also point out that the overall casualties of those killed, those numbers that were up there that added up to a number of more than 650 a month on our side, our coalition side with Iraqi civilian, coalition troops and Iraqi troops, that number that was around 650 a month then, now has diminished dramatically, and those casualties are down to around 50 a month.

So big progress is being made. The sad part is statistically that is not showing up in American casualties; they are still suffering a greater proportion of these casualties. Progress is being made, though, Mr. Speaker; and there is great light at the end of this tunnel.

It has almost moved out into the dawn. It has always been a three-component operation going on in Iraq. And the first component has always been the military component, liberation, provide first regime change. Get Saddam out of power, and then provide security in the country.

And that has been an ongoing battle. It has been difficult. I do not think anybody predicted how difficult it would be. But the American soldiers and marines have persevered. And now the second phase of this, and think of them really as intertwined efforts, but the military security effort first.

The second effort that needed to come along behind that and partially intertwined with it is the political solution. If we just have a military security solution and a political solution, that does not get Iraq where they need to go. They need to have an economic solution as well.

So the phases of this, we are nearing the end of the phase of the security military solution, where more than 237,000 Iraqis are now in uniform defending Iraqis, where more than 30 bases have been handed over to the Iraqis to man and maintain and take care of and operate out of.

Those things are happening. That transition is taking place. It is all consistent with a plan that has been in place for more than a year. And so the military solution is coming along. Re-

member, within a 12-month period of time, Iraq had three elections. They pulled off three elections.

They elected an interim parliament, they brought forth a Constitution and ratified the constitution and under that constitution they elected seats for a new parliament, and just now promoted the nomination for a new prime minister. That is a great long stride into the political solution, coming right intertwined with and intermixed with, but on the heels of the security solution that comes from the military side.

And now I hope that the Iraqi people, once they have the formal election, they elect a prime minister, I hope they sit down and go to work. I hope one of the first items on their agenda is the item that says look at this country that we have. Look at all of this oil up here around Kirkuk. We have got all of this oil down here around Basra. We have got all of these resources that have been producing \$26 billion in royalty revenues in oil from this dilapidated structure that we have. We need to find a way to inject foreign capital in here and punch new wells down into the desert and bring that oil to the top of the ground and run it through refineries and down pipelines and out into the gulf and onto tankers that are sitting down here off the gulf in that area, Mr. Speaker.

□ 2340

They need to realize that that is their economic solution. So I would submit the plan that I would submit would be to have a competitive bidding process. Bring in the large oil companies in the world. Give them a chance to come in and bid and have them pay royalties for the oil that they would take out of the ground. And if they need cash up front to continue their reconstruction effort, and they do, I would ask that those bids come with upfront money so they would be adequate, that Iraq could continue their reconstruction efforts and still open up the oil fields and get this cash coming.

This \$26 billion a year, I will not say it is a drop in the bucket, that is a lot of money, Mr. Speaker, but it can be a lot more money, and it needs to be a lot more money.

As this situation unfolds and the Iraqis provide for more and more of their own security and the political solution comes into place where it is on the cusp of having a ratified parliament seated with a prime minister, a voice in the world that is credible and a voice in the world for a sovereign Iraq that really represents the people in Iraq, will be controlling their own destiny, and an oil revenue that gives them a measure of financial independence and can actually make them a very wealthy country, then you will see some of these other things happening.

For example, about the only thing being exported from Iraq right now are dates, and the date exports have been

cut perhaps in half as to what they were prior to the liberation of Iraq. That can come back. A number of other industries can come back and a dynamic free enterprise, the economy that you see that all over the streets in Baghdad and around the country can be rejuvenated.

I want to also point out an interesting experience, and that is they asked if I would give a speech to the Baghdad Chamber of Commerce. Of course, I always say yes if anyone gives me any speech time, Mr. Speaker, so I said I would if we could fit it in the schedule. I believe it was at three o'clock on a Thursday afternoon. So we came rolling into Baghdad, and we hustled into the Al Rasheed Hotel. They were starting to introduce me, and I was not ready because I had not identified the interpreter. I said, Just a minute. Before you introduce me, I would like to know who the interpreter is so I can speak to the interpreter and I will know how to interact with him. And they said, You will not need an interpreter. I said, Well, I do not speak a word of Arabic. They said, You will not need to. These people, there are about 56 or 57 members of the Baghdad Chamber of Commerce, you will not need to have an interpreter and you will not need to speak Arabic because this group of people speaks English. And I thought, This is sweet.

I spoke English to them for 30 minutes or so. They reacted. They smiled at the right times, frowned at the right times, clapped occasionally. They got up and asked questions. It was like being at home in Iowa.

I thought, if they can pull off this English here in Baghdad, we ought to be able to handle this in most of the places in the United States of America. They have got a great start on their economy there, and it has been a very rough time for them, but we are committed, and we will stay there.

Mr. Speaker, to the people from Iraq who will one day look up this CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of perhaps tonight or tomorrow, they need to know that there is a broad, solid core of support in this Congress. We took a vote on whether to stay with them or whether to pull out, and this Congress voted 403 to 3 to stick with you in Iraq. We will be there, Mr. Speaker, and we will be there until this is done. And they are picking up this on their own.

I want to say a few words then about the necessity. While they are providing more energy coming out of Iraq, how come it is so important for us here in the United States to have a better energy policy than we have? We passed a couple of energy bills last year, neither of which was I satisfied with, and I voted for them both because they move us down the road a little ways. They did not get enough done. I want to see more done, Mr. Speaker.

We sit here with a shortage of energy in this country, and Hurricane Katrina certainly illustrated that. The shortage of energy that was shut off when

Katrina hit in the Gulf drove gas prices up over \$3 a gallon. In some places, gas was not even available. In places like Pennsylvania I think diesel fuel was not available, and there were trucks parked there, and I believe there were also trucks parked in places in Georgia. But it shut down this fuel down, and prices went up, and we understood how vulnerable we were to losing that supply of fuel that comes up from the Gulf Coast and Louisiana area.

It is not just that. It is the fact that we have not produced energy to keep up with the increase in our consumption. So we import more and more foreign oil. The last number that I saw that I had confidence in was 61 percent of our oil comes from overseas. I see that number published sometimes significantly higher than that, and sometimes it is predictions. Sometimes they say it is a real number.

Regardless, Mr. Speaker, we need to be less dependent on foreign oil; and I am certainly more concerned about the oil that we purchase from countries who have leaders who take positions that are just contrary to that of the United States.

Hugo Chavez down in Venezuela has often given public statements that have been very, very critical to the United States. He leans towards Marxism. He is agitating for those kind of governments in South America. There have been elections in South America that leaned a number of countries in that direction. Hugo Chavez has allied with Castro.

The direction that has taken place in the Western Hemisphere because of the politics of the people that we are enriching by purchasing natural gas and oil from them causes me to ask, why are we enriching the people who would position themselves to be our enemies? Why are we losing the fertilizer industry in the United States? The cost of nitrogen fertilizer, 90 percent of that cost is the cost of natural gas that it is produced from. We have watched those fertilizer prices go up 4 and 500 percent in the last few years. We have watched natural gas prices go from \$2 to \$15. They dropped back down some in the last several years as well but peaked out at \$15 here within the last couple of months.

We cannot produce fertilizer with natural gas prices like that. Farmers cannot afford to buy the fertilizer. So what is happening is our fertilizer industry is going offshore, and it is a real industry that is being built down in Trinidad Tobago. Also the fertilizer industry coming from Venezuela and Russia, Russia where their natural gas is 95 cents, ours was \$15. You can see that we cannot compete with that. One day we will see a fertilizer cartel in the hands of the people that are positioning themselves not to be our friends, Mr. Speaker.

It is important that we have that kind of independence for our food supply. It is important that we have independence for our energy supply. It is

important that we develop the natural gas reserves that we have in this country, 38 trillion cubic feet of natural gas on the north slope of Alaska, sitting there, waiting to be run down to the lower 48 States in a pipeline. A few political glitches in the way from building that pipeline, Mr. Speaker. I think that should have been done a long time ago.

I am not as concerned about that any longer as I am about our ability to drill on the Outer Continental Shelf like they do offshore in Texas, like they do offshore in Louisiana, like they do not offshore going around Florida and up the East Coast and up the West Coast as well. The Outer Continental Shelf, comparing the fertilizer inventory on the north slope of Alaska, which is 38 trillion cubic feet, with 406 trillion cubic feet of natural gas offshore. And that is what we have a pretty good idea of without going out to inventory that natural gas. A tremendous amount.

It is sitting next door to the distribution system off the Louisiana coast. We could just drill our way on around Florida on up the coast. We need to do that. We need to drill for that gas where the market is, where the population centers are. Yes, I am told that Florida plans 33 generation plants coming up within this next year or two, and 28 of them plan to be natural gas and they will not let us drill a single well, not even 199 miles offshore of Florida, anywhere, because someone on a tall tower with a powerful telescope could somehow see the top of that derrick over the curvature of the Earth. And somehow someone would find out about that and they would not go to Florida to sit on the beach when there has never been any kind of environmental negative impact with natural gas anywhere in the world. It just simply vaporizes and goes off in the air, Mr. Speaker.

So I contend that on energy we need to do a number of things, all in the context of grow the size of the energy pie. If you think of all the energy as a pie, and that would include our nuclear, our coal, our gas, our diesel fuel, our ethanol, our bio-diesel, our wind, our hydrogen, and a number of other components of energy that we use and produce, that can all be laid out now. The percentage of each would dictate the size of the piece of the size of the overall pie.

We need to look at that. That is the finite amount of energy that we are producing in this country. We need to grow that. We need to expand the amount of energy that is available to the consumers in America, and we need to change the proportion of those slices of the pie. So, for example, why do we use natural gas to generate electricity when it is becoming a more scarce product that we need for fertilizer, for example?

So I would submit that we would change the overall size of that to more fertilizer, less electrical production. We probably hit the limit that we can

build hydroelectric dams in order to generate electricity.

□ 2350

The limit has been the environmentalists' limit that we would hit there. We need to go back to nuclear and generate a lot more electricity with nuclear. There is a clean coal concept that can be used for baseline, coal-fired plants, and that can be used almost all over this country to produce a tremendous amount of electricity.

All those things need to happen, and as the President said in this chamber just the last day of January, that we need to expand the use of ethanol, and he is very credible when he says that, Mr. Speaker, because a fellow that comes from the oil patch, that is promoting ethanol and renewable fuels, is a person that you know believes in it.

In Iowa, and the congressional district that I have the privilege and honor represent, they will be at nine ethanol production facilities there by the end of this year, perhaps even one more. That will take us to the position where we are producing from corn all of the ethanol that we have the corn to supply. It means we can cannot use all of our corn for ethanol production. We can perhaps use 25 percent of our corn for ethanol production, and ethanol is, of course, going all over the country to be blended with gasoline.

Our markets in Iowa are voluntary. When people go in and pull out the pump and the nozzle and put it in their tank, they choose ethanol 81 percent of the time. It was 42 percent just a few years ago. So it has almost doubled, and that is a voluntary usage because people understand that it is economical, it is environmentally friendly, and it reduces our dependence on foreign oil.

So the President has advocated that within 25 years we reduce our dependence on foreign oil by 75 percent. I think that is a doable goal, especially with some of the technology that is out there, making ethanol out of cellulose. So that would be wood fiber and chips and even weeds and switch grass, and yet corn stalks and all of that kind cellulose that grows up out of the ground is all renewable. We can be energy independent if, in fact, we had to be. It would not take us very long to get there, Mr. Speaker.

We need an overall strategy to grow the size of the energy pie to change the proportions of the size of those pieces so that we use more of certain kinds of energy, and I will advocate, as I said, nuclear and coal and ethanol to be three of those that I would advocate we use a lot more of. We can do some things with solar panels. That is an emerging technology, but change the proportion of the size of the pieces of the energy pie so that we have a prudent, long-term policy that can reduce and, one day, eliminate our dependence on foreign oil.

It also includes not just drilling for oil and gas on the Outer Continental

Shelf, not just bringing a pipeline down from Alaska to deliver the natural gas from Alaska, but it also includes drilling for oil in ANWR. That stretch up there, Mr. Speaker, that is 19.6 million acres. Out of that we are going to tap into 2,000. Only 2,000 acres, .01 percent of that region, used to tap into the oil that we know is there. That could bring 1 million barrels or more of oil down to the lower 48 or actually down to Valdez and out on the tanker. That could happen in a very short period of time if we would just step up here on the floor of this Congress, Mr. Speaker, and have the people in the other body do the same thing. The President would sign the bill, and we would be one huge step closer to energy independence.

All of these things need to happen in a country that should be able to plan its future, in a country that should be able to debate its future and take action on the floor of this Congress.

We have stepped forward and taken on quite a task in this overall war on terror. This place called Iraq is not the war on terror. This is a battlefield in the overall global war on terror, but our military has stepped forward and done their job. We need to stand with them. We need to know and realize that we are in a time of war and that means that we need to tighten our belt. That requires sacrifice. That sacrifice needs to let us find the will in this Congress to move towards a balanced budget, a balanced budget that makes the Bush tax cuts permanent because that fixes this growth rate in place so it has a sense of permanency and a sense of predictability. We need to put those tax cuts in place, move towards a balanced budget, and provide a sense of financial security so that this continuity of this long period of 10 consecutive quarters of growth can go on another 10 consecutive quarters.

I would go further with the taxes, Mr. Speaker. Given the time that is allowed here tonight I will simply tie this back with the energy side of this. So, if good things are happening in the overall war on terror, if we control our spending on this budget, tighten our belt and if we sacrifice the way our military sacrifices, we can keep funds and resources going to them so they can do their job. If we provide for more energy, grow the size of the energy pie, we have laid out a destination for America's future that is an economic and a security destiny, and without going into the social side of this, the constitutional aspects of it, that is most of what we need, Mr. Speaker, to get this country where it needs to go.

So I want to thank the Speaker for the privilege to address this House of Representatives.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HINCHEY (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and February 15.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week.

Ms. WOOLSEY (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today and the balance of the week on account of the death of his father.

Mr. GIBBONS (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of travel delay.

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today and the balance of the week on account of illness.

Mr. WAMP (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today and the balance of the week on account of illness in the family.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. PALLONE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mrs. MCCARTHY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FALCOMA, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WYNN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPFUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. HERSETH, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DEAL of Georgia, for 5 minutes, February 15.

Mr. NORWOOD, for 5 minutes, February 16.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, February 16.

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, today and February 15.

Mr. OSBORNE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DREIER, for 5 minutes, today and February 15 and 16.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and February 15 and 16.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for 5 minutes, today and February 15.

Mr. FLAKE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, February 16.

Mr. KINGSTON, for 5 minutes, today.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House reports that on February 9, 2006, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill.

H.R. 4636. To enact the technical and conforming amendments necessary to implement the Federal Deposit Insurance Reform Act of 2005, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, February 15, 2006, 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:

6140. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Imazethapyr; Pesticide Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2005-0508; FRL-7755-8] received February 1, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

6141. A letter from the Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act by the Department of the Army, Case Number 02-06, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1517(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

6142. A letter from the Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act by the Department of the Navy, Case Number 04-01, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1517(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

6143. A letter from the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's report on the amount of purchases from foreign entities for Fiscal Year 2005, pursuant to Public Law 104-201, section 827 (110 Stat. 2611); to the Committee on Armed Services.

6144. A letter from the Senior Vice President for Congressional Affairs, Export-Import Bank, transmitting the Bank's FY 2005 annual report for the Sub-Saharan Africa Initiative; to the Committee on Financial Services.

6145. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maine; Nitrogen Oxides Exemption Request for Northern Maine [EPA-R01-OAR-2005-ME-0007; A-1-FRL-8027-5] received February 1, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6146. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Wisconsin; General and Registration Permit Programs [EPA-R05-OAR-2005-WI-0003; FRL-8020-1] received February 1, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6147. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Final Rule Making Findings of Failure to Submit Required State Implementation Plans for Phase II of the NOx SIP Call [Docket No. OAR-2005-0154; FRL-8028-8] received February 1, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6148. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Interim Final Determination to Stay and/or Defer Sanctions, Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District [EPA-R09-OAR-2005-0557c; FRL-8024-9] received February 1, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6149. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants: Plywood and Composite Wood Products; List of Hazardous Air Pollutants, Lesser Quantity Designations, Source Category List [OAR-2003-0048; FRL-8028-9] (RIN: 2060-AN05) received February 1, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6150. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Protection of Stratospheric Ozone; The 2006 Critical Use of Exemption from the Phaseout of Methyl Bromide [FRL-8028-2] (RIN: 2060-AN18) received February 1, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6151. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Ventura County Air Pollution Control District, Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District [EPA-R09-OAR-2005-0557a; FRL-8025-2] received February 1, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6152. 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. 04-06 which informs of an intent to sign an Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Concerning Combating Terrorism Research and Development with Singapore, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2767(f); to the Committee on International Relations.

6153. 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. 02-06 which informs of an intent to sign an Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) regarding the Organizational Structure and Exploitation Systems (BICES) between the United States and Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2767(f); to the Committee on International Relations.

6154. 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. 03-06 which informs of an intent to sign an Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) Concerning Combating Terrorism Research and Development with Australia, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2767(f); to the Committee on International Relations.

6155. 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. 05-06 which informs of an intent

to sign a Project Arrangement concerning the U.S./U.K. Missile Defense Situational Awareness Node, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2767(f); to the Committee on International Relations.

6156. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for International Security Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting a Report on Proposed Obligations for Weapons Destruction and Non-Proliferation in the Former Soviet Union and the Republic of Albania, pursuant to Public Law 104-106, section 1206(a) (110 Stat. 471); to the Committee on International Relations.

6157. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting intention to support a resolution in the United Nations Security Council to authorize maintaining the personnel ceiling of the United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) at its current level until after nationwide presidential and parliamentary elections, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 287(d) Public Law 109-108, section 4(d); to the Committee on International Relations.

6158. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report on gifts given by the United States to foreign individuals for the period October 1, 2004 through September 30, 2005, pursuant to Public Law 95-105; to the Committee on International Relations.

6159. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 (Pub. L. 107-243), the Authorization for the Use of Force Against Iraq Resolution (Pub. L. 102-1), and in order to keep the Congress fully informed, a report prepared by the Department of State for the August 15, 2005 — October 15, 2005 reporting period including matters relating to post-liberation Iraq under Section 7 of the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998 (Pub. L. 105-338); to the Committee on International Relations.

6160. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a Memorandum of Justification for the waiver of loan default assistance restrictions under Section 620(q) of the Foreign Assistance Act to support the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo; to the Committee on International Relations.

6161. A letter from the Office of the Independent Counsel, transmitting the 2005 annual report for the Office of Independent Counsel-Barrett, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 595(a)(2); to the Committee on Government Reform.

6162. A letter from the Federal Co-Chair, Appalachian Regional Commission, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Title VI of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Commission's report on FY 2005 Competitive Sourcing Efforts; to the Committee on Government Reform.

6163. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Title VI of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Department's Report to Congress on FY 2005 Competitive Sourcing Efforts; to the Committee on Government Reform.

6164. A letter from the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the semiannual report on the activities of the Office of Inspector General for the period April 1, 2005, through September 30, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 5(b); to the Committee on Government Reform.

6165. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Title VI of

the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Commission's report on FY 2005 Competitive Sourcing Efforts; to the Committee on Government Reform.

6166. A letter from the Chairman and Acting General Counsel, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting in accordance with Section 645 of Division F, Title VI, of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Board's report covering fiscal year 2004; to the Committee on Government Reform.

6167. A letter from the General Counsel, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting the FY 2005 annual report under the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA), pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3512(c)(3); to the Committee on Government Reform.

6168. A letter from the Deputy Director for Administration and Information Management, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Title VI of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Office's Report to Congress on FY 2005 Competitive Sourcing Efforts; to the Committee on Government Reform.

6169. A letter from the Chairman, Postal Rate Commission, transmitting a copy of the annual report in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act during the calendar year 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552b(j); to the Committee on Government Reform.

6170. A letter from the Secretary to the Board, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, and the Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-06-01, the Board's report on competitive sourcing efforts for FY 2005; to the Committee on Government Reform.

6171. A letter from the Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's report to on Fiscal Year 2005 Competitive Sourcing Efforts as required by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of FY 2004; to the Committee on Government Reform.

6172. A letter from the Acting Director, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting notification that funding under Title V, subsection 503(b)(3) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended, has exceeded \$5 million for the response to the emergency declared as a result of Tropical Storm Rita on September 18 through October 23, 2005 in the state of Florida, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 5193; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6173. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class D Airspace, Modification to Class E; Galveston, TX [Docket No. FAA-2005-22999; Airspace Docket No. 2004-ASW-20] received January 25, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6174. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class D Airspace, Modification to Class E; Rogers, AR [Docket No. FAA-2004-19599; Airspace Docket No. 2004-ASW-12] received January 24, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6175. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30470; Amdt. No. 3145] received January 24, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6176. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, Weather Takeoff Minimums; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30471; Amdt. No. 3146] received February 7, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6177. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, Weather Takeoff Minimums, Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30469; Amdt. No. 3144] received February 7, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6178. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 767-200 and -300 Series Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2005-20357; Directorate Identifier 2004-NM-120-AD; Amendment 39-14377; AD 2005-23-19] received January 24, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6179. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Fokker Model F27 Mark 050 Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2005-23214; Directorate Identifier 2001-NM-338-AD; Amendment 39-14399; AD 2005-25-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 24, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6180. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment to Class E Airspace, Wenatchee, WA [Docket FAA 2005-20417; Airspace Docket No. 05-ANM-06] received February 7, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6181. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Hillsboro, TX [Docket No. FAA-2005-22998; Airspace Docket No. 2005-ASW-19] received February 7, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6182. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revision of Class E Airspace; Egeglik, AK [Docket No. FAA-2005-22023; Airspace Docket No. 05-AAL-22] received February 7, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6183. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of Class E Airspace; Kennett, MO [Docket No. FAA-2005-22746; Airspace Docket No. 05-ACE-32] received February 7, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6184. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revision of Class E Airspace; Nikolai, AK [Docket No. FAA-2005-22094; Airspace Docket No. 05-AAL-28] received February 7, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6185. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of the Norton Sound Low Offshore Airspace Area; AK [Docket No. FAA-2005-22399; Airspace Docket No. 05-AAL-27] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received February 7, 2006, pursu-

ant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6186. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Nenana, AK [Docket No. FAA-2005-22022; Airspace Docket No. 05-AAL-21] received February 7, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6187. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Enroute Domestic Airspace Area, San Luis Obispo, CA [Airspace Docket No. 05-AWP-12] received February 7, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6188. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Artic Village, AK [Docket No. FAA-2005-22021; Airspace Docket No. 04-AAL-06] received February 7, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

[Filed on February 10, 2006]

Mr. HYDE: Committee on International Relations. House Resolution 593. Resolution directing the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Attorney General, and requesting the President, to provide certain information to the House of Representatives relating to extraordinary rendition of certain foreign persons (Rept. 109-374), adversely. Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. HYDE: Committee on International Relations. House Resolution 624. Resolution requesting the President of the United States and directing the Secretary of State to provide to the House of Representatives certain documents in their possession relating to United States policies under the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Geneva Conventions (Rept. 109-375), adversely. Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. HYDE: Committee on International Relations. House Resolution 642. Resolution requesting the President and directing the Secretary of State to provide to the House of Representatives certain documents in their possession relating to the Secretary of State's trip to Europe in December 2005. (Rept. 109-376), adversely. Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. BASS (for himself, Mr. GILCHRIST, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. FLAKE, Ms. HERSETH, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. WYNN, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. SIMMONS, Mr. OLVER, Mr. RYUN of Kansas, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MELANCON, Mr.

JONES of North Carolina, Mr. KIND, Mr. CANNON, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. BAKER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. SWEENEY, Mr. BISHOP of New York, and Mr. MICHAUD):

H.R. 4740. A bill to extend the termination date for the exemption of returning workers from the numerical limitations for temporary workers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. WELLER, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. WOLF, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. ISSA, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, and Mr. SIMMONS):

H.R. 4741. A bill to develop and deploy technologies to defeat Internet jamming; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. SMITH of Texas (for himself, Mr. BERMAN, and Mr. GOODLATTE):

H.R. 4742. A bill to amend title 35, United States Code, to allow the Director of the Patent and Trademark Office to waive statutory provisions governing patents and trademarks in certain emergencies; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FORD:

H.R. 4743. A bill to amend part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require prescription drug plans to provide enrollee notice of less expensive part D covered drugs that may be substituted for dispensed drugs; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. COLE of Oklahoma, Mr. BOREN, and Mr. ISTOOK):

H.R. 4744. A bill to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic in Tulsa, Oklahoma, as the Ernest Childers Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LEWIS of California:

H.R. 4745. A bill making supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2006 for the Small Business Administration's disaster loans program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, 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. BRADLEY of New Hampshire (for himself, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. STRICKLAND, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. SIMMONS, Ms. HERSETH, Mr. FILNER, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. McDERMOTT, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas):

H.R. 4746. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish a financial assistance program to facilitate the provision of supportive services for very low-income veteran families in permanent housing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. CAPPS (for herself and Mrs. CUBIN):

H.R. 4747. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases in women; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be

subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. JINDAL:

H.R. 4748. A bill to require the Secretary of the Army to submit to Congress a report identifying activities for hurricane and flood protection in Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. PALLONE, and Mr. GRIJALVA):

H.R. 4749. A bill to suspend the application of any provision of Federal law under which persons are relieved from the requirement to pay royalties for production of oil or natural gas from Federal lands in periods of high oil and natural gas prices, to require the Secretary to seek to renegotiate existing oil and natural gas leases to similarly limit suspension of royalty obligations under such leases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. OSBORNE (for himself and Mr. MORAN of Kansas):

H.R. 4750. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of implementing a water supply and conservation project to improve water supply reliability, increase the capacity of water storage, and improve water management efficiency in the Republican River Basin between Harlan County Lake in Nebraska and Milford Lake in Kansas; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. PITTS (for himself, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. MCINTYRE, Ms. HART, and Ms. HARMAN):

H.R. 4751. A bill to establish and provide for the treatment of Individual Development Accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RANGEL:

H.R. 4752. A bill to provide for the common defense by requiring all persons in the United States, including women, between the ages of 18 and 42 to perform a period of military service or a period of civilian service in furtherance of the national defense and homeland security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. STARK:

H.R. 4753. A bill to establish a congressional commemorative medal for organ donors and their families; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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. WHITFIELD, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. HERGER, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. AKIN, Mr. BONILLA, Mr. BUYER, Mr. SWEENEY, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan, Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota, and Mr. FORBES):

H. Con. Res. 339. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress in support of military recruiting; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, 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. GERLACH:

H. Con. Res. 340. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress with re-

spect to the effective treatment of and access to care for individuals with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SHIMKUS (for himself and Mr. GALLEGLEY):

H. Res. 673. A resolution expressing support for the efforts of the people of the Republic of Belarus to establish a full democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and urging the Government of Belarus to conduct a free and fair presidential election on March 19, 2006; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky:

H. Res. 674. A resolution amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to require parity and transparency in the earmark process; to the Committee on Rules, and in addition to the Committee on Government Reform, 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. PALLONE (for himself, Mr. TANCREDO, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Ms. LEE, Mr. MCCOTTER, Ms. WATSON, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. ROHR-ABACHER, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. WOLF, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. HOLT, Mr. WYNN, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. HONDA, Mr. McNULTY, Mr. EVANS, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. NADLER, Mr. DOGGETT, and Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California):

H. Res. 675. A resolution expressing disapproval of the Arab League's decision to hold its 2006 summit in Khartoum, Sudan and calling on the Arab League, the Government of Sudan, the Sudanese rebels, and the world community to do all they can to end acts of genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. POE:

H. Res. 676. A resolution amending rule XXV of the Rules of the House of Representatives to prohibit Members, officers, and employees of the House from accepting gifts from registered lobbyists; to the Committee on Rules.

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama (for himself, Mr. WATT, Mr. OWENS, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. CARSON, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. LEE, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. WYNN, Mr. MCHENRY, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. HAYES, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. COBLE, Ms. FOX, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. FOLEY, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina, and Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania):

H. Res. 677. A resolution recognizing the creation of the NASCAR-Historically Black Colleges and Universities Consortium; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 198: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
 H.R. 202: Mr. CLAY and Mr. WEXLER.
 H.R. 282: Mr. BLUNT.
 H.R. 333: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
 H.R. 398: Mr. BERMAN.
 H.R. 408: Mr. LANTOS.
 H.R. 414: Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, and Mr. CANNON.
 H.R. 415: Mr. SHUSTER.
 H.R. 503: Mr. CASE.
 H.R. 550: Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee.
 H.R. 591: Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. GOODE, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, and Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota.
 H.R. 601: Ms. BERKLEY.
 H.R. 602: Mr. LATOURETTE.
 H.R. 676: Ms. KAPTUR and Mr. REYES.
 H.R. 698: Mr. PENCE.
 H.R. 752: Mr. RAHALL, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. CLAY, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
 H.R. 764: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 791: Mr. MICHAUD.
 H.R. 815: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 819: Mr. PASTOR and Mr. KLINE.
 H.R. 839: Mr. MEEHAN and Mr. ENGEL.
 H.R. 898: Mr. CLAY, Mr. DAVIS of Florida, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. BOEHLERT, Mr. NADLER, Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. STARK, Mr. DINGELL, and Mr. PALLONE.
 H.R. 939: Mr. ROTHMAN.
 H.R. 941: Mr. HOSTETTLER.
 H.R. 963: Mr. CALVERT and Mr. JEFFERSON.
 H.R. 968: Mr. WAMP.
 H.R. 986: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky and Mr. CUELLAR.
 H.R. 1002: Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. HOYER, and Mr. WOLF.
 H.R. 1053: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, and Mr. GUTIERREZ.
 H.R. 1105: Mr. KILDEE.
 H.R. 1108: Mr. STARK, Mr. HONDA, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. OWENS, Mr. BARROW, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. GERLACH.
 H.R. 1188: Mr. OLVER, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. HONDA.
 H.R. 1217: Mr. HOLDEN.
 H.R. 1227: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 1259: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. PITTS, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mrs. BONO, and Mr. SOUDER.
 H.R. 1333: Ms. DELAURO.
 H.R. 1345: Mr. MCCRERY, Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, and Mr. SHAYS.
 H.R. 1357: Mr. DOOLITTLE.
 H.R. 1426: Mr. JEFFERSON.
 H.R. 1431: Mr. OWENS, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. FILNER, and Mr. WYNN.
 H.R. 1494: Mr. PUTNAM.
 H.R. 1578: Mr. DOGGETT and Mr. SHUSTER.
 H.R. 1707: Mr. WEXLER, Mr. ROTHMAN, and Mr. LYNCH.
 H.R. 1708: Mr. MURPHY and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
 H.R. 1816: Mrs. NORTHUP.
 H.R. 1849: Mr. MEEKS of New York.
 H.R. 1898: Mr. STUPAK.
 H.R. 1951: Mr. OWENS.
 H.R. 2048: Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, and Mr. SKELTON.
 H.R. 2051: Ms. WOOLSEY.
 H.R. 2052: Mr. WYNN.
 H.R. 2063: Mrs. NORTHUP.
 H.R. 2072: Mr. FATTAH and Ms. MCKINNEY.
 H.R. 2101: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
 H.R. 2129: Mr. STRICKLAND.
 H.R. 2177: Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico.
 H.R. 2233: Mr. KILDEE.
 H.R. 2237: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.
 H.R. 2345: Ms. WOOLSEY and Mr. FATTAH.
 H.R. 2369: Mr. POMBO, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mrs. BONO, Mr. PENCE, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr.

PITTS, Mr. BARROW, Mrs. CHRISSTENSEN, Mr. FALCOMOVAEGA, Mr. KIRK, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. REYES, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. COOPER, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. AKIN, Mr. EMANUEL, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. OTTER, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. MELANCON, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. BOUCHER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. PORTER, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. FOLEY, Mrs. NORTHUP, Ms. HOOLEY, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. CLEAVER, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. EVANS, and Mr. DEFazio.
 H.R. 2386: Ms. HARRIS, Mr. GILCHREST, and Mrs. NORTHUP.
 H.R. 2390: Mr. NADLER, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Ms. WATSON, Mr. FARR, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. MORAN of Virginia.
 H.R. 2553: Mr. ISRAEL.
 H.R. 2658: Mr. MARCHANT and Mr. BACHUS.
 H.R. 2716: Mr. MICHAUD.
 H.R. 2717: Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 2793: Mr. SABO and Mr. SULLIVAN.
 H.R. 2803: Ms. PRYCE of Ohio.
 H.R. 2872: Mr. PASTOR, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. MCCRERY, Ms. WATERS, Mr. KIRK, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. GRAVES, Mr. NUSSLE, and Mr. REICHERT.
 H.R. 2874: Mr. MELANCON and Mr. HINCHEY.
 H.R. 3061: Mr. GRAVES.
 H.R. 3111: Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin.
 H.R. 3145: Mr. LOBIONDO, Ms. HOOLEY, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. WYNN, Mr. MCINTYRE, and Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.
 H.R. 3157: Mr. CONYERS.
 H.R. 3186: Mr. CROWLEY and Mr. PAUL.
 H.R. 3255: Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 3307: Mr. BARROW and Mr. CASE.
 H.R. 3334: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, and Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee.
 H.R. 3337: Mrs. TAUSCHER.
 H.R. 3352: Mr. POE and Mr. DOGGETT.
 H.R. 3401: Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 3442: Mr. WEXLER.
 H.R. 3476: Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. PLATTS, and Mr. HOLDEN.
 H.R. 3478: Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. CASE, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. AKIN, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, and Mr. HOSTETTLER.
 H.R. 3502: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
 H.R. 3579: Mr. ALLEN.
 H.R. 3681: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.
 H.R. 3753: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina and Mr. BACHUS.
 H.R. 3778: Mr. KILDEE, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mrs. CAPPS, and Mr. FILNER.
 H.R. 3861: Mr. TIERNEY, Ms. MCKINNEY, Mr. CLAY, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. CROWLEY.
 H.R. 3883: Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. COBLE, Ms. FOXF, Mr. CALVERT, Ms. HART, Mr. ISTOOK, and Mr. COLE of Oklahoma.
 H.R. 3888: Ms. DEGETTE and Mr. LYNCH.
 H.R. 3917: Mr. CUMMINGS.
 H.R. 3933: Mr. EVANS.
 H.R. 3972: Mr. MCCOTTER.
 H.R. 4005: Mr. GERLACH and Mr. CARDIN.
 H.R. 4030: Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 4033: Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. BARROW.
 H.R. 4035: Mrs. MUSGRAVE.
 H.R. 4063: Mr. DEFazio.
 H.R. 4075: Mr. MCCOTTER.
 H.R. 4140: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
 H.R. 4141: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H.R. 4186: Ms. HOOLEY and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
 H.R. 4197: Mr. STARK.
 H.R. 4222: Mr. CARDOZA and Mr. MICHAUD.
 H.R. 4236: Mr. CONAWAY.
 H.R. 4265: Mr. MOLLOHAN, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. OBERSTAR, and Ms. KAPTUR.
 H.R. 4298: Mr. SANDERS and Mr. DOGGETT.
 H.R. 4304: Mr. CASE.
 H.R. 4351: Mr. FARR.
 H.R. 4366: Mr. BILIRAKIS.
 H.R. 4409: Mr. SIMMONS, Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania, and Mr. PLATTS.
 H.R. 4411: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina and Mr. UPTON.
 H.R. 4424: Mr. MARSHALL, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
 H.R. 4448: Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
 H.R. 4460: Mr. PALLONE and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
 H.R. 4463: Mr. BERMAN.
 H.R. 4465: Mr. FATTAH, Mr. WU, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania, Mr. WAXMAN, and Mr. MICHAUD.
 H.R. 4472: Mr. REYNOLDS, Mr. WHITFIELD, and Mr. CRAMER.
 H.R. 4479: Ms. PELOSI, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, and Mr. CUMMINGS.
 H.R. 4494: Mr. BARROW.
 H.R. 4511: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.
 H.R. 4520: Mr. FATTAH.
 H.R. 4526: Mr. BROWN of South Carolina.
 H.R. 4542: Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. CAPUANO, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.
 H.R. 4547: Mr. MURTHA, Mr. MCHENRY, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
 H.R. 4574: Ms. BERKLEY.
 H.R. 4625: Mr. POMBO, Mr. NORWOOD, and Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 4655: Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. CAPUANO, and Mrs. BIGGERT.
 H.R. 4662: Mr. FOSSELLA.
 H.R. 4663: Mr. SIMMONS.
 H.R. 4665: Mr. CUELLAR.
 H.R. 4666: Mr. GOODE, Mr. DOYLE, and Mr. CASE.
 H.R. 4668: Mr. PRICE of Georgia.
 H.R. 4672: Mr. BERRY, Mr. WYNN, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. MCHUGH, and Mr. COSTA.
 H.R. 4675: Ms. WOOLSEY.
 H.R. 4676: Mr. PAYNE.
 H.R. 4679: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 4681: Ms. HART, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. DAVIS of Florida, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. BLUNT, and Mrs. MALONEY.
 H.R. 4685: Mr. SCHIFF and Mr. CLAY.
 H.R. 4704: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mrs. MCCARTHY.
 H.R. 4705: Mr. HINOJOSA.
 H.R. 4708: Ms. MATSUI and Mr. MCDERMOTT.
 H.R. 4722: Ms. SOLIS.
 H.J. Res. 67: Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire, and Ms. HARRIS.
 H. Con. Res. 68: Mr. FATTAH and Mrs. MCCARTHY.
 H. Con. Res. 210: Mr. CHANDLER.
 H. Con. Res. 231: Mr. WICKER.
 H. Con. Res. 235: Mr. BOOZMAN.
 H. Con. Res. 277: Mr. MCINTYRE, Mrs. MCCARTHY, and Mr. BOEHLERT.
 H. Con. Res. 298: Mr. WAXMAN.
 H. Con. Res. 299: Ms. LEE and Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H. Con. Res. 302: Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. ALEXANDER, and Mr. CANTOR.

H. Con. Res. 306: Mr. BROWN of South Carolina and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H. Con. Res. 318: Mr. MEEHAN and Mr. FARR.

H. Con. Res. 322: Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia.

H. Con. Res. 335: Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. BERMAN, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. FILNER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. KILDEE, Mrs. MALONEY, Ms. LEE, and Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.

H. Res. 116: Mrs. MALONEY and Mr. ACKERMAN.

H. Res. 323: Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. RAMSTAD.

H. Res. 357: Mr. SCHIFF.

H. Res. 521: Mr. MEEKS of New York and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H. Res. 526: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H. Res. 544: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. POMEROY.

H. Res. 556: Mr. HENSARLING.

H. Res. 561: Mr. EVANS.

H. Res. 578: Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. AKIN, and Mr. LEACH.

H. Res. 628: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H. Res. 635: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ and Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.

H. Res. 641: Ms. BALDWIN.

H. Res. 643: Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. SERRANO, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. WATT, Mr. CAPUANO, Mrs. DAVIS of Cali-

fornia, Ms. WATSON, and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.

H. Res. 647: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. GUTKNECHT.

H. Res. 658: Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. HONDA, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H. Res. 665: Mr. WAMP, Mr. COOPER, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. DOYLE, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Mr. TANNER, Mr. HOLT, Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. MALONEY, and Mr. GORDON.