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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m.

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

In the prophetic vineyard of Isaiah, You God Almighty, are recognized as the vine grower. Your people are the treasured vineyard which is cared for by the vine dressers. As believers and servants of Your people, the Members of Congress, viewed as the vine dressers, turn to You, Lord, in prayer. You must bless their work for You alone can produce lasting results in the roots and all the branches.

Only a healthy and prosperous vineyard will provide good wine for the tables of life in America. Yet, so much depends on climatic incidents, the soil, the water, the sunlight, as well as the human labor of distinguished pruning and attentive care.

Lord of the vineyard, help Congress to seize the right moments and make the right decisions. Especially during difficult times do the vine dressers need to cultivate together and be discerning. Only by mutual trust and conversation can there be a structured response focused not only on the long hanging produce or just on some of the branches, but concern for the whole vineyard.

For the entire vineyard, beginning with the grafted vine from the foreign soil to the very best vintage, Lord, belongs to You, now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. GARY G. MILLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five 1-minute speeches on each side.

HURRICANE VICTIM IS HURRICANE VILLAIN

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, she lost her house, she lost her way of life, and she lost her innocence. She had fled Katrina. She fled to Texas. But also fleeing with the good were the bad, and then the ugly happened.

Matthew Lindsey, registered sex offender from Louisiana, fled to Texas. He got that free FEMA money and those free FEMA hotel rooms. But FEMA would not let Texas lawmen see their database and cross-check for criminals like Lindsey. It was private, they said.

So it was then while baby-sitting 12 kids at a shelter he molested this 8-year-old girl. Now one little girl has emotional scars that will forever be with her.

Lindsey was one of 146 sex perverts that took the name ''hurricane victim'' and became that hurricane villain.

Congress must stop this nonsense and make FEMA quit protecting the lawless. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the Fraternal Order of Police supports such legislation. We cannot stop hurricanes; we can stop sex offenders. We can force FEMA to help the lawmen find the outlaws and thereby save the innocent.

And that's just the way it is.

IGNORING FISCAL CRISIS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House we started the appropriations process, and that continues today, but the problem is that the Republican leadership and the President continue to ignore the fiscal crisis that they have created here in the Congress and across the country.

As you know, we passed a budget this week, but at the same time the debt continues to rise and so much of the money actually being spent is going towards the war in Iraq which is not really being addressed. In fact, many times, the budget simply masks that because it does not include the funding and the cost of the war in the budget itself.

So what I say today, rather than just focus on the appropriation bills and the different items back and forth, the Republican Congress should look at the overall picture. They just passed another tax cut bill, with tax cuts primarily going to large corporations, special interests, wealthy individuals, not the average American; and they continue to increase the debt.

Spending is also out of control, and they are not doing anything about it. Unfortunately, over the long term this leads to a fiscal crisis. We continue to go into debt. We don't have the money available to borrow for new production, and the Republicans need to address this fiscal crisis. They are not doing it, Mr. Speaker.

HOUSE PASSES REASONABLE BUDGET RESOLUTION

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

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minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week House Republicans voted to pass the fiscal year 2007 House budget resolution. I was pleased to support a reasonable budget that will fund our top priorities, continue our program policies, and increase accountability within Federal Government programs. I was especially pleased to see this budget will help cut the Federal deficit in half by 2009 without implementing any tax increases.

Yet, in keeping with their record of being the party of no, Democrats voted ''no'' on this budget. They voted ''no'' to even the smallest attempts on holding the line on spending, and they voted ''no'' to reforming outdated and ineffective government programs. You see, Democrats would rather just raise taxes on hardworking families.

Mr. Speaker, you can rest assured that House Republicans are going to continue to work to keep taxes low and maintain the pro-growth economic policies that have created 32 consecutive months of job growth. After all, if there is something we should all be saying ''no'' to, it is the Democrats' tax and spend mentality.

REVEALING THE TRUTH

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, sometimes it takes a heated exchange to reveal the truth. People say things they would not normally say, or reflect their true thinking.

For instance, while debating the budget the other night, a member of the Republican leadership said, ''If you earn $40,000 a year and have a family of two, you don't pay any taxes.'' Well, that would be news to that middle-class family.

According to the Center of Budget and Policy Priorities, middle-class families paid an average of 13.6 percent of their income in Federal taxes in 2003. Additionally, these hardworking families pay State income taxes, property taxes, gasoline taxes, and sales taxes. If anything, middle-class families are paying too much in taxes.

But the truth serum clearly did not wear off, because the next day the same member of the Republican leadership sent out a press release titled ''Fiscal Responsibility is Not an Option in This House.''

After 5 years of record budget deficits of $3 trillion in new debt, for a total of $9.6 trillion of debt, never were truer words spoken in that press release.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the truth about the Republican Congress has finally come out. Now the American people have a choice between leadership and the Republican Party that cuts taxes on the wealthy and leaves trillions of dollars of debt for the rest of us.

As Ronald Reagan once said, ''Facts are a stubborn thing.'' Mr. Speaker, it is time for a change. It is time for new priorities. It is time to give the people back their House.

HONORING CAMERON STAY

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

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a friend of mine, Cameron Stay, a friend from Henderson, Nevada. Cameron has been an inspiration for me. We had a chance to meet recently. He experienced a tragic motorcycle accident just a few months ago.

Cameron is a friend of Nevada and a friend of the country. He is a Green Valley High School graduate from Henderson, Nevada, in my district and has a college degree in criminal justice. He also was a firefighter with the BLM and with the Hotshots 777 group and worked for TAB Construction.

I mention Cameron today because he is an inspiration for me as a Member of Congress. As we look at issues ranging from world peace to education to health care to children and families, Cameron has been that inspiration for his courage, his enthusiasm, and his will to live a full life. He truly represents what this country is about; and today I would like to recognize Cameron and his mother, who is here today, Denice Olson and her husband, Stan, who are in the audience, and say thank you for sharing with us your son as an inspiration for us as Members of Congress.

SECURING OUR BORDERS

(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, on Monday night, President Bush demonstrated his commitment to securing our country. By placing thousands of National Guard troops on our borders, he will help decrease illegal border crossings, stop drug trafficking, and prevent terrorism. As a veteran of the National Guard, I know our troops are well prepared to assist temporarily with this critical mission.

In December, the House of Representatives passed legislation to prevent illegal crossings by addressing the hiring of illegals and gaining control of our borders.

As the House and Senate now work to find a long-term solution to America's immigration problem, House Republicans will continue to fight to ensure securing our borders remains the first priority. We will resist any frivolous lawsuits and protect American families.

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

CONGRATULATING LESLI McCOLLUM GOOCH

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

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, occasionally we have an opportunity to come to the floor to celebrate something. Lesli McCollum Gooch has been my legislative director for over 3 years. She began her service on Capitol Hill in the fall of 1999 as a Congressional Fellow for Marge Roukema of New Jersey. At the conclusion of the fellowship, Lesli served as Representative Roukema's legislative director until the congresswoman retired at the end of the 107th Congress.

Lesli has been working on her Ph.D. for 10 years. She began working as a Graduate Fellow at Carl Albert Congressional Research and Study Center at the University of Oklahoma. In 1998, Lesli joined the University of Oklahoma's Institute of Public Affairs. She received a Master's in political science from the University of Oklahoma in 1999.

Leslie defended her dissertation on April 10, 2006, and graduated with her Doctorate of Philosophy degree on May 12, 2006.

Mr. Speaker, I will not call her ''Doctor,'' but do as I do, call her ''Fudd'' when you see her.

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PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5385, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 821 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 821

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5385) making appropriations for the military quality of life functions of the Department of Defense, military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. Points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived except for title IV. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chairman of the Committe of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment

has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read. When the committee rises and reports the bill back to the House with a recommendation that the bill do pass, the previous question shall be considereed as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 821 is an open rule. It provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and the ranking minority member of the Appropriations Committee. It waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. Under the rules of the House, the bill shall be read for amendment by paragraph. This rule waives points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI prohibiting unauthorized appropriations or legislative provisions in an appropriation bill, except as specified in the resolution. It authorizes the Chair to accord priority and recognition to Members who have preprinted their amendments in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, and it provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 821 and the underlying bill, H.R. 5385, the Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2007.

First, I want to thank and recognize Chairman WALSH and Chairman LEWIS for all of the work they have put into this bill. The committee did a great job of staying within the framework of the President's budget request and ensuring the needs of our veterans, those currently serving and their families.

Mr. Speaker, the underlying bill totals $136.1 billion, which is an increase of almost $14 billion over last year's level, more than 10 percent. Of this $136 billion, the bill provides $41.4 billion in mandatory spending and $94.7 billion in discretionary spending.

The bill provides $77.9 billion for veterans' programs, marking approximately a 10 percent increase over the 2006 enacted level. Particularly important is the $32.7 billion for veterans' medical services, 11 percent more than the 2006 enacted level and $38 million above the President's request.

Additionally, the committee followed the recommendations of various veterans groups to make sure more funds are provided to meet the needs of veterans returning from combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. I must also emphasize to the veterans back home in the 11th Congressional District of Georgia, northwest Georgia particularly, and all across this country, that this bill does not, I want to repeat, it does not contain any new fees for veterans' medical services or prescription drugs. It does, however, increase mandatory veterans' benefits by $4.2 billion over the 2006 level.

So, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5385 also includes significant increases in funding to improve the lives of our veterans and their families. It provides an additional $25 million to open a minimum of 10 new community based outpatient clinics and an additional $20 million to make facility improvements to existing State veterans' homes.

Further, this bill increases basic medical research by $13 million; and it includes an additional $12 million to begin upgrades to VA medical research facilities nationwide.

In regards to military construction, this bill provides $10.6 billion: $5.6 billion for active duty construction, a billion dollars in construction for our reserve components, and $4 billion for the construction of housing for our servicemembers and their families.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5385 provides $21 billion, an increase of $1 billion over current levels, to fund the health defense program allowing for the ongoing preparation of our brave soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines, while caring for their families back home.

Without question, we are again in a tough budget year; and while the underlying bill may not be perfect, it does ensure that scarce resources are allocated in the most effective, efficient and responsible manner possible.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to this debate. I encourage my colleagues to support the rule and the underlying bill.

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

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me this time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. MATSUI asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks, and include extraneous material.)

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, the rule before us will allow the House to consider the fiscal year 2007 Military Quality of Life and Veterans Administration Appropriations bill. All Members know that the support in this bill for military housing, for veterans' health care, and for retiree benefits is part of the promise we made to the men and women when they joined our Armed Forces.

As we consider this bill, there should be little disagreement over the tremendous demands being placed on the Veterans Administration and on the military construction accounts.

In 1995, the VA treated 2.6 million veterans and their families. By the end of this year, that number will have more than doubled to an estimated 5.4 million people. This places additional stress on the many hospitals and the VA network. These World War II-era buildings are badly in need of upgrades at the cost of billions over the next 5 to 10 years.

It was for this reason, increased strain in time of war, that the Democrats have consistently criticized the administration's less-than-adequate funding for veterans and veterans' health care.

Last year, the administration admitted to accounting errors which underestimated the demand for veterans' services by $3 billion in fiscal years 2005 and 2006. It turned out that the administration had failed to account for the new veterans, those returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. After Democrats, the American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans and many other veterans organizations expressed outrage, steps were taken retroactively to address the shortfall.

With that backdrop, this year's appropriations bill does increase veterans' medical services by $2.6 billion over last year's amount. Unfortunately, it does so by employing a budget gimmick.

This year's shortsighted budget did not provide full funding to meet this Nation's veterans' health care needs in a time of war. So the Military Quality of Life Appropriations Subcommittee was forced to boost money for veterans using money originally designated for military housing and then pay for military housing by declaring that money emergency funding.

In truth, it was no emergency. It was simply a shell game that ignored the principle of shared sacrifice upon which our Nation has relied in every other time of war, except this one. These budget gimmicks should come as no surprise. Even to the casual observer, this majority has shown disregard for budget matters. After all, 3 years into the Iraq War, the administration and this majority continue to fund it with ''emergency spending.''

We are using a credit card to pay for war and sending the bill to our children and our grandchildren. Nonetheless, it must be noted that the only reason this bill comes close to meeting the health needs of so many veterans is because of this gimmick. And the bill pays for construction of some housing for military families, but again only because of this gimmick. Many Members on both sides of the aisle are frustrated with this approach.

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government cannot go back on our responsibility to support our troops, assist their families, and continue our commitment to the veterans. This responsibility is particularly important in a time of war. With troops fighting the war in Iraq, they should not be the only ones to make sacrifices; they must be shared by all Americans. No loopholes for a select few, no kicking

the can down the road for another generation to deal with by way of increasing the national debt.

In cities and towns across America, our constituents notice when Congress uses these gimmicks. My local paper, in fact, hit on this very theme of sacrifice in time of war earlier this week, and I include for the RECORD an editorial from the Sacramento Bee. Its title says it all: ''Where's the Sacrifice.'' I could not agree more.

[From the SACRAMENTO BEE, MAY 16, 2006]

WHERE'S THE SACRIFICE?

The Republican majority in Congress wants to go into the November elections bragging that they've cut taxes again. The House and Senate just extended record-high Bush tax cuts until 2010. They call it a political victory.

Will the American people really buy this one-note chant again?

It represents the triumph of rigid ideology over practical reality.

At a time of war, these members of Congress are demanding sacrifice only of the young people fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. The tax cuts of 2001, 2002 and 2003 have given us record-high deficits and debt, driving this country into a financial mess political leaders are passing on to future generations.

The tax cutters rely on two fallacious arguments.

The first is the ''starve the beast'' idea. Tax cuts, the theory goes, will reduce government revenues and choke off government spending, making government smaller. Even conservative economists now reject that hypothesis. For example, economists William Niskanen and Peter Van Doren of the Cato Institute show convincingly that since 1981, for each one percentage point decline in tax revenues, federal spending increases by about one-half percent of GDP. Government spending grows because tax cuts make government look cheaper than it actually is, so people want more of it. A tax increase does a better job of reducing government because it forces people to pay for government services.

At least ''starve the beast'' proponents were honest in saying that tax cuts would reduce government revenues.

Today you have members of Congress actually saying the opposite: ''Lower tax rates equal more federal revenue.'' The facts show otherwise. Bush tax cuts have contributed to revenues dropping in 2004 to the lowest level as a share of the U.S. economy since 1950. Where revenues typically have been 17 percent to 20 percent of the economy, in 2004 they were 16.3 percent, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

A CBO report, ''Analyzing the Economic and Budgetary Effects of a 10 Percent Cut in Income Tax Rates,'' shows that a 10 percent cut in income tax rates lowers revenues by $775 billion over 10 years.

So when tax cut proponents say that tax cuts benefit the Treasury, take it with a grain of salt.

The tax cut vote was a party line vote. Voters know whom to blame for the nation's financial mess come November.

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and for his leadership on getting this rule together and also to Chairman DREIER and the members of the Rules Committee for their help and support.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that we can be very proud of. After all, we are a Nation at war, and the way we treat our veterans of past wars is a very clear signal to our current active duty people as to how they will be treated in the future. And the commitments we have made in the past are being met in this bill.

One of the key issues always in the Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill is veterans' medical care, the Veterans Health Administration. We have provided almost a 13 percent increase in veterans' medical care in this bill, a remarkable increase, although consistent with the last 6 or 7 years where we have dramatically ramped up funding.

No other budget within the Federal Government's entire purview has received the increases that the Veterans Health Administration has.

Clearly Congress, especially the House, establishes its priorities by the funds it provides, it allocates, it appropriates on the discretionary side of the budget. If that is any indication, our commitment to our Nation's veterans is the highest priority of the House of Representatives and indeed the Congress.

We have also provided additional resources for the benefits administration to make sure that we bring down the time frames that veterans are forced to wait until their benefits issues are resolved. We are working on reducing those delays.

We have also mandated that the Veterans Administration create a minimum of 10 new veterans' outreach clinics. This is part of the CARES Commission statement. People all over the country, veterans all over the country, are benefiting from these new veterans' clinics. The quality of health care has improved dramatically. We are getting to the veterans much sooner, and the process that they follow, they can be treated at the clinics or, if it is a more serious health issue, they can then be referred to the hospital.

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But we are getting veterans into the system much sooner, and the view on the part of veterans and their service organizations is that this is a very important major improvement and breakthrough in veterans care. Additionally, we provided more money for mental health.

One of the real focuses of this subcommittee has been not only mental health, which it has been, but also the transition from active duty to veterans status. What we found is that because of the difficulties, very serious challenges to find a safe place for our soldiers in Afghanistan or in Iraq, many of them are coming back with very serious mental health issues, post-traumatic stress disorder and other issues that have caused great stress on the soldier, sailor, airman, marine and their families, additionally, when they return.

One of the things that we will require is that all of our active duty people enter into a dialogue with our mental health professionals within the service while they are active in the field.

Currently, if a soldier has a concern about their mental health, or they are upset or they are depressed or they are anxious about things and they want to get some advice, they have to voluntarily go forward, step forward. People worry about a stigma. How does that affect my record in the future if I go and seek out help?

What we have stated, stipulated in this bill, is that every one of our active duty people will have, as part of their service, a regular routine of working with mental health professionals, psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors, so that there is no stigma, that everybody is in the mix. That way we think that our folks who are in very stressful situations, very dangerous situations, will be more at ease in how they go about getting this very important aspect of their health in order.

Additionally, this subcommittee is responsible for the defense health, TRICARE for Life, et cetera. While the increase is not as substantial as it is in veterans, it is a healthy increase. My view is that as we go forward into conference with the Senate, hopefully we will be able to add additional resources within the defense health portion of this budget to make sure that we are meeting needs.

Our subcommittee traveled last year to Europe. We visited Landstuhl hospital in Germany. It is truly remarkable the quality of care that our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines are receiving there.

In the field, the Medevac units, the quality of care in the combat zone is beyond description. It is that good. In the history of war, there has never been health care like we are providing today. We can be very proud of that. But we have to make sure that the resources are there, that they are allocated to make sure that those needs are met.

One last point, and that is on the military construction, we have a lot of money in this bill to roll out the 2005 BRAC. The Army, which is very dependent upon this, asked us to get as much money forward as we could, so we did. That was a priority for us, Army is going through transformation, they are going through BRAC. We have people moving from Europe to the U.S., from one place in Asia to another, from places in Asia back to the U.S., and it is all part of this process.

We want to make sure that they had the resources up front so that they could get this moving and meet the commitments that they have made,

not only to us, to the taxpayers, but to the troops.

As I said at the outset, Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that we can all be very, very proud of. It has been a bill that we have worked very closely on in a bipartisan way with my opposite number on the Democratic side, Mr. EDWARDS, we have collaborated well.

I would like to, just again, thank the Rules Committee for the rule.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS).

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I have had the privilege of representing over 40,000 soldiers from Texas who have fought for our country in Iraq. I have one of the larger veterans populations in America, and that is why I am grateful to have the privilege to work with Chairman WALSH in my position as ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs.

I will talk about the substance of the bill that will be on the floor in a few moments after the rule debate is over. But let me just list four reasons why I oppose this particular rule to bring our bill to the floor.

First, as I understand this rule, it could possibly leave as much as a half a billion dollars in vital military construction programs during a time of war at risk to a technical point of order on this floor. This whole issue evolved late last night, so perhaps someone could clarify this.

I would urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, Republican and Democratic alike, to not use such a technical budget question to put at risk critical infrastructure that is needed to support our troops during a time of war; whether they are serving here at home, or they are in Iraq, Afghanistan or elsewhere.

I don't understand why the Rules Committee, which on a daily basis, bill after bill after bill, bills that are far less important than supporting our veterans or military troops, military construction and defense health care, that the Rules Committee waives technical points of order on a routine basis. I am not sure if my understanding is correct why they didn't do the same for something as important as half a billion dollars investment in military infrastructure.

The second reason I oppose this rule and urge my colleagues to vote against this rule is that the Obey amendment was not allowed. The Obey amendment would have protected that $500 million of military construction funding by paying for it, following the pay-as-you-go principle, rather than putting it under emergency spending, which could allow Members of this House potentially to strike that crucial funding.

Secondly, I was disappointed the Rules Committee refused to protect my amendment that I intended to bring on this bill today, that would have brought defense health care spending back up to the level that President Bush said is needed this year to maintain the quality of care for our troops and our retirees that Mr. WALSH referenced, and that we all should have a right to be proud of.

As a consequence of that Rules Committee decision, we could end up passing this bill today at a funding level that is $735 million below administration's designation of what is needed to maintain military health care quality this year. That could be a tragedy to have any risk of reducing military health care services, especially during the time of war.

The next reason I oppose this rule is that Congressman FARR's amendment was not protected. It was an amendment that was going to add $1.8 billion to veterans programs, important veterans programs. I will talk later in cooperation with Chairman WALSH about what I think is good in this bill for veterans and some of the increases for veterans health care spending, which he and I and members of the committee all supported.

But Mr. FARR wanted to go a step further and say we should not be freezing VA research, health research dollars. He wanted to say it is not right to say to a combat veteran who is making $29,000 a year, that you weren't wounded in combat, you haven't earned the right to get VA health care in a VA hospital because you are too wealthy.

That is kind of ironic, because just earlier this week, the House voted to give Lee Raymond, the just retired ExxonMobil CEO who got a $400 million retirement package, gave him a $2 million dividend. Mr. FARR wanted to say if we can give Mr. Lee Raymond of ExxonMobil and all of his hundreds of millions of dollars of platinum parachute retirement programs, a $2 million dividend tax cut, shouldn't we able to say to veterans making $30- or $35,000 a year, you too have earned the right to get VA health care, along with other veterans?

Mr. FARR wanted to have an amendment that enforced the law that we passed on a bipartisan basis in the late 1990s that said the VA shouldn't reduce the number of beds for veterans nursing home care.

These amendments don't take away any good things from the amendment of the bill, which I will talk about during the bill's debate. But my objection is with the Rules Committee setting one standard for unimportant bills that will, for partisan reasons, and unimportant reasons, will waive technical points of order on bills coming to this floor and do it routinely.

Yet when we come to amendments intended to try to guarantee military construction during a time of war, intended to try to help more veterans get better health care and nursing home care, the Rules Committee, on a partisan basis, said, no, we are not going to allow Democrats to have those kinds of amendments offered and protected on the floor.

For all of those reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this rule today.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, before yielding to my good friend from Texas, Judge CARTER, talking about concerns that he has, I want to make sure that all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle understand that the committee, for the first time ever, for the first time ever, used a veterans service organization's independent budget as a baseline for this fiscal 2007 funding, and essentially adopted the veterans' group recommendations to increase funds by 6.3 percent.

In regard to defense health, the defense health program is increased by $1 billion over the last year. So the total funding of $21 billion for defense health is the same as the budget request.

I want to also say, Mr. Speaker, that I had the distinct honor of traveling last summer with subcommittee chairman WALSH, as we visited some of our cemeteries in Europe, at Anzio and Normandy, our fallen soldiers in World War II and also Bella Woods, for the Marines that fell during World War I.

To see the compassion of Chairman WALSH and what he and our colleagues that served, that have the honor of serving on his committee, on both sides of the aisle, was a moving, moving experience for me. I know how important the work of this subcommittee is.

I commend Members on both sides of the aisle for their hard work in bringing this good budget. I wish we could do more, but I think the compassion is there on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to rise to say that one of the great blessings in my life that has been bestowed upon me is that I have been given a district now where we have almost 50,000 of the people who stand on the wall and defend our Nation, Fort Hood, Texas.

It has made me realize the real duty that we have to the American soldier, the American military personnel. Being on this subcommittee and being able to try to do what is good for these men and women who give their duty, honor, to our Nation every day, is a great blessing to me personally.

This bill that we have got here today is an honest attempt, within the resources, to do a great job for our military. I think, quite frankly, we have done a great job.

I would urge, and I listened to what Mr. EDWARDS had to say. Mr. EDWARDS and I worked together. He also is a very good friend of Fort Hood.

I would urge my colleagues, as they look at, as we proceed in this debate, that they, first and foremost, keep in mind that soldier, sailor, airman and marine, that stand on the wall every day and defend this Nation's freedom. As they look for technical challenges and other things that may occur, hopefully, will be corrected, that they will take that soldier's best interest in mind first.

This is, if there is a piece of legislation that goes to the Congress at any time, that thinks about the individual guy carrying a rifle, this is it.

□ 0945

If we can, we have to; and we must make sure they have the best health care, the best living facilities, the best facilities on post, the best equipment, the best that we can give them. I think we have done our very best to do that, and so I rise to speak on behalf of the American soldier and ask this House to keep the American soldier in mind in this debate.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas to respond to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, let me make two comments.

First, let me say I fully associate myself with the views expressed by my friend and colleague, the Representative of Fort Hood, Mr. CARTER. We all should consider our troops as the number one priority in whatever decisions are made today. That is far more important than any technical budget issue that can be brought up, especially during a time of war.

In terms of the gentleman from Georgia, he said that this budget provides the same amount of funding, in so many words, for defense health care as requested by the administration. I think if the gentleman will look more carefully into the budget request, what he will find is that, in addition to the appropriated funds, the administration had proposed an additional $735 million in fees that I hope this Congress will clearly, vociferously oppose.

Our subcommittee certainly didn't endorse those fee increases. Those fee increases would put a 200 percent health insurance premium on men and women who have served our military for 20 and 30 years. But as a consequence of Congress not having made the decision and, in fact, the Armed Services Committee having passed a bill recently saying that we will not increase those fees, in effect, this bill will fund defense health care this year by $735 million less than President Bush said was needed to maintain our quality health care system for our troops and for our military retirees.

That is why I had hoped the Rules Committee in all of its wisdom would have been willing to do what it does on a regular basis, to protect my $735 million amendment to get defense health care spending back where President Bush says it needs to be, to protect my amendment from a technical budget point of order. Unfortunately, the Rules Committee chose to weigh in on the side of budget technicalities that it ignores on a regular basis and didn't weigh in on the side of protecting our present quality of defense health care for our troops.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Texas, the minority member of the subcommittee, I very much respect. I very much respect the work that he has done.

I mentioned that trip last summer. Of course, Representative EDWARDS was a part of that. Representative CARTER, my good friend from Texas, was also a part of that trip when we visited those military cemeteries and looked at MILCON construction in Europe and the importance of all these things we do.

I agree with what the gentleman said in regard to the administration proposing to increase fees for our military retirees under age 65, certain categories of veterans in copays and deductibles, to be able to raise, I think he mentioned the figure of 700 and something million dollars. He was opposed to it, the subcommittee was opposed to it, the entire committee was opposed to it, and we rejected it as we did last year when the administration wanted to do that.

I commend him, and I commend the chairman and the entire committee for their work in regard to that. We are not really in any disagreement in regard to the points that he just made, and I commend him for his work.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, this morning, I am not even going to talk about the fact that on this side of the aisle we feel that this bill is short by at least $1.8 billion in providing the kind of health and medical care that we think ought to be provided for our veterans.

But I want to talk about two other problems in the bill. Because this bill, first of all, continues the fiction that somehow it is likely, or desirable, that $735 million in additional fees will be laid onto our retired military. I do not believe that that should happen, and I do not believe that will happen. And if it doesn't, then this bill has a $735 million hole that it is going to have to fill.

Secondly, this bill has a very interesting budget gimmick that essentially allows this bill to come to the floor $500 million above the budget resolution that was adopted just 2 nights ago by the Republican majority.

Here is what happened. The administration sent down in the military construction bill their request to move ahead with about 310 military infrastructure projects. What the committee did was to designate 20 of those projects, and there is nothing emergency about those projects, but they need to proceed. What the committee did was essentially to take 20 of those projects and simply label the expenditures for those projects as being emergency.

Why did they do that? Because it then made room in the bill for the committee to add projects of their own totaling $507 million. So that is a $507 million gimmick which allows this bill to come to the floor in reality $507 million above the Republican budget resolution.

As a result of the rule which is now being brought to the floor, there will be several choices that people will have to make. Members will now be free to strike the emergency designation for those projects. If they do, then the bill has to be taken off the floor because it exceeds the budget cap, unless the committee itself moves to simply take all of those projects out of the bill. As a result, if those projects are taken out of the bill, we then have a hole in the administration request. If they aren't taken out of the bill, then we, in effect, are $507 million above the budget that the Republicans pledged their loyalty to just 2 days ago. And in addition to that, down the line you are still going to have to find $735 million to make up for the fiction that there is some possibility in this place that those additional fees ought to be laid on our retired military.

I think this is another quaint example of the majority party fealty to their own budget resolution and we are forced to encounter these ridiculous budgetary gimmicks because the majority party refused to fix the problem. I offered an amendment in committee to try to fix the problem, at least to fix the problem of the $507 million. I simply suggested that we support an amendment which would cut the size of the tax cut for people making a million dollars, and they are going to get a $114,000 tax cut this year. We simply suggested that if you can cut the size of that $114,000 tax cut by 1,400 bucks, you could pay on the square, without any gimmicks, for that $507 million.

That is what we should have done. But the majority party thought that it was more important to deliver a $114,000 tax cut to millionaires than it was to play straight with the budget process and to play straight with their own budget resolution and to play straight with the American people.

Very interesting. Very interesting.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers at this time, so I will reserve the balance of my time for the purpose of closing.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5½ minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentlewoman's courtesy in permitting me to speak on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I, too, am sad that we don't have maximum flexibility under the way the rule is structured to speak to the needs of American veterans; and I will vote against it. But I hope that we can spend this time also focusing on some broader issues.

Luckily, there is a provision that will permit me to provide an amendment today to help with the cleanup of the vast toxic legacy that America faces in every State of the Union from unexploded munitions and military toxins, from training exercises, from old military depots, from having shells lobbed by generations of cadets at West

Point that have been in the Storm King Forest. Every State in the Union, over 3,000 sites, have been identified as areas that need cleanup.

I want to say I appreciate what Mr. WALSH, Mr. EDWARDS and Mr. FARR have done with this important military quality of life committee in starting to focus on this. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, the real problem is that Congress has been missing in action when it comes to cleaning up this toxic legacy.

I had a Member of this body yesterday tell me, well, we really don't need to put more money in it. He wasn't sure that it was worth it. Let's just have barbed wire around them, keep people out and save the money for things that are more important. This is a Member that I deeply respect but who betrayed a tragic lack of understanding of exactly the scope and magnitude of this problem and what would be the benefit of handling it properly.

I could tell this gentleman that there were dozens of cases where innocent civilians, in some cases children, have been killed because bombs have turned up in the back of a subdivision that people have just walked away from. Or the gentleman rototilling his yard in Five Points, Texas, rototilling up a bomb. Or three times since I have been in Congress we have had to pull firefighters out of forest fires because bombs were exploding, generated by the heat.

Now these are not things that we can simply walk away from. There are areas where munitions break down over time and the toxic leaks into the groundwater which creates a larger problem.

There is also the notion that there are 10 million, 20 million, 30 million acres or more, nobody knows exactly how much, polluted or potentially polluted that is not available for hunting and fishing, that is not available for redevelopment, for housing, for industrial use, to be put back on the tax rolls.

Ultimately, this is a responsibility that the Department of Defense and the Federal Government is going to have to assume. Putting up barbed wire and walking away doesn't solve the problem.

But one of the things that I would hope would focus attention by Members of this assembly is not just the long-term benefits, not just cleaning it up, not just returning it to productive use but think about who is at risk, because it is our soldiers, their families, the employees of these bases and their neighbors that are most at risk.

□ 1000

What is to be solved by kicking the can down the road and ignoring it?

Last, but by no means least, if we get the technology right that will enable us to find out whether it is a hubcap or a 105-millimeter shell that is buried under the ground, that just doesn't help us clean up these 3,000 sites in the United States. That same technology would save the lives of our soldiers right now who are at risk every day in Iraq from roadside bombs, from land mines. That is how I lost my first constituent in Iraq, was a young man killed by a land mine.

By Congress continuing to be missing in action not taking a significant step to clean up this toxic explosive legacy, we are not just putting at risk the environment, we are not just putting at risk children who are playing in subdivisions or firefighters who will fight in the next forest fire where there are bombs and toxic legacy, they are putting at risk our soldiers, our men and women overseas who won't benefit from the techniques and the technology.

I appreciate what the subcommittee has done trying to train the attention. It is time for this body to step up and agitate to make their job a little harder and for our friends on the Appropriations Committee in Defense appropriations to invest in doing this right.

I oppose the rule. I look forward to bringing an amendment later in the debate to be able to at least put a little bit of money to deal with the problem in other parts of the United States now.

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

I thank the gentleman for his passion on this issue and the very clear presentation that he made. I want to remind him and my colleagues that I think we authorized an additional $250 million in the Defense Authorization Bill of 2007 which we passed last week.

In regard to specifically, he mentioned about the technology that could be used for ferreting out improvised explosive devices, and he mentioned, of course, that the first soldier from his district was killed by one of those devices. And I know that Members on both sides of the aisle have certainly experienced that. This particular Member from the 11th of Georgia has experienced it as well. So it is an important issue, and it is clear that we are doing everything we can to try to defend against these cowardly attacks of improvised explosive devices.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to reserve the balance of my time for purposes of closing.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers. I understand the gentleman has no additional speakers.

Mr. GINGREY. I have no additional speakers.

Ms. MATSUI. Then I will proceed to my closing.

Mr. Speaker, I will be asking Members for a ''no'' vote on the previous question. If the previous question is defeated, I will amend the rule so we can consider three important amendments that were not included in this rule. These amendments will help fix the funding shortfalls in this bill.

I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of these amendments and extraneous materials immediately prior to the vote.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. MATSUI. The first amendment by Ranking Member OBEY would pay for the $507 million cost for 20 routine military construction projects instead of designating them as ''emergency spending'' so that the funding would not count against the bill's allocation.

The Obey amendment pays for the 20 projects by reducing the tax cuts for people making more than $1 million a year by $1,400 or 1 percent.

The second amendment by subcommittee Ranking Member EDWARDS provides the $735 million needed to fully fund the Defense Health Program throughout the next year. The cost of the amendment is offset by reducing by 2 percent the tax cut for those making over $1 million annually.

The third amendment by Representative FARR, would increase veterans health care by $1.82 billion and pay for it by reducing the average tax cut for those with incomes above $1 million a year by about $5,000, leaving them with $109,025,

Mr. Speaker, these amendments together will help us meet the obligations we have to the members of our military, our veterans and their families. This Nation made a promise to those serving in the military that they would receive quality health care in return for their valiant service to this country, and now that wounded soldiers are returning to their homes, they deserve the best medical treatment and care available.

We can fix this today if we allow these amendments to be considered on the floor. But the only way that will happen is if we defeat the previous question.

I want to assure my colleagues that a ''no'' vote will not prevent us from considering the Military Quality of Life Veterans Appropriations bill under an open rule. But a ''no'' vote will allow us to vote on these important amendments.

Vote ''no'' on the previous question.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I would again like to thank Subcommittee Chairman WALSH, ranking minority member EDWARDS, and Chairman LEWIS for leading the committee in the production and shepherding of this bill.

We can never do enough for our veterans. I think we all want to, but understand that this bill represents a victory for our serviceman and women in all stages of service, from recruitment to retirement.

I encourage my colleagues to support this rule and underlying bill. And so I rise, again, in support of the rule, and as I say, in support of the underlying bill in recognition of its importance to the men and women who have and will continue to serve and protect America. Our servicemen and women put their lives on the line each and every day and we have a responsibility to support

them in any and every way possible as they make these significant sacrifices for the safety and security of this great Nation. We must provide them with everything that they need, not only to succeed in their military duty, but also to enjoy the quality of life that they and their families so much deserve.

Again, Mr. Speaker, with spending totaling $94.7 billion, this bill includes significant increases to the veterans medical care and benefits, military construction and the Defense Health Care Program. I encourage, then, my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support both this rule and the underlying bill for the sake of those who spend their lives defending ours.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I could not be present today because of a family medical emergency and I would like to submit this statement for the RECORD in opposition to the previous question and H. Res. 821, the rule providing for consideration of the FY2007 Military Quality of Life appropriations bill (H.R. 5385).

The Veterans' Administration has treated more than 144,000 returning veterans from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, and nearly 30,000 veterans are waiting in line for their first appointment—nearly double the number last year. However, funding for veterans and military retiree health care has barely kept pace with the increasing demand. As a result our young men and women will return home from Iraq and Afghanistan to a health care system that is struggling to take care of current veterans—let alone new ones.

While the bill before us today is certainly an improvement over last year's bill, it still underfunds critical programs and services that our veterans and military retirees rely on. For instance, even as the Defense Authorization Bill (H.R. 5122) we passed last week rightfully rejected the President's plan to increase fees for military retirees, this bill still falls $735 million short of the level needed to ensure that military retirees do not face having their TRICARE fees doubled or tripled. In addition, this bill uses a budgeting gimmick to designate $507 million for 20 military construction projects as emergency spending so that the committee could keep the overall total under the bill's allocation level—jeopardizing this critical funding by leaving it vulnerable to procedural points of order that could strip it from this bill. Finally, this bill provides $25.4 billion for veteran's medical services—$2.6 billion more than last year, but still $400 million below the recommendation of the Independent Budget and $2.8 billion below the level recommended by the House Veterans Affairs Committee Democrats.

Unfortunately, Democratic amendments to address these shortcomings were rejected by Republicans on the Appropriations Committee and are blocked from being considered here today by this rule. These pragmatic measures would have made this a stronger bill that fulfils our promise to our military retirees and veterans. I urge the defeat of the previous question and this rule so that we can debate critical amendments to ensure that veterans and military retirees get the timely, quality, and affordable health care they deserve.

The material previously referred to by Ms. MATSUI is as follows:

PREVIOUS QUESTION STATEMENT H. RES. 821—RULE FOR H.R. 5385 FY06 MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE—VA APPROPRIATIONS

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Notwithstanding any other provision of this resolution, it shall be in order to consider the amendments printed in section 3, which may be offered only in the order specified, may be offered only by the Member designated or a designee, shall be considered as read, shall not be subject to amendment except pro forma amendments for the purpose of debate, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived.

SEC. 3. The amendments referred to in section 2 are as follows:

(a) Amendment to be offered by Representative OBEY of Wisconsin.

AMENDMENT TO H.R.5385, AS REPORTED

OFFERED BY MR. OBEY OF WISCONSIN

Page 58, line 20, strike ''2011:'' and all that follows through line 25 and insert ''2011.''.

Page 59, line 4, strike ''2011:'' and all that follows through line 9 and insert ''2011.''.

Page 59, line 13, strike ''2011:'' and all that follows through line 18 and insert ''2011.''.

Page 59, line 22, strike ''2011:'' and all that follows through page 60, line 2, and insert ''2011.''.

Page 60, line 6, strike ''2011:'' and all that follows through line 11 and insert ''2011.''.

Page 60, line 15, strike ''2011:'' and all that follows through line 20 and insert ''2011.''.

At the end of title IV (page 60, after line 20), insert the following new section:

SEC. 401. In the case of taxpayers with income in excess of $1,000,000, for the calendar year beginning in 2007, the amount of tax reduction resulting from the enactment of Public Laws 107–16, 108–27, and 108–311 shall be reduced by 1.23 percent.

(b) Amendment to be offered by Representative Edwards of Texas

AMENDMENT TO H.R. 5385, AS REPORTED

OFFERED BY MR. EDWARDS OF TEXAS

Page 19, line 8, strike ''$21,065,163,000'' and insert ''$21,800,163,000''.

Page 19, line 9, strike ''$20,218,205,000'' and insert ''$20,953,205,000''.

At the end of title I (page 35, after line 2), insert the following new section:

SEC. 136. In the case of taxpayers with income in excess of $1,000,000, for the calendar year beginning in 2007, the amount of tax reduction resulting from the enactment of Public Laws 107–16, 108–27, and 108–311 shall be reduced by 1.78 percent.

(c) Amendment to be offered by Representative Farr of California

AMENDMENT TO H.R. 5385, AS REPORTED

OFFERED BY MR. FARR OF CALIFORNIA

Page 39, line 22, strike ''$25,412,000,000'' and insert ''$26,875,000,000''.

Page 41, line 1, strike ''$3,277,000,000'' and insert ''$3,390,000,000''.

Page 42, line 2, strike ''$412,000,000'' and insert ''$460,000,000''.

Page 42, line 14, strike ''$1,480,764,000'' and insert ''$1,553,764,000''.

Page 44, line 21, strike ''$69,499,000'' and insert ''$77,499,000''.

Page 45, line 13, strike ''$283,670,000'' and insert ''$399,000,000''.

At the end of title II (page 56, after line 8), insert the following new section:

SEC. 223. In the case of taxpayers with income in excess of $1,000,000, for the calendar year beginning in 2007, the amount of tax reduction resulting from the enactment of Public Laws 107–16, 108–27, and 108–311 shall be reduced by 4.4 percent.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives, (VI, 308–311) describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

Because the vote today may look bad for the Republican majority they will say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for electronic voting, if ordered, on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 211, nays 186, not voting 35, as follows:

[Roll No. 173]

YEAS—211

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Boozman
Boustany
Bradley (NH)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Chocola
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeLay
Dent
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Emerson
Everett
Feeney
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Green (WI)
Gutknecht
Hall
Harris
Hart
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hostettler
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Istook
Jenkins
Jindal
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Marchant
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy
Myrick
Neugebauer
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Nussle
Osborne
Otter
Oxley
Paul
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Poe
Pombo
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Saxton
Schwarz (MI)
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Sodrel
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (FL)

NAYS—186

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (OH)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Case
Chandler
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (TN)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Edwards
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Filner
Ford
Frank (MA)
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kind
Kucinich
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Lee
Levin
Lipinski
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sabo
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz (PA)
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sherman
Skelton
Slaughter
Snyder
Solis
Spratt
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

NOT VOTING—35

Andrews
Beauprez
Bishop (GA)
Bonner
Cubin
Davis (FL)
Davis (KY)
Diaz-Balart, L.
English (PA)
Evans
Fattah
Fossella
Gohmert
Kennedy (RI)
Larson (CT)
Leach
Lewis (GA)
Manzullo
McCrery
McKinney
Moran (VA)
Musgrave
Oberstar
Pearce
Platts
Reynolds
Rogers (MI)
Sanders
Schmidt
Smith (WA)
Stark
Strickland
Stupak
Thomas
Young (AK)

□ 1034

Mr. RANGEL changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 216, noes 187, not voting 29, as follows:

[Roll No. 174]

AYES—216

Abercrombie
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Boozman
Boustany
Bradley (NH)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Chocola
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeLay
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Emerson
Everett
Feeney
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Green (WI)
Gutknecht
Hall
Harris
Hart
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hostettler
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Istook
Jenkins
Jindal
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Marchant
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy
Myrick
Neugebauer
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Nussle
Osborne
Otter
Oxley
Paul
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Poe
Pombo
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Saxton
Schwarz (MI)
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Sodrel
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (FL)

NOES—187

Ackerman
Allen
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell

Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (OH)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Case
Chandler
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (TN)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Edwards
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Filner
Ford
Frank (MA)
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kind
Kucinich
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Lee
Levin
Lipinski
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sabo
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz (PA)
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sherman
Skelton
Slaughter
Snyder
Solis
Spratt
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

NOT VOTING—29

Andrews
Beauprez
Bishop (GA)
Bonner
Cubin
Davis (FL)
Davis (KY)
English (PA)
Evans
Fattah
Gohmert
Kennedy (RI)
Larson (CT)
Lewis (GA)
Manzullo
McCrery
Moran (VA)
Musgrave
Pearce
Platts
Reynolds
Sanders
Schmidt
Smith (WA)
Stark
Strickland
Stupak
Thomas
Young (AK)

□ 1043

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, earlier today, I was unavoidably detained and missed two rollcall votes.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 173, On Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 821, the Rule for H.R. 5385; and "aye" on rollcall vote No. 174, On Adoption of the Rule for H.R. 5385.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

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

S. 193. An act to increase the penalties for violations by television and radio broadcasters of the prohibitions against transmission of obscene, indecent, and profane language.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the amendment of the House of Representatives to the amendment of the Senate to the text of the bill (H.R. 1499) ''An Act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow members of the Armed Forces serving in a combat zone to make contributions to their individual retirement plans even if the compensation on which such contribution is based is excluded from gross income, and for other purposes.''.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 1928a–1928d of title 22, Untied States Code, as amended, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the following Senators to the Senate Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, during the 109th Congress:

The Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY).

The Senator from Colorado (Mr. ALLARD).

The Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS).

The Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH).

The Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN).

The message also announced that pursuant to section 1928a–1928d of title 22, United States Code, as amended, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the following Senators as members of the Senate Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, during the 109th Congress:

The Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY).

The Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 5385, and that I may include tabular material on the same.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1045

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). Pursuant to House Resolution 821 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 5385.

□ 1045

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 5385) making appropriations for the military quality of life functions of the Department of Defense, military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes, with Mr. SHIMKUS in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, today I am proud to present the Fiscal Year 2007 Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for consideration of the House.

The Appropriations Committee has dedicated to providing a suitable quality of life for our servicemen and women from recruitment through retirement. I believe this bill is fiscally responsible, while improving the quality of life for our all-volunteer force throughout their military careers and beyond. It also builds upon initiatives begun last year to get the Defense Department and the Department of Veterans Affairs to be more cooperative and expand synergies that exist between them.

The bill totals $136.1 billion. It stays within our discretionary allocation of $94.7 billion, which is $824 million below the budget request. But, more importantly, the bill is $8.5 billion over last year's level after adjusting VA medical services for contingency funding.

The increases above last year are in four areas: veterans medical care, active duty military medical care, housing allowances for military families, and the first year of major construction for the new BRAC round recommendations.

Mr. Chairman, the bill continues to improve military health care and recommends $21 billion for fiscal year 2007 for the defense health program. This is a sizeable increase of $1 billion above last year's level and represents more than a 40 percent increase in this budget since fiscal year 2003.

For veterans medical care, the bill recommends $25.4 billion, a $2.9 billion increase, or 12.7 percent, over last year's level. This program has increased $7.6 billion, or 43 percent, since

2004. I do not know what could speak more for the priorities of this House or this Congress or our committee than this commitment to our Nation's veterans.

For military construction, including funding to support the global war on terrorism, the bill provides $16.3 billion. The remainder of the bill funds a variety of defense programs and four related agencies, most of which are funded at the budget request.

I would like to mention that an additional $40 million in funding is recommended for two programs to accelerate environmental clean-up at formerly used defense sites and closed installations dating back to the 1988 BRAC round.

Mr. Chairman, we have a responsibility to make sure the limited resources we have are spent efficiently and effectively and that programs achieve their mission. We are, after all, at war; and we need to make sure that our current active duty personnel understand that the commitments to our former warfighters are kept. If we keep our promises to our former warfighters. We will keep our promises to those who are fighting today. This bill accomplishes that, while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the chairman of the full committee, Chairman LEWIS, for his vision and leadership and for the allocation that he has provided our subcommittee, probably the most generous of all of the subcommittee allocations.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to thank sincerely my ranking member and colleague and friend, Mr. EDWARDS of Texas, for his hard work. He knows these issues cold. He is a good collaborator, a good person to work with. I respect his thoughts, I respect his work ethic, and I think this is a product of both of our vision.

I would also like to thank Mr. OBEY, as ranking member of the full committee, for working with us throughout this process. While we may have some differences, I think overall clearly this is a bipartisan bill that expresses the views of this House that our veterans and our active duty service personnel are our highest priority.

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE I - DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE					
Military construction, Army	1,757,507	2,059,762	1,756,298	-1,209	-303,464
Rescissions	-19,746	---	-43,348	-23,602	-43,348
Total	1,737,761	2,059,762	1,712,950	-24,811	-346,812
Military construction, Navy and Marine Corps	1,145,570	1,162,038	1,193,834	+48,264	+31,796
Rescissions	-50,037	---	-38,000	+12,037	-38,000
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	291,219	---	---	-291,219	---
Total	1,386,752	1,162,038	1,155,834	-230,918	-6,204
Military construction, Air Force	1,275,645	1,156,148	1,187,550	-88,095	+31,402
Rescissions	-29,100	---	-2,694	+26,406	-2,694
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	52,612	---	---	-52,612	---
Total	1,299,157	1,156,148	1,184,856	-114,301	+28,708
Military construction, Defense-Wide	998,766	1,208,198	1,107,606	+108,840	-100,592
Rescissions	-20,000	---	-110,229	-90,229	-110,229
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	45,000	---	---	-45,000	---
Total	1,023,766	1,208,198	997,377	-26,389	-210,821
Total, Active components	5,447,436	5,586,146	5,051,017	-396,419	-535,129
Military construction, Army National Guard	517,919	473,197	512,873	-5,046	+39,676
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	374,300	---	---	-374,300	---
Total	892,219	473,197	512,873	-379,346	+39,676
Military construction, Air National Guard	312,956	125,788	207,088	-105,868	+81,300
Rescissions	-13,700	---	---	+13,700	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	35,000	---	---	-35,000	---
Total	334,256	125,788	207,088	-127,168	+81,300
Military construction, Army Reserve	151,043	166,487	167,774	+16,731	+1,287
Military construction, Navy Reserve	46,395	48,408	55,158	+8,763	+6,750
Rescissions	-16,560	---	---	+16,560	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	120,132	---	---	-120,132	---
Total	149,967	48,408	55,158	-94,809	+6,750
Military construction, Air Force Reserve	104,824	44,936	56,836	-47,988	+11,900
Rescissions	-13,815	---	---	+13,815	---
Total	91,009	44,936	56,836	-34,173	+11,900
Total, Reserve components	1,618,494	858,816	999,729	-618,765	+140,913
Total, Military construction	7,065,930	6,444,962	6,050,746	-1,015,184	-394,216
Appropriations	(6,310,625)	(6,444,962)	(6,245,017)	(-65,608)	(-199,945)
Emergency appropriations	(918,263)	---	---	(-918,263)	---
Rescissions	(-162,958)	---	(-194,271)	(-31,313)	(-194,271)
North Atlantic Treaty Organization Security Investment Program	204,789	220,985	200,985	-3,804	-20,000
Rescissions	-30,000	---	---	+30,000	---
Total	174,789	220,985	200,985	+26,196	-20,000

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Family housing construction, Army	544,140	594,991	578,791	+34,651	-16,200
Rescissions	-16,000	---	---	+16,000	---
Total	528,140	594,991	578,791	+50,651	-16,200
Family housing operation and maintenance, Army	795,953	676,829	674,657	-121,296	-2,172
Family housing construction, Navy and Marine Corps	216,753	305,071	308,956	+92,203	+3,885
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	86,165	---	---	-86,165	---
Total	302,918	305,071	308,956	+6,038	+3,885
Family housing operation and maintenance, Navy and Marine Corps	582,773	509,126	509,126	-73,647	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	48,889	---	---	-48,889	---
Total	631,662	509,126	509,126	-122,536	---
Family housing construction, Air Force	1,090,868	1,183,138	1,169,138	+78,270	-14,000
Rescissions	-43,900	---	-66,200	-22,300	-66,200
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	278,000	---	---	-278,000	---
Total	1,324,968	1,183,138	1,102,938	-222,030	-80,200
Family housing operation and maintenance, Air Force	759,270	755,071	755,071	-4,199	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	47,019	---	---	-47,019	---
Total	806,289	755,071	755,071	-51,218	---
Family housing construction, Defense-Wide	---	8,808	8,808	+8,808	---
Family housing operation and maintenance, Defense-Wide	45,927	48,506	48,506	+2,579	---
Department of Defense Family Housing Improvement Fund	2,475	2,500	2,500	+25	---
Total, Family housing	4,438,332	4,084,040	3,989,353	-448,979	-94,687
Appropriations	(4,038,159)	(4,084,040)	(4,055,553)	(+17,394)	(-28,487)
Emergency appropriations	(460,073)	---	---	(-460,073)	---
Rescissions	(-59,900)	---	(-66,200)	(-6,300)	(-66,200)
Chemical demilitarization construction, Defense-Wide	---	130,993	90,993	+90,993	-40,000
Base realignment and closure:					
Base realignment and closure account, 1990	252,279	191,220	216,220	-36,059	+25,000
Base realignment and closure account, 2005	1,489,421	5,626,223	5,309,876	+3,820,455	-316,347
Total, Base realignment and closure	1,741,700	5,817,443	5,526,096	+3,784,396	-291,347
Basic Allowance for Housing: 1/					
Army	3,880,723	3,687,905	3,687,905	-192,818	---
Navy	3,511,570	4,135,061	4,135,061	+623,491	---
Marine Corps	1,166,686	1,350,921	1,350,921	+184,235	---
Air Force	3,162,073	2,934,327	2,934,327	-227,746	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	6,526	---	---	-6,526	---
Total	3,168,599	2,934,327	2,934,327	-234,272	---
Army National Guard	444,819	469,109	469,109	+24,290	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	32,294	---	---	-32,294	---
Total	477,113	469,109	469,109	-8,004	---
Air National Guard	238,396	277,533	277,533	+39,137	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	10,289	---	---	-10,289	---
Total	248,685	277,533	277,533	+28,848	---

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Army Reserve	306,642	347,607	347,607	+40,965	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	361	---	---	-361	---
Total	307,003	347,607	347,607	+40,604	---
Navy Reserve	189,141	208,838	208,838	+19,697	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	1,053	---	---	-1,053	---
Total	190,194	208,838	208,838	+18,644	---
Marine Corps Reserve	40,134	43,082	43,082	+2,948	---
Air Force Reserve	69,357	76,218	76,218	+6,861	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	85	---	---	-85	---
Total	69,442	76,218	76,218	+6,776	---
Total, Basic Allowance for Housing	13,060,149	13,530,601	13,530,601	+470,452	---
Appropriations	(13,009,541)	(13,530,601)	(13,530,601)	(+521,060)	---
Emergency appropriations	(50,608)	---	---	(-50,608)	---
Facilities Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization: 1/					
Army	1,832,607	1,810,774	1,810,774	-21,833	---
Navy	1,331,521	1,201,313	1,201,313	-130,208	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	215,499	---	---	-215,499	---
Total	1,547,020	1,201,313	1,201,313	-345,707	---
Marine Corps	548,420	473,141	473,141	-75,279	---
Air Force	1,827,246	1,684,019	1,684,019	-143,227	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	69,005	---	---	-69,005	---
Total	1,896,251	1,684,019	1,684,019	-212,232	---
Defense-Wide	115,731	86,386	86,386	-29,345	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	5,238	---	---	-5,238	---
Total	120,969	86,386	86,386	-34,583	---
Army National Guard	392,579	387,882	387,882	-4,697	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	49,217	---	---	-49,217	---
Total	441,796	387,882	387,882	-53,914	---
Air National Guard	177,993	255,322	255,322	+77,329	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	13,557	---	---	-13,557	---
Total	191,550	255,322	255,322	+63,772	---
Army Reserve	202,326	215,890	215,890	+13,564	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	1,128	---	---	-1,128	---
Total	203,454	215,890	215,890	+12,436	---
Navy Reserve	67,110	52,136	52,136	-14,974	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	310,024	---	---	-310,024	---
Total	377,134	52,136	52,136	-324,998	---
Marine Corps Reserve	10,004	9,579	9,579	-425	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	1,094	---	---	-1,094	---
Total	11,098	9,579	9,579	-1,519	---

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Air Force Reserve	49,860	59,849	59,849	+9,989	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	1,917	---	---	-1,917	---
Total	51,777	59,849	59,849	+8,072	---
Total, Facilities Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization	7,222,076	6,236,291	6,236,291	-985,785	---
Appropriations	(6,555,397)	(6,236,291)	(6,236,291)	(-319,106)	---
Emergency appropriations	(666,679)	---	---	(-666,679)	---
Environmental Restoration: 1/					
Army	403,786	413,794	413,794	+10,008	---
Navy	302,222	304,409	304,409	+2,187	---
Air Force	402,396	423,871	423,871	+21,475	---
Defense-Wide	27,885	18,431	18,431	-9,454	---
Formerly used Defense sites	254,352	242,790	257,790	+3,438	+15,000
Total, Environmental Restoration	1,390,641	1,403,295	1,418,295	+27,654	+15,000
Defense Health Program: 1/					
Operation and maintenance	19,106,789	20,498,163	20,218,205	+1,111,416	-279,958
Rescission	---	---	-40,042	-40,042	-40,042
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	120,000	---	---	-120,000	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	172,958	---	---	-172,958	---
Total, Operation and maintenance	19,399,747	20,498,163	20,178,163	+778,416	-320,000
Procurement	375,328	396,355	402,855	+27,527	+6,500
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	28,592	---	---	-28,592	---
Total, Procurement	403,920	396,355	402,855	-1,065	+6,500
Research and development	536,883	130,603	444,103	-92,780	+313,500
Total, Defense Health Program	20,340,550	21,025,121	21,025,121	+684,571	---
Appropriations	(20,019,000)	(21,025,121)	(21,065,163)	(+1,046,163)	(+40,042)
Emergency appropriations	(321,550)	---	---	(-321,550)	---
Total, title I	55,434,167	58,893,731	58,068,481	+2,634,314	-825,250
Appropriations	(53,269,852)	(58,893,731)	(58,368,994)	(+5,099,142)	(-524,737)
Emergency appropriations	(2,417,173)	---	---	(-2,417,173)	---
Rescissions	(-252,858)	---	(-300,513)	(-47,655)	(-300,513)

1/ Funding for these programs in fiscal year 2006 was included in the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2006. Amounts are shown here for comparison purposes.

TITLE II - DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Veterans Benefits Administration

Compensation and pensions	33,897,787	38,007,095	38,007,095	+4,109,308	---
Readjustment benefits	3,309,234	3,262,006	3,262,006	-47,228	---
Veterans insurance and indemnities	45,907	49,850	49,850	+3,943	---
Veterans housing benefit program fund program account (indefinite)	64,586	196,692	196,692	+132,106	---
(Limitation on direct loans)	(500)	(500)	(500)	---	---
Credit subsidy	-112,000	-100,000	-100,000	+12,000	---
Administrative expenses	153,575	153,185	153,185	-390	---
Vocational rehabilitation loans program account	53	53	67	+14	+14
(Limitation on direct loans)	(4,242)	(4,242)	(3,369)	(-873)	(-873)
Administrative expenses	305	305	305	---	---

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Native American veteran housing loan program account..	580	615	615	+35	---
(Limitation on direct loans).....	(30,000)	(30,000)	(30,000)	---	---
Total, Veterans Benefits Administration.....	37,360,027	41,569,801	41,569,815	+4,209,788	+14
Veterans Health Administration					
Medical services.....	21,322,141	25,512,000	25,412,000	+4,089,859	-100,000
Emergency appropriations.....	1,225,000	---	---	-1,225,000	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	198,265	---	---	-198,265	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	27,000	---	---	-27,000	---
Subtotal, Medical Services.....	22,772,406	25,512,000	25,412,000	+2,639,594	-100,000
Medical administration.....	2,858,442	3,177,000	3,277,000	+418,558	+100,000
Medical facilities.....	3,297,669	3,569,000	3,594,000	+296,331	+25,000
Medical and prosthetic research.....	412,000	399,000	412,000	---	+13,000
Medical care cost recovery collections:					
Offsetting collections.....	-2,170,000	-2,329,000	-2,329,000	-159,000	---
Appropriations (indefinite).....	2,170,000	2,329,000	2,329,000	+159,000	---
Total, Veterans Health Administration.....	29,340,517	32,657,000	32,695,000	+3,354,483	+38,000
Departmental Administration					
General operating expenses.....	1,410,520	1,480,764	1,480,764	+70,244	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	24,871	---	---	-24,871	---
Information technology systems.....	1,213,820	1,257,000	1,302,330	+88,510	+45,330
National Cemetery Administration.....	156,447	160,733	160,733	+4,286	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	200	---	---	-200	---
Office of Inspector General.....	70,174	69,499	69,499	-675	---
Construction, major projects.....	607,100	399,000	283,670	-323,430	-115,330
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	367,500	---	---	-367,500	---
Construction, minor projects.....	198,937	198,000	210,000	+11,063	+12,000
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148).....	1,800	---	---	-1,800	---
Grants for construction of State extended care facilities.....	85,000	85,000	105,000	+20,000	+20,000
Grants for the construction of State veterans cemeteries.....	32,000	32,000	32,000	---	---
Disaster Compensation for Veterans (Emergency) (P.L. 109-148).....	3,000	---	---	-3,000	---
Total, Departmental Administration.....	4,171,369	3,681,996	3,643,996	-527,373	-38,000
Total, title II.....	70,871,913	77,908,797	77,908,811	+7,036,898	+14
Appropriations.....	(69,024,277)	(77,908,797)	(77,908,811)	(+8,884,534)	(+14)
Emergency appropriations.....	(1,847,636)	---	---	(-1,847,636)	---
(Limitation on direct loans).....	(34,742)	(34,742)	(33,869)	(-873)	(-873)
Discretionary.....	33,666,399	36,493,154	36,493,168	+2,826,769	+14
Mandatory.....	37,205,514	41,415,643	41,415,643	+4,210,129	---
TITLE III - RELATED AGENCIES					
American Battle Monuments Commission					
Salaries and expenses.....	35,888	35,838	37,088	+1,200	+1,250
Foreign currency fluctuations account.....	15,098	4,900	4,900	-10,198	---
Total, American Battle Monuments Commission.....	50,986	40,738	41,988	-8,998	+1,250

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims					
Salaries and expenses	18,607	19,790	19,790	+1,183	---
Department of Defense - Civil					
Cemeterial Expenses, Army					
Salaries and expenses	28,760	26,550	26,550	-2,210	---
Armed Forces Retirement Home					
Operation and maintenance	56,463	54,846	54,846	-1,617	---
Capital program	1,236	---	---	-1,236	---
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 109-148)	65,800	---	---	-65,800	---
Total, Armed Forces Retirement Home	123,499	54,846	54,846	-68,653	---
Total, title III	221,852	141,924	143,174	-78,678	+1,250
Appropriations	(156,052)	(141,924)	(143,174)	(-12,878)	(+1,250)
Emergency appropriations	(65,800)	---	---	(-65,800)	---
TITLE IV - DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS					
Military Construction, Army (contingency operations)	---	---	379,300	+379,300	+379,300
Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps (contingency operations)	---	---	26,037	+26,037	+26,037
Military Construction, Air Force (contingency operations)	---	---	49,923	+49,923	+49,923
Military Construction, Defense-Wide (contingency operations)	---	---	44,500	+44,500	+44,500
Military Construction, Army National Guard (contingency operations)	---	---	5,530	+5,530	+5,530
Military Construction, Army Reserve (contingency operations)	---	---	1,713	+1,713	+1,713
Total, Title IV	---	---	507,003	+507,003	+507,003
Grand total	126,527,932	136,944,452	136,120,466	+9,592,534	-823,986
Appropriations	(122,450,181)	(136,944,452)	(136,420,979)	(+13,970,798)	(-523,473)
Emergency appropriations	(4,330,609)	---	---	(-4,330,609)	---
Rescissions	(-252,858)	---	(-300,513)	(-47,655)	(-300,513)

Note: FY 2006 enacted figures for Title I and III reflect a 1% across the board cut (P.L. 109-148). Title II is exempt.

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET RECAP					
Scorekeeping adjustments:					
Emergency appropriations defense	-2,417,173	---	-507,003	+1,910,170	-507,003
Emergency appropriations non-defense	-1,913,436	---	---	+1,913,436	---
ATB adjustment	-230	---	---	+230	---
Total, adjustments	-4,330,839	---	-507,003	+3,823,836	-507,003
Total (including adjustments)	122,197,093	136,944,452	136,120,466	+13,923,373	-823,986
Amounts in this bill	---	---	---	---	---
Scorekeeping adjustments	(-4,330,839)	---	(-507,003)	(+3,823,836)	(-507,003)
Prior year outlays	---	---	---	---	---
Total mandatory and discretionary	122,197,093	136,944,452	136,120,466	+13,923,373	-823,986
Mandatory	(37,205,514)	(41,415,643)	(41,415,643)	(+4,210,129)	---
Mandatory (prior year)	---	---	---	---	---
Mandatory (total)	(37,205,514)	(41,415,643)	(41,415,643)	(+4,210,129)	---
Discretionary	(84,991,579)	(95,528,809)	(94,704,823)	(+9,713,244)	(-823,986)
Discretionary (prior year)	---	---	---	---	---
Discretionary (total)	(84,991,579)	(95,528,809)	(94,704,823)	(+9,713,244)	(-823,986)

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION BILL 2006 (H.R. 5385)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2006 Enacted	FY 2007 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
RECAP BY FUNCTION					
Mandatory	37,205,514	41,415,643	41,415,643	+4,210,129	---
Prior year outlays	---	---	---	---	---
Total, Mandatory	37,205,514	41,415,643	41,415,643	+4,210,129	---
General purpose discretionary:					
Defense	53,016,994	58,893,731	58,068,481	+5,051,487	-825,250
Prior year outlays	---	---	---	---	---
Total, Defense	53,016,994	58,893,731	58,068,481	+5,051,487	-825,250
Nondefense	31,974,585	36,635,078	36,636,342	+4,661,757	+1,264
Prior year outlays	---	---	---	---	---
Total, Nondefense	31,974,585	36,635,078	36,636,342	+4,661,757	+1,264
Subtotal, General purpose discretionary	84,991,579	95,528,809	94,704,823	+9,713,244	-823,986
Prior year outlays	---	---	---	---	---
Total General purpose discretionary	84,991,579	95,528,809	94,704,823	+9,713,244	-823,986
Grand total, Mandatory and Discretionary	122,197,093	136,944,452	136,120,466	+13,923,373	-823,986
DISCRETIONARY 302B ALLOCATION					
GENERAL PURPOSE	84,991,579	95,528,809	94,704,823	+9,713,244	-823,986
302B ALLOCATION	44,143,000	---	94,705,000	+50,562,000	+94,705,000
OVER/UNDER	40,848,579	95,528,809	-177	-40,848,756	-95,528,986

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

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman and Members, there are three reasons why I intend to support this bill.

First, it has a significant increase in funding for VA health care, approximately $3 billion, even though I believe the VA needs and deserves more. The increase is significant, it is real, and it is important.

Secondly, this bill includes military construction funding. It is vital to support our troops and their families during a time of war. And also it includes military construction funding needed to implement the BRAC proposals.

Thirdly, I am going to support this bill because Chairman WALSH's leadership in this effort was, at every step of the way, professional and bipartisan. This is the kind of leadership I believe Americans would want and expect from Congress when we are dealing with military and defense and veterans issues.

I salute the chairman for that leadership, for his extensive hearings, for listening to all members of his subcommittee and the Appropriations Committee and Members throughout this House, and for having numerous hearings, listening to veterans and other organizations testify and have input on this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I want to be clear on my position. In my opinion, the House budget resolution passed earlier this week would have better served our Nation if it had been less willing to give the just-retired Exxon CEO a $2 million dividend tax cut and had saved that money for deficit reduction and providing more funding for defense, military construction, veterans health care and defense health care, which we have in this bill.

I did not support that budget resolution, which was passed on a partisan basis. And today, very quickly after that resolution's passage, we start to see the impact of it in real terms. In real terms, our subcommittee was allocated $824 million less than President Bush felt we needed in this area for VA funding, defense health care, and military construction.

Had we had a better budget resolution, a bipartisan budget resolution, I do not think we would have had to cut $824 million from the President's request for the important responsibilities under the jurisdiction of this subcommittee.

But the reality is that the budget resolution has passed the House, and the House leadership intends to implement those budget rules and numbers, at least for now, and our subcommittee had to deal with those numbers.

I think the subcommittee dealt with the limited budget, in my opinion an inadequate budget, in a responsible way, a bipartisan way, and tried to put the limited dollars in the highest priority needs.

I want to talk about what is good in this bill, given that we had so many fewer dollars than the President had asked for in this area. One, the VA health care increase for about $3 billion, I think that is important. It is a huge turnaround from a year or 2 ago, where I, many Democrats, veterans organizations, were pleading with the Republican leadership and the administration to more adequately fund VA health care, because we felt the administration budget request, particularly last year, would have caused significant and serious cuts in VA health care during a time of war.

This is a great turnaround from that and is supported on a bipartisan basis to increase VA health care spending by $3 billion. I am glad, frankly, that the OMB in particular and the administration have heard the voices of Congress and our Nation's veterans that we are going to adequately fund and significantly increase funding for VA health care.

I do want to point out this is a not a Cadillac budget, if anyone wants to suggest that, for our veterans health care system. Because the fact is and the challenge is that the VA system has seen a net increase of veterans needing VA health care between 150 and 250,000 a year.

The reality is that, even this year, the number of Iraqi war veterans needing VA health care is significantly higher than what we had projected, or the VA had projected, and we need to keep our eye on that.

In addition to the increase in VA health care funding which I commend, I want to pay special focus and tribute to Chairman WALSH's leadership on mental health care. I think it is vital that we provide our veterans who have served in combat, risked their lives, given so much for our country, receive the health care they deserve, whether it is mental health care, or to deal with their physical wounds.

In many cases, Mr. Chairman, mental health care wounds last longer than physical wounds; and I think one of Chairman WALSH's great legacies in Congress will have been to send a clear message to the VA and the Congress that we must make VA mental health care a priority. I salute the chairman for that legacy and that leadership.

Mr. Chairman, I am glad that we on a bipartisan basis rejected the Administration's proposal to have a $250 enrollment fee for men and women who served in uniform to be considered for VA health care.

Mr. Chairman, I believe the Congress believes that our veterans paid their enrollment fee when they put on our country's uniform and agreed to go into harm's way.

We also in a bipartisan manner rejected the Administration's proposal to go from $8 dollars to $15 for a copay for veterans prescription drugs. That may not sound like a big increase for many. But when you are an 80-year-old World War II veteran and you are taking six, seven, or eight drugs a month, that prescription copay increase would have created a lot of harm. I salute the subcommittee and the leadership of the subcommittee for rejecting that proposal.

Finally, and Chairman WALSH mentioned this earlier, I think the entire Congress, as well as this committee, ought to be proud of the quality of military health care services our troops wounded in combat are receiving. I was proud to be on the trip to Germany where we went to the Landstuhl Hospital where our medical personnel are saving lives every day.

Mr. Chairman, it is because of the decisions and the budget funding of Congress that men and women are alive today that would have died in any other previous war. That is a great tribute to the effort and leadership of this Congress on defense health care spending.

Finally, I think it is good that we are having the $6.5 billion increase in military construction funding. I also want to put that in perspective, though. Do not let anyone conclude, Mr. Chairman, that that is a Cadillac budget for military construction. That pays for vitally needed construction to support our troops fighting the war on terrorism and those fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. It also is needed to help implement the Base Realignment and Closing Commission recommendations, which will cost taxpayers additional funding up front but will save billions of dollars in the out years.

Mr. Chairman, let me just say my concerns. My biggest single concern is that, because of the inadequate budget allocation to this subcommittee, again, $824 million less than the President requested, we actually have a bill that underfunds defense health care spending by $735 million less than President Bush said was needed to maintain our quality of care system.

If I felt that the final bill were going to underfund defense health care that drastically, I simply could not vote for this bill. But I hope and I trust that we will work on a bipartisan basis from now to the final passage of the conference report on this bill to find those dollars, because I hope we all agree it would be morally wrong to cut the quality of defense health care for our troops and our military retirees, especially during a time of war.

My second concern is, we have got a huge backlog of cleaning up past military installations that have been closed. I want to urge the administration which, along with the previous administration, frankly, did not recognize the need for these programs.

Thirdly, while we increase VA spending, health care spending by about $3 billion, because of the inadequate allocation for our subcommittee, we had to almost effectively freeze VA health care research. We are going this year from a backlog for veterans having their claims considered by the VA from being an average of 167 days to 185 days.

Mr. Chairman, I urge the VA and I urge Congress to take a look at that. We do not need to be moving backwards, because so often, especially for our older veterans, justice delayed is justice denied.

Mr. Chairman, I also wish the same week we gave the retired, just-retired Exxon CEO a $2 million dividend tax cut we do not say that if you are a veteran making 28 or $29,000 a year, you make too much money to deserve VA care if you did not have combat wounds. I think our veterans making $28,000, $29,000, $30,000 have earned the right to receive VA care.

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But having expressed those concerns, I have to salute this subcommittee and its leadership for working on a solid, professional, bipartisan basis to take a limited budget, a budget almost $1 billion below the President's request for this area, and putting the money where it was most needed in very, very positive ways.

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

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, at this time, I would yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Colorado, the chairman of the Readiness and Military Construction Subcommittee on the House Armed Services Committee, Mr. HEFLEY, for 3 minutes.

Mr. HEFLEY. I thank the gentleman very much for yielding.

As chairman of the authorizing committee for much of this bill, I rise today in support of H.R. 5385.

This is a good bill. It provides more than $16 billion for military construction activities for the Department of Defense, including more than $5 billion to implement Base Realignment and Closure decisions and $4 billion for family housing for military personnel. It will make meaningful improvements in the facilities which our military people and their families live and work.

At the same time, I don't want to argue that it is a perfect bill. For instance, I would have liked to see an increase in funding for military construction facilities restoration accounts. I would also have preferred full funding of the BRAC's 2005 account, as cuts in this account will impact DOD's ability to implement BRAC moves in a timely manner. However, in general, it is a good bill which I am pleased to support.

With respect to the MILCON projects appropriated within the bill, I would note that they largely mirror those projects authorized in the Defense Authorization Act that passed the House last week. This approach whereby specific projects are both authorized and appropriated is unique to military construction activities and is a longstanding practice. Over time, it has helped ensure that construction activities for the Department of Defense are reviewed by multiple bodies within the Congress to ensure that they are viable, affordable, and necessary.

This year, through close scrutiny of the President's budget request, the authorizing and appropriating committees found numerous projects and requests that were flawed, unnecessary, or of low priority. By cutting those projects, we were able to do some of the more crucial projects.

The projects added to this bill are critical to military readiness requirements, such as the child development centers for families of military personnel, alert complexes for pilots, fighter jets that patrol the skies over our cities, and urban training facilities to teach our servicemembers how to fight in city environments.

On a final note, Mr. Chairman, I would like to acknowledge the members and the staff of the Military Quality of Life Subcommittee for their efforts. Their professionalism and willingness to maintain the working relationship and spirit of cooperation between our two committees is extraordinary. I especially want to thank Chairman WALSH and Ranking Member EDWARDS and their fine staff for their help in this process, and applaud them for producing such a very good bill.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

I didn't earlier salute Chairman HEFLEY and Mr. ORTIZ, the chairman and ranking member, respectively, of the Armed Services Committee that authorizes these programs.

It is not often and certainly not always, many times not often that the authorizers and appropriators work so closely together, and I salute the leadership on both sides of the aisle of the authorizing appropriations committee for doing this in the right way and doing it together. I thank Chairman Hefley for his leadership in that area.

I would like to now recognize Mr. BLUMENAUER of Oregon for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy in permitting me to speak. I appreciate Mr. EDWARDS' leadership, that of Chairman WALSH, and my good friend, SAM FARR, for taking the attention to the problem of the toxic and explosive legacy of 225 years of military operations in the United States. We are not talking about problems overseas, we are talking about communities in every single State in the Union.

Mr. FARR's experience with Fort Ord over, I don't know, over 15 years now, has demonstrated the scope and scale of the promise, if we do it right, there are tremendous opportunities. Many of these bases are jewels that can be returned to productive use.

His experience has also shown how complicated they can be; that if we don't have the right plan, we don't invest the resources, it can drag on and on and on. Sadly, we have over 3,000 sites around the country that still are a part of this toxic legacy.

I do appreciate what the subcommittee has done. You have a difficult job. I wouldn't want to have to balance those equities. But I am here today arguing for more attention and more resources to deal with accelerating the problem in the past and the promises of the past.

I am going to offer an amendment in a few minutes that would transfer from the 2005 BRAC account money that will be used to deal with the first four rounds and those communities that are waiting.

Now, there are going to be some who will say, well, you are offsetting a much bigger number than the mere $77 million. And that is because the 5.3 billion, an increase of $3.6 billion that is technically set aside for 2005 is not going to be spent. The payout rate is something like 5 percent for this next year. You are not going to use it. It is a phony number. You can safely transfer resources to help people who have already suffered closure and who have not been dealt with fairly by this Congress. You can look at Mather Air Force Base in California, closed in the first round, and their cleanup isn't slated to be completed until 2072. That is unconscionable.

I would respectfully request that Congress no longer be missing in action when it comes to cleaning up the bombs, the munitions, the fuel depot, the multiple problems that have been left by communities, for communities to deal with, and impede the recycling. On base closures under BRAC, the unexploded bombs and chemical contamination prevents 140,000 acres on closed and realigned bases from being transferred right now to local communities for redevelopment.

The last point I would make is that it goes far beyond this subcommittee. Again, I appreciate their attention and the work they have done, but we have to have the appropriations committee and the authorizing committees to get serious about this. We have an up and down cycle where we put some money in and then the money goes away. We transfer it in areas when all of a sudden there is a huge problem that gets the attention, like Spring Valley in Washington, DC. on the campus of the American University. That is where we tested and developed chemical weapons during World War I.

We have had three cleanups to try and solve that problem. The more that we focus on this, the more that we invest on an ongoing basis, the more that we develop the techniques, the technology, it is not just going to save people around the country from this problem, but that same technology that will help us figure out whether it is a hub cap or a 105 millimeter shell will be able to be used to protect our soldiers in Iraq. That is how I lost my first constituent, was a land mine.

Now, I would suggest that, if we get serious about this, we will not only accelerate the technology and the research that will make our communities safer and healthier here at home, but it will protect lives of our service people

overseas and will also deal with the vast amounts of munitions and land mines that are scattered all around the world that kill innocent victims every day.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

What I would like to do is ask, if there is no objection of my colleague from Texas, I have two brief colloquies that I would like to enter into with two of my colleagues.

At this time, Mr. Chairman, I would yield for the purpose of colloquy 2 minutes to Mr. WICKER of Mississippi, a member of the committee.

Mr. WICKER. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, may I say initially that I certainly support the passage of H.R. 5385 and urge my colleagues to cast an ''aye'' vote. But I rise at this point to enter into a colloquy with Chairman WALSH regarding Columbus Air Force Base in Columbus, Mississippi.

During fiscal year 2006 military quality of life appropriations process, funding was authorized and provided for the first phase of the mission support complex at Columbus Air Force Base. Currently, mission support facilities are spread across the base and are too small for their functions. The proposed mission support complex will consolidate many of the command and control functions into one complex adjacent to the wing headquarters. Also, this new facility will meet new force protection antiterrorism standards.

Funding for the second and final phase of this complex is needed to complete the project. I realize this project was not authorized in the House version of the 2007 Defense Authorization Act, and this fact prevented the project from being funded in this appropriation bill, Mr. Chairman. However, I hope the chairman will work with me as this bill moves through conference in order to complete the project on schedule.

Mr. WALSH. If the gentleman will yield for the purpose of colloquy. I thank the gentlemen for bringing this issue to our attention.

Funding in the amount of $10 million was provided in last year's bill, fiscal year 2006, to begin construction of this project. I appreciate the importance of completing this project on time, and the committee will keep the gentleman's concerns in mind as we go to conference with the Senate. I know this is also a priority for the gentleman's Senators from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. I thank the chairman very much for yielding and this colloquy.

Mr. WALSH. Now, Mr. Chairman, I would yield 30 seconds to my colleague, Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, for a brief statement.

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. I thank the gentleman for yielding. And I know Chairman WALSH and Representative BEAUPREZ from Colorado have been working to solve veterans' needs in Colorado. And, Mr. Chairman, I would respectfully ask unanimous consent to submit for the RECORD the following statement by my friend and colleague Representative BEAUPREZ from Colorado.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's request will be handled under general leave.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I would like to recognize the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) for 2 minutes.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague from Texas for this time and for his work on this bill.

I support this bill because it represents a vast improvement over the administration's budget request. But I don't think that we have in this bill the answer, the sufficient funds that we need particularly for our VA health care system.

I know without a doubt that all of my colleagues in this House want to support our veterans, but the fact remains that the Veterans Administration is chronically underfunded, and it is struggling to provide very basic services and benefits to the veterans as we have promised them.

The answer to our VA funding problem? Let's adequately fund the VA in the budget so that the veterans will receive the kind of care that they were promised when they signed up to defend this country.

While I am pleased that the Appropriations Committee saw fit to increase the VA funding from the wholly inadequate amount that the President had suggested, I am disappointed that the efforts of several of my colleagues, including Mr. FARR, to provide an additional $2.6 billion for our critical health care needs of our Nation's veterans was not successful in this committee.

□ 1115

As a member of the Blue Dog Coalition, I believe fiscal responsibility should be one of the Federal Government's top priorities, but there should be no higher priority than honoring the promises that we have made to our veterans.

We cannot in good conscience balance this budget or reduce the deficit at their expense. How we treat our veterans, how we treat our veterans is a sign of our character as a Nation. The men and women who have sacrificed so much in defense of our country deserve no less than the very best that we have to offer in return.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER), the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee of the House.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the good work of Chairman WALSH and my good friend CHET EDWARDS on the bill. I have never questioned the sincerity of both of you in your service for my comrades and the men and women who wear the uniform. I appreciate your service.

I appreciate the advocacy also of the previous speaker, but I also have to disagree with some of her words in context because I think what we have done here is put together a pretty good bill.

Also, at the same time, I have to turn to the administration and express my appreciation to them to send one of the largest increases of any Department once again to Congress. I think it reflects our commitment to care for the veterans who need us most. It also ensures the seamless transition from military to civilian life and to provide our veterans with economic opportunities. At a time when most Federal spending will see very few increases, this spending increase for veterans will rise another 10 percent for fiscal year 2007.

After the budget shortfall that I identified last summer, I commend VA Secretary Nicholson for taking the challenge presented last year as we examined the concerns with regard to VA's budgeting process within the model that is used. Secretary Nicholson took ownership of the fiscal year 2007 budget, and it appears that improving the integrity of the process has born fruit with this legislation.

I would also note that that responsibility did not rely solely upon the Secretary. We can demand accountability of others, but we also have to demand accountability to ourselves. So what I did was I also changed the process here in Congress and said for a long time we would take the counsel and advice from military service organizations and veterans service organizations and we receive that counsel after we put together the budget, and it had been done that way for decades. Now, does that even pass the straight face test? Does that even pass common sense? I think the answer is no.

So what we did was we changed the process on how we receive the testimony from our veterans organizations and military service organizations. Before that decision was made, I met with most of them at Carlisle Barracks in Pennsylvania at a veterans summit, and then the decision was made to sever the joint hearings and receive their testimony as soon as we received the President's budget and before we put together the budget use and estimates, extremely important.

So let me share with all my colleagues that this is something that has never been done before. This right here is the testimony of 19 veterans service organizations and military service organizations that was received prior to the formulation of the budget. What a radical thing to do. It only makes sense to do this. So I am really pleased, and as a matter of fact, it is reflected in what Chairman WALSH has been able to put together, and I have such deep respect for Chairman WALSH and what he has done here.

The other thing I would like to do is I agree with the gentleman from Texas

(Mr. EDWARDS) commending the leadership of Chairman WALSH on mental health. I also want to share and enlighten my colleagues with something we are dealing with.

In the VA, we are dealing with the consequences of many of these roadside bombs, and when I say the consequences, let me pause, and once again, I am going to applaud you again. When we created the four polytrauma centers, the ones in Palo Alto, Minneapolis, Tampa and Richmond, these polytrauma centers are caring for the traumatic brain injuries. These wounds that we are dealing with are so much different from wounds from other wars. The American people have placed such demand upon us, and rightfully so, to do all we can to care for the men and women who are serving us, and what do we do? We reach into the Treasury and we do everything to protect the torso. We have them in their body armor. We bought them a new helmet. That helmet is strapped on. The soldier then takes the body armor, they flip it up, they have got on the helmet, the roadside bomb explodes.

Now, typically in an explosion the torso will absorb part of the blast; but right now, we have protected the torso. So when the force comes in and hits the torso, the force goes up, and it disseminates, but that which goes up hits them in the face and goes up into the helmet and cannot escape. So as it goes up into the helmet and cannot escape, we now have more traumatic brain injury than ever before.

I am enlightening all my colleagues to this because I want to work with Mr. EDWARDS and the chairman because I think what we need to do is redesign a new helmet. We need to design a helmet that can have some type of vent system with regard to this force, at the same time not compromise the integrity of the helmet.

Will you join me in this one? We need to do this because when you visit our polytrauma centers and all the traumatic brain injury and the eye injuries that we are receiving, you will have your maxillofacial damage, but some of that can be taken care of. But these brain injuries are very severe, and so we need to look at this helmet, and I want to work with both of you to do that.

I also want to comment on, we are on the authorization side. You are ahead of us here, and we are working on the construction budget, and we have a tremendous challenge in front of us. I want to work with you.

On the construction side of this, it has been 15 years since we have built a VA hospital. So a lot of the institutional knowledge on how to build VA hospitals is no longer there, and this spending $625 million for 170 beds, wow, is a lot of money. So our challenge is we have got Las Vegas and we have got Denver, we have got Orlando, New Orleans and Charleston, South Carolina. As we examine this collaborative effort between a medical university and a VA and how we could share facilities, as we were working on that, then Katrina hits. So then we say, okay, we can leverage that perhaps in New Orleans, and that is what is being done right now between the VA and LSU.

But I want to work with both of you as we move on the construction budget and I commend you.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank Chairman BUYER for not only his kind comments but also even more importantly for his service to our country, his military service to our country in Operation Desert Storm in the first Iraqi war.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN).

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank both the chairman and the ranking member for putting together this legislation and for the appropriations.

It is interesting because I do not serve on Armed Services or obviously Appropriations or Defense approps, but I think every Member of this House is affected by what is in this bill because all of us have seen our young men and women who have come back, who have been injured, and that is what this bill is about, the VA medical facilities, the medical facilities for these service personnel who are injured, and it is great to hear some of the good things that are in this bill. I know it is under very strict limitations, but I want to thank the committee for doing this.

I want to talk about something that is very specific briefly, about an important project in my own area. Now, in Houston we do not have a base. We have a lot of reserve units, but we have the Ellington Field where they have F–16s, and we have a fire station that needs to be put in there. We have one that does not meet either Air Force standards or OSHA standards, and it is a facility that serves not only our Air National Guard but our Army National Guard, the U.S. Coast Guard, NASA, and of course, civil aircraft.

The existing facility, like I said, is rapidly deteriorating and does not meet either OSHA or Air Force standards. Roof leaks and lack of insulation result in equipment being destroyed and extremely high operating costs. The lack of adequate facilities and space do not allow for proper integration of female firefighters. Storage facilities do not exist and require hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of equipment to be stored outside, and traditional Guardsmen must store issued equipment at their homes.

New firefighting apparatus must be parked outside the station because they do not fit in the truck bays. Currently, our 147th has one fire truck valued at $1 million which is unable to fit into the station, and the unit is expecting delivery of another one this year. This results in slower response times, degraded performance, and vehicle deterioration.

The funding I requested for this new fire station will not only bring the facilities up to OSHA and Air Force standards but will protect the investments already made in the equipment in the base.

Plans are under way to move 2,300 Army, Navy and Marine Corps Reserve troops from elsewhere in the Houston area to Ellington to make it really a joint Reserve base. As this happens, we must ensure there is sufficient infrastructure to support these units.

Again, the fourth largest city in the country affecting not only Johnson Space Center and the petrochemical industry, but I would appreciate any consideration by the committee during the conference report.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE), a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I certainly want to commend the committee chairman, as well as the ranking minority member, for working on this very important bill.

Coming from Florida, I represent the highest number of veterans of any Member of Congress. We have worked very hard in the last few years that I have been here to make sure that veterans' needs are adequately funded. Obviously, this bill before us today has a record level of funding for veterans' needs.

The committee, for the first time, used the veterans service organizations' independent budget as kind of the baseline for the fiscal year 2007 funding. Obviously, the veterans groups want to make sure that every single need is met. This appropriation does do exactly that. The total funding is $2.6 billion above last year's level and $100 million below the President's request.

We are improving health care substantially, as well as opening up additional community-based outpatient clinics. The C–BOCs are very, very well received in each one of our districts and do meet the veterans' needs.

Obviously, we were able to again ward off the additional fees that were proposed in the administration's budget.

We want to make sure that we continue to be able to go home and tell our veterans that this Congress, the people on this side of the aisle, people on the other side of the aisle, recognize the need to make sure that our veterans, whether they are from World War II or whether they are coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan, that they are adequately cared for.

The bill also contains an additional $20 million over last year's level for veterans nursing homes, and I again want to commend the chairman of the committee.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) for the purpose of a colloquy.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Chairman, as you know, many veterans live hours from major hospitals, making it very difficult for them to get the care they need; and oftentimes, for those who have to travel there two or three times a week, they have a terrible quality of life. That is why our local veterans health care clinics, known as Community-Based Outpatient Clinics, are just so important to deliver quality care for veterans. These have been stalled in recent years; yet, my understanding is that in this bill there is a strong commitment of $25 million to build the highest priority Community-Based Outpatient Clinics in the country. Is that the case?

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Texas for his concern for veterans and for his leadership on this important area of veterans health care, community outreach clinics; and, yes, in fact, the subcommittee prioritized $25 million for the VA to open up 10 of the highest priority CBOCs in the country, and so the gentleman is correct.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Well, let me just conclude with this. One of my communities, Conroe, the veterans and I have worked for a number of years to try to make this a reality. This is great news for our veterans; and, more importantly, I think it is great news for all those communities that will get help for their veterans care, and I will just tell you that we are grateful for Chairman WALSH's leadership. This is just awful good news.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman.

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

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

□ 1130

Ms. LEE. Mr. Chairman, thank you for yielding, and I want to enter into a colloquy with the chairman of the subcommittee, Mr. WALSH.

I want to thank the gentleman for his hard work on this bill and also for his dedication to our brave young men and women serving abroad. I come to the floor today to raise an issue that I know is very important to all of us, as well as to you, Mr. Chairman, on the issue of the mental health of our troops who are deployed in harm's way.

An investigative report this week by the Hartford Courant, based on records obtained from a Freedom of Information Act request, revealed, and I quote: ''United States military troops with severe psychological problems were sent to Iraq or kept in combat even when superiors had been aware of signs of mental illness.''

We all know that going to war can be psychologically very difficult, yet it was found that less than one in 300 troops received a referral to mental health professionals before being sent to war. Still, the Pentagon's own physicians have estimated that one in 11 troops going into conflict suffer from some form of major depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder.

The 1998 Defense Authorization Act included explicit direction to the Defense Department to include an assessment of mental health in its medical tracking system for troops deployed overseas. However, the Department's predeployment health assessment form has only one question on mental health.

Mr. Chairman, I believe this is a disservice to our troops, and I understand that there is additional money for the military services to begin to integrate mandatory mental health services into the standard operating procedures for our soldiers. I support the chairman in that effort, and I look forward to working with him on the initial assessment of mental health for troops being deployed and to ensure that the intent of the 1998 law is fully implemented.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. LEE. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and I thank her for expressing her concern on this very important issue. This is a priority of the highest order for our subcommittee. We take it very seriously.

As you heard Mr. EDWARDS say, we have moved on this issue in a number of ways. So I want to assure the gentlewoman from California that I agree with her on the need for the increased mental health screening and appreciate her intention in raising this issue. I want to assure her that we will be mindful of this issue as we move this bill forward.

Ms. LEE. Let me just thank the gentleman for his attention to this issue, and I look forward to working with him and the ranking member to be ensure it is moved forward and is addressed as he just stated.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN).

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. I thank the gentleman for yielding. Mr. Chairman, soon our country will be rightfully commemorating the sacrifices made by our military servicemembers on Memorial Day, and words alone can never sufficiently express our gratitude for their service and their dedication to our country, especially those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Today, the House is considering H.R. 5385, a bill that would fund essential medical programs for our courageous veterans. With the return of our servicemembers from Iraq and Afghanistan in particular, we have learned last year that the demands on our veterans health care system have risen at a rate for which we were not prepared.

While I am pleased that H.R. 5385 contains significant increases from last year and does not recommend the administration's fee increases for TRICARE recipients, I am still concerned that this bill does not fully reflect the needs of our returning troops, nor does it guarantee that our veterans receive the very best health care.

I encourage my colleagues to support increased funding so that our veterans have accessible, timely, and affordable health care. I especially support more funding for mental health assessments for servicemembers returning from abroad, particularly now that our troops are stretched incredibly thin and the psychological burdens and the stresses on them are tremendous. We need to make sure that they have sufficient support when they return home, whether it is counseling services or other things, to help them fully integrate into society. It has an effect on them, their families, and society as a whole.

Mr. Chairman, I sincerely hope that we learn from past mistakes that we cannot and must not shortchange the veterans who have so selflessly served our country. Mr. Chairman, it is our job and our duty to ensure that our veterans receive the benefits that they were promised and the recognition that they deserve.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), a member of the committee.

Mr. KIRK. I thank the chairman.

As a member of the subcommittee, I strongly support this bipartisan bill, and it contains a key reform to ensure that Americans in uniform, veterans, sailors, and their families, will join together in a new joint VA-Navy Hospital to be built in north Chicago, Illinois.

I have worked on this for 5 years. In 2000, the previous administration announced plans to close the north Chicago VA, saying that veterans in northern Illinois could easily get to downtown Chicago in just 30 minutes. Only a Washington consultant with a map and a string would think that.

We knew that we could do much better; that we could dramatically improve health care for veterans who wore green, who wore white, who wore blue, and their families, at a joint Navy-VA facility. This bill begins the funding of that hospital. It includes $23 million for the first joint VA-Navy Hospital in the country.

Already, we have moved many Navy services into the north Chicago VA, and this summer we will open several state-of-the-art rooms. But this embraces the new vision of a brand-new facility taking care of Americans in uniform, veterans, and their families.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to support the Military Quality of Life Appropriations Bill (H.R. 5385). This is an improvement, albeit a small one, over the President's budget request for the Department of Veterans Affairs. In total, the Committee provided an additional $635 illion above the President's budget. Everyone on my side ofthe aisle—and all of

the veteran service organizations—viewed that figure as inadequate. Several of my colleagues—including Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. FARR, and Mr. OBEY—did their best to get the committee to fund adequately hospital construction, personnel hiring, and health care delivery initiatives that are vital to meeting our veterans needs. Instead, the committee voted to give still more tax cuts to millionaires.

Whom do we value more—those who make millions, or those whose valor made it possible for the millionaires to flourish in peace and freedom in the first place?

On January 17, 2003, the Bush Administration stopped enrolling new Priority 8 veterans for VA medical care, and the President's budget continues this restrictive policy. This Republican policy has denied health care to 273,000 and prevented 1 million veterans, who make as little as $26,902, from enrolling in VA health care. Those who are eligible are often forced to wait in line for care. As VA officials admitted to Congress in February, the VA has treated more than 144,000 returning veterans from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, and nearly 30,000 veterans are waiting in line for their first appointment—double the number last year.

Nearly a third of returning veterans from Iraq or Afghanistan have been diagnosed with mental disorders, with nearly half of those PTSD, according to the VA. The number of troops back this year from Iraq and Afghanistan with post-traumatic stress disorder could total 15,000 or more—five times higher than the VA predicted. And as the Kansas City Star noted on April 30, the ''miscalculation on PTSD echoes last year's underestimation by the Bush administration of how many Iraq and Afghanistan veterans would need medical treatment.''

The President and his Congressional allies don't seem to have any problem paying for the weapons of war, but they do seem to have a problem paying for the consequences of war. But the country that sends its people into combat—its sons and daughters, its husbands and wives, its sisters and brothers—has a sacred obligation to take care of those people when they come home—and to care for their survivors when they do not. It is an obligation that goes back to Abraham Lincoln in 1865. It is an obligation we have never fully met—under administrations and Congresses of both parties.

This budget, while better than what the President submitted, does not truly meet that obligtion. Any member of this body who has committed this country to a war costing $400 billion can surely find it in their hearts to their budget to produce the $2 billion that the veteran's organizations say is missing in this bill. Yet this bill fails to provide $6 billion from what current veterans need over the next 5 years for their health care. I hope that next year we will pass a budget that veterans feel meets their needs, rather than one they view as ''the best they could get.''

Finally, there is a VA clinic in my district leasing space at Fort Monmouth which is scheduled to close under the 2005 BRAC recommendations. Secretary Nicholson has pledged to me in writing that this clinic will stay open through 2010 at its present location and working to maintain its location in Monmouth County beyond that. While the Pentagon must take into account the care and well-being of the veterans served by the base when following BRAC procedures, the VA must have sufficient resources meet the veteran's needs. In this case, it means having the resources to acquire a much needed facility after the Army leaves town. At present those resources are not there. I look forward to working with my colleague to ensure that the veterans of my district will continue to receive the same high quality care they currently have.

Mr. BEAUPREZ. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to acknowledge Chairman WALSH and the members of the Military Quality of Life—VA Appropriations Subcommittee for their willingness to work with the VA to meet the needs of Colorado's veteran population.

The VA's effort to coordinate and reassess the current and future health care needs of our Nation's veterans has been a monumental undertaking. The CARES report cited numerous locations throughout the VA's nationwide network of medical facilities that are in need of improvement. A replacement facility for the VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System in Denver was one of the top priorities listed in the CARES report. Unfortunately, the original plan to share facilities with the University of Colorado was deemed infeasible. After years of hard work and negotiations, the VA has finally found a workable solution that meets their needs, and will allow them to continue their 50-year working relationship with the University of Colorado.

I commend Chairman WALSH for his commitment to this project, and for helping the VA reprogram existing funds for the purchase of the land. This is a critical first step in accomplishing the mission at hand.

While there is still much to be done in order for this project to be a success, I am optimistic that we will be able to overcome the obstacles and provide the veterans of the Rocky Mountain region with the hospital they deserve.

Mr. Chairman, again, I want to thank Chairman WALSH for his commitment to our Nation's veterans, and more specifically to the health care needs of Colorado's veterans. Without question, this project could not move forward without his assistance.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chair may accord priority in recognition to a Member offering an amendment that he has printed in the designated place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Those amendments will be considered read.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5385

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the military quality of life functions of the Department of Defense, military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY

(INCLUDING RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, military installations, facilities, and real property for the Army as currently authorized by law, including personnel in the Army Corps of Engineers and other personal services necessary for the purposes of this appropriation, and for construction and operation of facilities in support of the functions of the Commander in Chief, $1,756,298,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That of this amount, not to exceed $220,830,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, architect and engineer services, and host nation support, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of Defense determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for ''Military Construction, Army'' under Public Law 109–114, $43,348,000 are hereby rescinded.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

(INCLUDING RESCISSIONS OF FUNDS)

For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, naval installations, facilities, and real property for the Navy and Marine Corps as currently authorized by law, including personnel in the Naval Facilities Engineering Command and other personal services necessary for the purposes of this appropriation, $1,193,834,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That of this amount, not to exceed $72,857,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of Defense determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for ''Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps'' under Public Law 108–132, $30,000,000 are hereby rescinded: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for ''Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps'' under Public Law 108–324, $8,000,000 are hereby rescinded.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR FORCE

(INCLUDING RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, military installations, facilities, and real property for the Air Force as currently authorized by law, $1,187,550,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That of this amount, not to exceed $97,504,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of Defense determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for ''Military Construction, Air Force'' under Public Law 108–324, $2,694,000 are hereby rescinded.

Mr. WALSH (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of the bill through page 11, line 11 be considered as read, printed in the RECORD, and open to amendment at any point.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill through page 11, line 11, is as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, DEFENSE-WIDE

(INCLUDING TRANSFER AND RESCISSIONS OF FUNDS)

For acquisition, construction, installation, and equipment of temporary or permanent public works, installations, facilities, and real property for activities and agencies of the Department of Defense (other than the military departments), as currently authorized by law, $1,107,606,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That such amounts of this appropriation as may be determined by the Secretary of Defense may be transferred to such appropriations of the Department of Defense available for military construction or family housing as the Secretary may designate, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes, and for the same time period, as the appropriation or fund to which transferred: *Provided further*, That of the amount appropriated, not to exceed $172,950,000 shall be available for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services, as authorized by law, unless the Secretary of Defense determines that additional obligations are necessary for such purposes and notifies the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress of the determination and the reasons therefor: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for ''Military Construction, Defense-Wide'' under Public Law 108–132, $9,000,000 are hereby rescinded: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for ''Military Construction, Defense-Wide'' under Public Law 108–324, $43,000,000 are hereby rescinded: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for ''Military Construction, Defense-Wide'' under Public Law 109–114, $58,229,000 are hereby rescinded.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Army National Guard, and contributions therefor, as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, $512,873,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR NATIONAL GUARD

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Air National Guard, and contributions therefor, as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, $207,088,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY RESERVE

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Army Reserve as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, $167,774,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, NAVY RESERVE

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the reserve components of the Navy and Marine Corps as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, $55,158,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR FORCE RESERVE

For construction, acquisition, expansion, rehabilitation, and conversion of facilities for the training and administration of the Air Force Reserve as authorized by chapter 1803 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, $56,836,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION SECURITY INVESTMENT PROGRAM

For the United States share of the cost of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Security Investment Program for the acquisition and construction of military facilities and installations (including international military headquarters) and for related expenses for the collective defense of the North Atlantic Treaty Area as authorized by section 2806 of title 10, United States Code, and Military Construction Authorization Acts, $200,985,000, to remain available until expended.

FAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION, ARMY

For expenses of family housing for the Army for construction, including acquisition, replacement, addition, expansion, extension, and alteration, as authorized by law, $578,791,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

FAMILY HOUSING OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ARMY

For expenses of family housing for the Army for operation and maintenance, including debt payment, leasing, minor construction, principal and interest charges, and insurance premiums, as authorized by law, $674,657,000.

FAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

For expenses of family housing for the Navy and Marine Corps for construction, including acquisition, replacement, addition, expansion, extension, and alteration, as authorized by law, $308,956,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

FAMILY HOUSING OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

For expenses of family housing for the Navy and Marine Corps for operation and maintenance, including debt payment, leasing, minor construction, principal and interest charges, and insurance premiums, as authorized by law, $509,126,000.

FAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION, AIR FORCE

(INCLUDING RESCISSIONS OF FUNDS)

For expenses of family housing for the Air Force for construction, including acquisition, replacement, addition, expansion, extension, and alteration, as authorized by law, $1,169,138,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That of the funds appropriated for ''Family Housing Construction, Air Force'' under Public Law 108–324, $23,400,000 are hereby rescinded: *Provided further*, That of the funds appropriated for ''Family Housing Construction, Air Force'' under Public Law 109–114, $42,800,000 are hereby rescinded.

FAMILY HOUSING OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AIR FORCE

For expenses of family housing for the Air Force for operation and maintenance, including debt payment, leasing, minor construction, principal and interest charges, and insurance premiums, as authorized by law, $755,071,000.

FAMILY HOUSING CONSTRUCTION, DEFENSE-WIDE

For expenses of family housing for the activities and agencies of the Department of Defense (other than the military departments) for construction, including acquisition, replacement, addition, expansion, extension, and alteration, as authorized by law, $8,808,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

FAMILY HOUSING OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE

For expenses of family housing for the activities and agencies of the Department of Defense (other than the military departments) for operation and maintenance, leasing, and minor construction, as authorized by law, $48,506,000.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FAMILY HOUSING IMPROVEMENT FUND

For the Department of Defense Family Housing Improvement Fund, $2,500,000, to remain available until expended, for family housing initiatives undertaken pursuant to section 2883 of title 10, United States Code, providing alternative means of acquiring and improving military family housing and supporting facilities.

CHEMICAL DEMILITARIZATION CONSTRUCTION, DEFENSE-WIDE

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For expenses of construction, not otherwise provided for, necessary for the destruction of the United States stockpile of lethal chemical agents and munitions in accordance with the provisions of section 1412 of the Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1986 (50 U.S.C. 1521), and for the destruction of other chemical warfare materials that are not in the chemical weapon stockpile, as currently authorized by law, $90,993,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That such amounts of this appropriation as may be determined by the Secretary of Defense may be transferred to such appropriations of the Department of Defense available for military construction as the Secretary may designate, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes, and for the same time period, as the appropriation to which transferred.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE ACCOUNT 1990

For deposit into the Department of Defense Base Closure Account 1990, established by section 2906(a)(1) of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (10 U.S.C. 2687 note), $216,220,000, to remain available until expended.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BLUMENAUER

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. BLUMENAUER:

Under the heading ''DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE ACCOUNT 1990'', insert after the dollar amount (page 11, line 17) the following: ''(increased by $27,500,000)''.

Under the heading ''DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE ACCOUNT 2005'', insert after the dollar amount (page 11, line 24) the following: ''(reduced by $440,000,000)''.

Under the heading ''ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES'', insert after the dollar amount (page 18, line 14) the following: ''(increased by 50,000,000)''.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I had the Clerk go ahead to read the numbers, because I think that we want to get one point clear from the outset. It looks like there is a big cut of $440 million in order to be able to spend $77,500,000. The point is, it is the same number.

There is a vast increase in the amount of money that has been set aside, a $3.6 billion increase, for the

2005 base closure account. But we are not going to spend that money. The payout rate is only 5 percent. That is why you have to reduce it, under our arcane budget rules, by over $400 million to get $77 million back. The point is the tax dollars are exactly the same; and, additionally, the point, is where are we going to spend it?

I appreciate the opportunity to offer this amendment with my colleague Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE from Florida because we are trying to focus on the serious problem of the toxic legacy of military operations in this country. I have a map behind me where we have identified 3,398 sites around the country already. There are more that we are discovering.

The particular area we want to focus on today is that we are not spending adequate resources to deal with the bases that have already been closed. We have 140,000 acres that cannot be transferred because they haven't been adequately cleaned up from the previous BRAC closings. And this isn't just a case of, well, don't worry about it, put up some barbed wire and it will go away. These are problems that continue over time.

Unexploded ordnance has killed dozens of people. I have interesting little materials here. These are promotional materials that the Department of Defense gives to our soldiers to try and recognize it. This is a problem that threatens the health and well-being of our men and women in service right now on our bases.

One of my favorites is Larry the Lizard. This is being distributed in Southern California, coloring books, to tell children not to pick these things up. Now, if it is your son, your niece, your granddaughter, your little brother, maybe you feel better that there is a Larry the Lizard coloring book. But wouldn't you feel better if we stepped up and met our obligation and actually picked up those bombs, those unexploded munitions? I think you would. I know I would.

I think it is time that Congress no longer be missing in action on the issue of military cleanup. We don't know at this point whether there are 10 million acres or 40 million acres with unexploded ordnance.

Now, I appreciate, and I have expressed my admiration for this subcommittee's sinking their teeth into it and trying to do something, like my colleague, Mr. FARR, for his tireless championing of this cause. But this amendment today, this little amendment, shifting the same amount of money that will be spent from the most recent round of base closures with $5.3 billion to increase the small amount of money that has been allocated to deal with prior facilities is a step in the right direction.

It would be a tragedy if we are going to continue to stretch this out over time. Our first obligation ought to be to those people who have suffered this experience before. Mather Air Force Base in California isn't slated to be cleaned up until 2072 under the current rate of expenditure. They were closed in the first round. That is unconscionable.

At the rate we are going, it is a 200- to 300-year problem, and every delay means that we do not return the land to productive use. It means that people's lives are in jeopardy. We are coming up to fire season, and we are probably going to have to pull firefighters out of some of the forests where there had been training and there is a danger of the bombs exploding.

We are spending enough money on national defense that we can prioritize dealing with this toxic legacy that will make families safer at home and people around the world. Because, bear in mind, the sooner we develop this technology and refine the techniques, not only will it help us clean up here at home, that technology will be available to make our soldiers safe overseas as well.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. Chairman, while I certainly understand the intent of the gentleman's amendment and the sincerity with which he brings it, we can't accept this offset.

I understand the problem, and the subcommittee has included an increase of $40 million for formerly used defense sites in the 1990 BRAC Round.

□ 1145

Additionally, we have included report language directing the Department of Defense to place a larger emphasis on these sites in future budgets. It is a problem. Clearly, it is a problem. Mr. FARR, Mr. BLUMENAUER, to their credit, have raised this issue. We are all concerned about it and we are moving on it. But, this is a bad way to go about it, and here is the reason. The gentleman's amendment would cut funds for the implementation of new BRAC rounds by $440 million to get $77 million. And the problem is the rate at which these funds are outlaid. Clearly, if we took the $440 million out of the 2005 BRAC, that would further delay implementation of the BRAC, which would lead to problems just like this in the out years. If we use the $440 million, it gets us $77 million for these FUD sites, but it leaves $363 million on the table that cannot, will not, won't be used by the Department.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WALSH. I would be happy to yield.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I want to understand this because I think it is very important. My understanding is the reason the offset of $440 million is required is because they are not going to spend more than $77 million this next year; is that correct?

Mr. WALSH. Reclaiming my time. While the funds may not be spent this year, they will be spent. They are needed to implement this BRAC round. We learned from the last BRAC round that if we delay the initial investment, it costs far more in the long run to implement these BRACs.

I remind the gentleman again that he voted against the measure that would have delayed the implementation of the 2005 BRAC round, which is exactly what this amendment would do. Additionally, any delay in implementing BRAC reduces the savings and the efficiency of the BRAC that it is designated to promote. It may also cause the same types of environmental restoration problems at these current BRAC sites that we are experiencing from these past BRAC rounds. For that reason I oppose the gentleman's amendment.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I certainly support this amendment. As the map showed, there are so many areas in this country where we have very, very dangerous sites. And let me tell you what the Army Corps of Engineers is doing about it. It not only is distributing coloring books, but it is also distributing, and it has U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on here, they also are distributing Frisbees telling kids to recognize, retreat and report when they see these live ordnances. I don't think this is the way that we should treat our young people, our neighbors who may live near these sites.

In my district there was the Brooksville Gunnery Range, and it was used during World War II for military practice. Since the Range's closure in 1946, thousands of my constituents have moved into the area and/or on adjacent lands that have not yet been surveyed. Unfortunately, inspections have found rockets, mortars and grenades, putting my constituents at substantial risk.

As a matter of fact, in one location there was a live ordnance found underneath a child's trampoline. Let me repeat that. There was a live ordnance found underneath a child's trampoline.

While the Army Corps of Engineers has been working to remove unexploded ordnances from Brooksville Gunnery Range, they must do more. We have to expand the area of exploration to make sure that we find and detonate all of the ordnances.

Now Brooksville is just one of these sites within my district and one of the sites in the United States. Jurisdiction over cleanup at these sites falls under these two major accounts which were mentioned here today, one, the formerly used defense sites account, and the BRAC 1990 account. So we are postponing and not adequately funding the cleanup, but we are working on 1990 sites. 1946 this range was closed.

The committee certainly has been working with us, and they understand that this is a large nationwide issue and urges the Department of Defense to increase funding in future years.

How much longer do we have to wait? It has been 60 years since this particular site was closed.

Fifty million dollars will go toward Formerly Used Defense Sites account, and $27.5 million will go to the BRAC 1990 account.

In far too many cases, yesterday's military base is today's housing development. The last thing anyone wants to hear is that someone's child was seriously injured or killed while playing in his or her backyard, or as children often do, wandering through fields.

I don't think a Frisbee is the answer. I think that being responsive and actually making sure that we have adequate funds to clean up those sites is the necessary way to go.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I want to just make one point, apropos the distinguished Chair of the subcommittee.

The $5.3 billion that he is talking about, which will not be spent rapidly, is for all of base realignment and closure activity. That is for reconstruction, that is for building, that is for a whole range of things. It is not just the critical cleanup of the explosives. It is not where there is the critical danger.

So there is a whole range of things in there that I think any objective person on this floor would say is much less of a priority to save lives than what the gentlewoman from Florida pointed out. Our amendment focuses on putting the money where it is going to do the most—the clean up that is essential, that has been delayed and delayed and delayed.

I understand the Chair's concern that we don't want to delay the 2005 BRAC. Bear in mind, the amendment that we are offering deals with the people long before that, who have been waiting and waiting and waiting. I would suggest there is no fiscal impact that is going to hurt over the long haul. The financial incentives that he references will be available if we have the economy of scale for the ones that are more dangerous and are more delayed.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

I rise in support of the Blumenauer amendment. But before I do that, I want to really compliment Chairman WALSH. He did everything possible, with the bad figure he was given, to work out this account and to put some more money into it. But I think that the problem is so severe that we need this time to discuss it.

In essence, what Mr. BLUMENAUER has showed you with his map is that there are about 10 of these sites in every congressional district in the United States. It just averages out to that.

And what are they? Well, they are called UXOs, unexploded ordnances. Those are very serious things. Ordnances were developed to harm people, seriously harm people.

They are also called Former Used Defense sites. And those could just be toxic wastes or other things. It is where the defense, back in the early wars and on the coastal areas, particularly Pacific coast, you had lookout areas and stuff like that. And there is a bunch of stuff in the ground, and that has to be cleaned up.

And then you also have military munitions response, MMR sites across this country.

Mr. BLUMENAUER is a true leader in being able to point out that this is sort of a huge Superfund, a Love Canal that might be in every congressional district. And I know it is just a matter of time before local newspapers who are starting to look at these maps and wondering where these things exist, and we in Congress are going to be hit right between the eyes and saying why didn't you do something about it if you knew it existed? And we know it has existed because it is a fact.

The geography is there. The sites are there. They have been on a list for a long time. And they cause problems. And of the ones that they are talking about, UXOs are the most serious problems of all. I know, in my own district, people have lost limbs from picking up boxes that they didn't know were explosive. Young kids, that they didn't know that there was an explosive device in it and dropped the box and blew off their arms and legs. So not enough attention is being paid to sort out these messes left behind by the services.

In fact, in our hearing, I am a member of the committee, in our hearing on April 5, the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Keith Easton, testified that it would take approximately $350 million just to clean up the former military base, Fort Ord in California, a base in my district, which was closed in 1991. Yet, the Army has only requested $45 million for clean up activities covered by the 1990 BRAC account, of which $6.6 million would be allocated for Fort Ord. That means $6.6 million out of what is needed is $350 million. We are going to have to adjust some monies around here. And the priority in his amendment is let's do what we know has been caused by former base closures before we try to clean up all of the new ones, those that just closed this year.

So clearly, there is a disconnect between what our cleanup obligations are, and what are services budget has been made. And this cannot continue.

So I applaud Mr. BLUMENAUER in bringing this amendment. Nonetheless, billions of cleanup obligations are still pending and must be addressed. So if we don't deal with it today and don't get it adopted, we are going to be back here next year, and a lot of the Members in this House are going to understand that these sites are in their district and they are going to want to support this amendment. So I say this is either going to be done now or it can be later, but we have got to get to it.

I applaud Mr. WALSH for the effort he has made in trying to beef up the account, but I don't think it is enough.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE ACCOUNT 2005

For deposit into the Department of Defense Base Closure Account 2005, established by section 2906A(a)(1) of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (10 U.S.C. 2687 note), $5,309,876,000, to remain available until expended.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. DELAURO

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Ms. DELAURO:

Page 11, line 24, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $10,000,000)''.

Page 19, line 8, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(increased by $5,000,000)''.

Ms. DELAURO (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the gentlewoman's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is reserved.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, after discussing this amendment with the chairman and the ranking member of the subcommittee, I intend to withdraw the amendment. So I will not seek a vote. And I thank my colleagues for giving me a few minutes to discuss a very important issue.

I believe that the issue of mental health services for our troops deploying or returning from combat is one that demands the attention of this body, if only for a few minutes today. And I know my colleague, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, addressed this issue as well.

My amendment would increase funding for the Defense Health Program by $10 million to establish a pilot program to provide in-person mental health assessments to servicemen when they deploy or return from combat. The offset is a reduction of $10 million in the 1990 BRAC account.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment is about ensuring that we do a better job for those men and women in our military in need of mental health services. Currently, upon the return from combat, our troops are given only a paper questionnaire with just seven questions about their mental health, and that is

supposed to be enough to determine their mental health status. This is hardly sufficient for people who, for 12 or 18 months, have been constantly subjected to insurgent violence or the threat of insurgents attacks, or witnesses to horrific devastation and loss of life and, in many cases, will have to go back for a second or third tour.

According to both veterans and mental health experts, this screening process leads to an under reporting of mental health problems. As the Surgeon General Kevin Kiley put it recently, and I quote, ''There's only so much we can do for large numbers of troops, and it is not like we wouldn't want to do more.''

That is what is so important is to be able to give the Defense Department the needed resources to do right by our troops. As General Kiley says, do more than a seven question paper questionnaire.

With the number of Army suicides on the rise, the Army suicide rate last year was nearly 13 per 100,000 soldiers, the highest since 1999.

□ 1200

We are simply are not reaching all those men and women in uniform who need our help. In fact, the GAO recently reported that only 22 percent of the servicemembers who might have been at risk for suffering PTSD were ever referred for further mental health evaluation. The report also found that ''DOD cannot provide reasonable assurance that OEF and OIF servicemembers who need referrals receive them.''

Given that, we should allow the Defense Department to test whether an in-person screening will make the screening process more effective and improve the likelihood of their receiving a referral to receive the mental health services they need.

Recently, the Hartford Courant ran a series of mental health concerns facing our troops today, and I have distributed the series to every single office today. I strongly urge my colleagues to take the time to read it. The stories are poignant as well as tragic. It includes serious allegations that the Defense Department has deployed troops who are mentally unprepared for combat and that all too often antidepressant medication is the only form of treatment that fragile servicemembers can get while they are on the front lines.

We must take the time to assess the emotional well-being of our troops. Would we send a young man or woman into combat if they have suffered severe physical wounds? We would not. By the same token, we should not send them to fight if they are suffering severe emotional wounds. The Defense Department has made great strides in the past 30 years in testing and understanding PTSD and other forms of combat stress. We need to do more. I hope someday this body will get the opportunity to provide the Pentagon with the adequate resources to continue to improve its mental health awareness.

I thank Chairman WALSH and I thank Mr. EDWARDS for their willingness to let me speak on this amendment. They are among the strongest supporters of our military that we have in this Congress. I know they share the concerns, the concerns of so many in this body about this issue. I look forward to continuing my work with them on this important issue.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, ARMY

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Army on active duty, $3,687,905,000.

Mr. WALSH (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of the bill through page 19, line 3 be considered as read, printed in the RECORD, and open to amendment at any point.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill through page 19, line 3, is as follows:

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, NAVY

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Navy on active duty, $4,135,061,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, MARINE CORPS

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Marine Corps on active duty, $1,350,921,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, AIR FORCE

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Air Force on active duty, $2,934,327,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Army National Guard on active duty, $469,109,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, AIR NATIONAL GUARD

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Air National Guard on active duty, $277,533,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, ARMY RESERVE

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Army Reserve on active duty, $347,607,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, NAVY RESERVE

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Naval Reserve on active duty, $208,838,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, MARINE CORPS RESERVE

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Marine Corps Reserve on active duty, $43,082,000.

BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING, AIR FORCE RESERVE

For basic allowance for housing, for members of the Air Force Reserve on active duty, $76,218,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, ARMY

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Army, $1,810,774,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, NAVY

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Navy, $1,201,313,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, MARINE CORPS

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Marine Corps, $473,141,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, AIR FORCE

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Air Force, $1,684,019,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, DEFENSE-WIDE

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Department of Defense, $86,386,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Army National Guard, $387,882,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, AIR NATIONAL GUARD

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Air National Guard, $255,322,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, ARMY RESERVE

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Army Reserve, $215,890,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, NAVY RESERVE

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Navy Reserve, $52,136,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, MARINE CORPS RESERVE

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Marine Corps Reserve, $9,579,000.

FACILITIES SUSTAINMENT, RESTORATION AND MODERNIZATION, AIR FORCE RESERVE

For expenses for facilities sustainment, restoration and modernization of the Air Force Reserve, $59,849,000.

THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION ACCOUNTS

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, ARMY

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of the Army, $413,794,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Army shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings and debris of the Department of the Army, or for similar purposes, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of the Army, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, NAVY

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of the Navy, $304,409,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Navy shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings

and debris of the Department of the Navy, or for similar purposes, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of the Navy, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, AIR FORCE

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of the Air Force, $423,871,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Air Force shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings and debris of the Department of the Air Force, or for similar purposes, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of the Air Force, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, DEFENSE-WIDE

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of Defense, $18,431,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Defense shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings and debris of the Department of Defense, or for similar purposes, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of Defense, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the Department of the Army, $257,790,000, to remain available until transferred: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Army shall, upon determining that such funds are required for environmental restoration, reduction and recycling of hazardous waste, removal of unsafe buildings and debris at sites formerly used by the Department of Defense, transfer the funds made available by this appropriation to other appropriations made available to the Department of the Army, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the appropriations to which transferred: *Provided further*, That upon a determination that all or part of the funds transferred from this appropriation are not necessary for the purposes provided herein, such amounts may be transferred back to this appropriation.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

DEFENSE HEALTH PROGRAM

(INCLUDING RESCISSION OF FUNDS)

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, for medical and health care programs of the Department of Defense, as authorized by law, $21,065,163,000, of which $20,218,205,000 shall be for operation and maintenance, of which not to exceed one percent shall remain available until September 30, 2008, and of which up to $10,638,784,000 may be available for contracts entered into under the TRICARE program; of which $402,855,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2009, shall be for procurement; and of which $444,103,000, to remain available for obligation until September 30, 2008, shall be for research, development, test and evaluation: *Provided*, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, of the amount made available under this heading for research, development, test and evaluation, not less than $7,000,000 shall be available for HIV prevention educational activities undertaken in connection with U.S. military training, exercises, and humanitarian assistance activities conducted primarily in African nations: *Provided further*, That of the funds provided for ''Defense Health Program'', operations and maintenance under title VI of Public Law 109–148, $40,042,000 are hereby rescinded.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. EDWARDS

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to considering the amendment at this point in the reading?

Without objection, the Clerk will report the amendment.

There was no objection.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. EDWARDS:

Page 19, line 8, strike ''$21,065,163,000'' and insert ''$21,800,163,000''.

Page 19, line 9, strike ''$20,218,205,000'' and insert ''$20,953,205,000''.

At the end of title I (page 35, after line 2), insert the following new section:

SEC. 136. In the case of taxpayers with income in excess of $1,000,000, for the calendar year beginning in 2007, the amount of tax reduction resulting from the enactment of Public Laws 107–16, 108–27, and 108–311 shall be reduced by 1.78 percent.

Mr. EDWARDS (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. A point of order is reserved.

The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I am not going to take up 5 minutes because we had a discussion of this, but I would like to remind all Members what this is about.

Because of what I think was a budget resolution passed on a partisan basis earlier this week, our subcommittee's allocation was $824 million less than President Bush said we needed to pay for VA health care, military construction, and defense health care. As a consequence of our rejecting on a bipartisan basis the administration's gimmick to try to find funding for defense health care, because we rejected the idea of having a 200 percent increase in TRICARE premiums for men and women who served our country for 20 and 30 years, we ended up with $735 million less for defense health care spending than President Bush, the administration, said we need.

My amendment would put back that $735 million and would pay for it by asking those Americans during a time of war who made over $1 million a year to accept a $112,000 tax cut on average rather than a $114,000 tax cut. I think that is a fair request given Americans' principle of shared sacrifice during time of war. Let us ask those making over $1 million a year to give up less than 2 percent of their tax cuts in order to fund defense health care during a time of war at the level the President said was needed.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation on an appropriation bill and therefore violates clause 2 of rule XXI.

The rule states in pertinent part: ''An amendment to a general appropriation bill shall not be in order if changing existing law.'' The amendment changes the application of existing law.

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

If not, the Chair will rule.

The amendment proposes to prescribe a rule of law regarding the Federal income tax. As such, it constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2(c) of rule XXI.

The point of order is sustained. The amendment is not in order.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 101. None of the funds made available in this title shall be expended for payments under a cost-plus-a-fixed-fee contract for construction, where cost estimates exceed $25,000, to be performed within the United States, except Alaska, without the specific approval in writing of the Secretary of Defense setting forth the reasons therefor.

SEC. 102. Funds made available in this title for construction shall be available for hire of passenger motor vehicles.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of the bill through page 39, line 8 be considered as read, printed in the RECORD, and open to amendment at any point.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill through page 39, line 8, is as follows:

SEC. 103. Funds made available in this title for construction may be used for advances to the Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, for the construction of access roads as authorized by section 210 of title 23, United States Code, when projects authorized therein are certified as important to the national defense by the Secretary of Defense.

SEC. 104. None of the funds made available in this title may be used to begin construction of new bases in the United States for which specific appropriations have not been made.

SEC. 105. None of the funds made available in this title shall be used for purchase of land or land easements in excess of 100 percent of the value as determined by the Army Corps of Engineers or the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, except: (1) where there is a determination of value by a Federal court; (2) purchases negotiated by the Attorney General or the designee of the Attorney General; (3) where the estimated value is less than $25,000; or (4) as otherwise determined by the Secretary of Defense to be in the public interest.

SEC. 106. None of the funds made available in this title shall be used to: (1) acquire land; (2) provide for site preparation; or (3) install utilities for any family housing, except housing for which funds have been made available in annual Acts making appropriations for military construction.

SEC. 107. None of the funds made available in this title for minor construction may be used to transfer or relocate any activity from one base or installation to another, without prior notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

SEC. 108. None of the funds made available in this title may be used for the procurement of steel for any construction project or activity for which American steel producers, fabricators, and manufacturers have been denied the opportunity to compete for such steel procurement.

SEC. 109. None of the funds available to the Department of Defense for military construction or family housing during the current fiscal year may be used to pay real property taxes in any foreign nation.

SEC. 110. None of the funds made available in this title may be used to initiate a new installation overseas without prior notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

SEC. 111. None of the funds made available in this title may be obligated for architect and engineer contracts estimated by the Government to exceed $500,000 for projects to be accomplished in Japan, in any North Atlantic Treaty Organization member country, or in countries bordering the Arabian Sea, unless such contracts are awarded to United States firms or United States firms in joint venture with host nation firms.

SEC. 112. None of the funds made available in this title for military construction in the United States territories and possessions in the Pacific and on Kwajalein Atoll, or in countries bordering the Arabian Sea, may be used to award any contract estimated by the Government to exceed $1,000,000 to a foreign contractor: *Provided*, That this section shall not be applicable to contract awards for which the lowest responsive and responsible bid of a United States contractor exceeds the lowest responsive and responsible bid of a foreign contractor by greater than 20 percent: *Provided further*, That this section shall not apply to contract awards for military construction on Kwajalein Atoll for which the lowest responsive and responsible bid is submitted by a Marshallese contractor.

SEC. 113. The Secretary of Defense is to inform the appropriate committees of both Houses of Congress, including the Committees on Appropriations, of the plans and scope of any proposed military exercise involving United States personnel 30 days prior to its occurring, if amounts expended for construction, either temporary or permanent, are anticipated to exceed $100,000.

SEC. 114. Not more than 20 percent of the funds made available in this title which are limited for obligation during the current fiscal year shall be obligated during the last two months of the fiscal year.

SEC. 115. Funds appropriated to the Department of Defense for construction in prior years shall be available for construction authorized for each such military department by the authorizations enacted into law during the current session of Congress.

SEC. 116. For military construction or family housing projects that are being completed with funds otherwise expired or lapsed for obligation, expired or lapsed funds may be used to pay the cost of associated supervision, inspection, overhead, engineering and design on those projects and on subsequent claims, if any.

SEC. 117. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any funds made available to a military department or defense agency for the construction of military projects may be obligated for a military construction project or contract, or for any portion of such a project or contract, at any time before the end of the fourth fiscal year after the fiscal year for which funds for such project were made available, if the funds obligated for such project: (1) are obligated from funds available for military construction projects; and (2) do not exceed the amount appropriated for such project, plus any amount by which the cost of such project is increased pursuant to law.

SEC. 118. The Secretary of Defense is to provide the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress with an annual report by February 15, containing details of the specific actions proposed to be taken by the Department of Defense during the current fiscal year to encourage other member nations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Japan, Korea, and United States allies bordering the Arabian Sea to assume a greater share of the common defense burden of such nations and the United States.

SEC. 119. In addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense, proceeds deposited to the Department of Defense Base Closure Account established by section 207(a)(1) of the Defense Authorization Amendments and Base Closure and Realignment Act (10 U.S.C. 2687 note) pursuant to section 207(a)(2)(C) of such Act, may be transferred to the account established by section 2906(a)(1) of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (10 U.S.C. 2687 note), to be merged with, and to be available for the same purposes and the same time period as that account.

SEC. 120. Subject to 30 days prior notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress, such additional amounts as may be determined by the Secretary of Defense may be transferred to: (1) the Department of Defense Family Housing Improvement Fund from amounts appropriated for construction in ''Family Housing'' accounts, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same period of time as amounts appropriated directly to the Fund; or (2) the Department of Defense Military Unaccompanied Housing Improvement Fund from amounts appropriated for construction of military unaccompanied housing in ''Military Construction'' accounts, to be merged with and to be available for the same purposes and for the same period of time as amounts appropriated directly to the Fund: *Provided*, That appropriations made available to the Funds shall be available to cover the costs, as defined in section 502(5) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, of direct loans or loan guarantees issued by the Department of Defense pursuant to the provisions of subchapter IV of chapter 169 of title 10, United States Code, pertaining to alternative means of acquiring and improving military family housing, military unaccompanied housing, and supporting facilities.

SEC. 121. None of the funds made available in this title may be obligated for Partnership for Peace Programs in the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union.

SEC. 122. (a) Not later than 60 days before issuing any solicitation for a contract with the private sector for military family housing the Secretary of the military department concerned shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress the notice described in subsection (b).

(b)(1) A notice referred to in subsection (a) is a notice of any guarantee (including the making of mortgage or rental payments) proposed to be made by the Secretary to the private party under the contract involved in the event of—

(A) the closure or realignment of the installation for which housing is provided under the contract;

(B) a reduction in force of units stationed at such installation; or

(C) the extended deployment overseas of units stationed at such installation.

(2) Each notice under this subsection shall specify the nature of the guarantee involved and assess the extent and likelihood, if any, of the liability of the Federal Government with respect to the guarantee.

SEC. 123. In addition to any other transfer authority available to the Department of Defense, amounts may be transferred from the accounts established by sections 2906(a)(1) and 2906A(a)(1) of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (10 U.S.C. 2687 note), to the fund established by section 1013(d) of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 3374) to pay for expenses associated with the Homeowners Assistance Program. Any amounts transferred shall be merged with and be available for the same purposes and for the same time period as the fund to which transferred.

SEC. 124. Notwithstanding this or any other provision of law, funds made available in this title for operation and maintenance of family housing shall be the exclusive source of funds for repair and maintenance of all family housing units, including general or flag officer quarters: *Provided*, That not more than $35,000 per unit may be spent annually for the maintenance and repair of any general or flag officer quarters without 30 days prior notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress, except that an after-the-fact notification shall be submitted if the limitation is exceeded solely due to costs associated with environmental remediation that could not be reasonably anticipated at the time of the budget submission: *Provided further*, That the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) is to report annually to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress all operation and maintenance expenditures for each individual general or flag officer quarters for the prior fiscal year: *Provided further*, That nothing in this section precludes the Secretary of a military department, after notifying the congressional defense committees and waiting 21 days, from using funds derived under section 2601, chapter 403, chapter 603, or chapter 903 of title 10, United States Code, for the maintenance or repair of general and flag officer quarters at the military service academy under the jurisdiction of that Secretary: *Provided further*, That each Secretary of a military department shall provide an annual report by February 15 to the congressional defense committees on the amount of funds that were derived under section 2601, chapter 403, chapter 603, or chapter

903 of title 10, United States Code, in the previous year and were obligated for the construction, improvement, repair, or maintenance of any military facility or infrastructure.

SEC. 125. None of the funds made available in this title under the heading ''North Atlantic Treaty Organization Security Investment Program'', and no funds appropriated for any fiscal year before fiscal year 2007 for that program that remain available for obligation, may be obligated or expended for the conduct of studies of missile defense.

SEC. 126. Whenever the Secretary of Defense or any other official of the Department of Defense is requested by the subcommittee on Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives or the subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate to respond to a question or inquiry submitted by the chairman or another member of that subcommittee pursuant to a subcommittee hearing or other activity, the Secretary (or other official) shall respond to the request, in writing, within 21 days of the date on which the request is transmitted to the Secretary (or other official).

SEC. 127. Amounts contained in the Ford Island Improvement Account established by subsection (h) of section 2814 of title 10, United States Code, are appropriated and shall be available until expended for the purposes specified in subsection (i)(1) of such section or until transferred pursuant to subsection (i)(3) of such section.

SEC. 128. None of the funds made available in this title, or in any Act making appropriations for military construction which remain available for obligation, may be obligated or expended to carry out a military construction, land acquisition, or family housing project at or for a military installation approved for closure, or at a military installation for the purposes of supporting a function that has been approved for realignment to another installation, in 2005 under the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (part A of title XXIX of Public Law 101–510; 10 U.S.C. 2687 note), unless such a project at a military installation approved for realignment will support a continuing mission or function at that installation or a new mission or function that is planned for that installation, or unless the Secretary of Defense certifies that the cost to the United States of carrying out such project would be less than the cost to the United States of cancelling such project, or if the project is at an active component base that shall be established as an enclave or in the case of projects having multi-agency use, that another Government agency has indicated it will assume ownership of the completed project. The Secretary of Defense may not transfer funds made available as a result of this limitation from any military construction project, land acquisition, or family housing project to another account or use such funds for another purpose or project without the prior approval of the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress. This section shall not apply to military construction projects, land acquisition, or family housing projects for which the project is vital to the national security or the protection of health, safety, or environmental quality: *Provided,* That the Secretary of Defense shall notify the congressional defense committees within seven days of a decision to carry out such a military construction project.

SEC. 129. During the 5-year period after appropriations available in this Act to the Department of Defense for military construction and family housing operation and maintenance and construction have expired for obligation, upon a determination that such appropriations will not be necessary for the liquidation of obligations or for making authorized adjustments to such appropriations for obligations incurred during the period of availability of such appropriations, unobligated balances of such appropriations may be transferred into the appropriation ''Foreign Currency Fluctuations, Construction, Defense,'' to be merged with and to be available for the same time period and for the same purposes as the appropriation to which transferred.

SEC. 130. None of the funds appropriated in this title available for the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS) or TRICARE shall be available for the reimbursement of any health care provider for inpatient mental health service for care received when a patient is referred to a provider of inpatient mental health care or residential treatment care by a medical or health care professional having an economic interest in the facility to which the patient is referred: *Provided*, That this limitation does not apply in the case of inpatient mental health services provided under the program for persons with disabilities under subsection (d) of section 1079 of title 10, United States Code, provided as partial hospital care, or provided pursuant to a waiver authorized by the Secretary of Defense because of medical or psychological circumstances of the patient that are confirmed by a health professional who is not a Federal employee after a review, pursuant to rules prescribed by the Secretary, which takes into account the appropriate level of care for the patient, the intensity of services required by the patient, and the availability of that care.

SEC. 131. (a) The Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, may carry out a program to distribute surplus dental and medical equipment of the Department of Defense, at no cost to the Department of Defense, to Indian Health Service facilities and to federally-qualified health centers (within the meaning of section 1905(l)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(l)(2)(B))).

(b) In carrying out this provision, the Secretary of Defense shall give the Indian Health Service a property disposal priority equal to the priority given to the Department of Defense and its twelve special screening programs in distribution of surplus dental and medical supplies and equipment.

SEC. 132. Notwithstanding any other provision of law or regulation, the Secretary of Defense may adjust wage rates for civilian employees hired for certain health care occupations as authorized for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs by section 7455 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 133. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, that not more than 35 percent of funds provided in this title for environmental remediation may be obligated under indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity contracts with a total contract value of $130,000,000 or higher.

SEC. 134. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, funds available to the Department of Defense in this title shall be made available to provide transportation of medical supplies and equipment, on a nonreimbursable basis, to American Samoa, and funds available to the Department of Defense in this title shall be made available to to provide transportation of medical supplies and equipment, on a nonreimbursable basis, to the Indian Health Service when it is in conjunction with a civil-military project.

SEC. 135. (1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law or regulation, the Secretary of Defense may exercise the provisions of section 7403(g) of title 38, United States Code, for occupations listed in section 7403(a)(2) of title 38, United States Code, as well as the following:

Pharmacists, Audiologists, and Dental Hygienists.

(2) The requirements of section 7403(g)(1)(A) of title 38, United States Code, shall apply.

(3) The limitations of section 7403(g)(1)(B) of title 38, United States Code, shall not apply.

TITLE II

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

COMPENSATION AND PENSIONS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the payment of compensation benefits to or on behalf of veterans and a pilot program for disability examinations as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. 107, chapters 11, 13, 18, 51, 53, 55, and 61); pension benefits to or on behalf of veterans as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. chapters 15, 51, 53, 55, and 61; 92 Stat. 2508); and burial benefits, the Reinstated Entitlement Program for Survivors, emergency and other officers' retirement pay, adjusted-service credits and certificates, payment of premiums due on commercial life insurance policies guaranteed under the provisions of title IV of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 540 et seq.) and for other benefits as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. 107, 1312, 1977, and 2106, chapters 23, 51, 53, 55, and 61; 43 Stat. 122, 123; 45 Stat. 735; 76 Stat. 1198), $38,007,095,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided,* That not to exceed $28,112,000 of the amount appropriated under this heading shall be reimbursed to ''General operating expenses'' and ''Medical administration'' for necessary expenses in implementing the provisions of chapters 51, 53, and 55 of title 38, United States Code, the funding source for which is specifically provided as the ''Compensation and pensions'' appropriation: *Provided further,* That such sums as may be earned on an actual qualifying patient basis, shall be reimbursed to ''Medical care collections fund'' to augment the funding of individual medical facilities for nursing home care provided to pensioners as authorized.

READJUSTMENT BENEFITS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the payment of readjustment and rehabilitation benefits to or on behalf of veterans as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. chapters 21, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 39, 51, 53, 55, and 61), $3,262,006,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided,* That expenses for rehabilitation program services and assistance which the Secretary is authorized to provide under section 3104(a) of title 38, United States Code, other than under subsection (a)(1), (2), (5), and (11) of that section, shall be charged to this account.

VETERANS INSURANCE AND INDEMNITIES

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For military and naval insurance, national service life insurance, servicemen's indemnities, service-disabled veterans insurance, and veterans mortgage life insurance as authorized by title 38, United States Code, chapter 19; 70 Stat. 887; 72 Stat. 487, $49,850,000, to remain available until expended.

VETERANS HOUSING BENEFIT PROGRAM FUND PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the cost of direct and guaranteed loans, such sums as may be necessary to carry out the program, as authorized by subchapters I through III of chapter 37 of title 38, United States Code: *Provided,* That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the

Congressional Budget Act of 1974: *Provided further*, That during fiscal year 2007, within the resources available, not to exceed $500,000 in gross obligations for direct loans are authorized for specially adapted housing loans.

In addition, for administrative expenses to carry out the direct and guaranteed loan programs, $153,185,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for ''General operating expenses''.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION LOANS PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For the cost of direct loans, $67,000, as authorized by chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code: *Provided*, That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974: *Provided further*, That funds made available under this heading are available to subsidize gross obligations for the principal amount of direct loans not to exceed $3,369,000.

In addition, for administrative expenses necessary to carry out the direct loan program, $305,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for ''General operating expenses''.

NATIVE AMERICAN VETERAN HOUSING LOAN PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For administrative expenses to carry out the direct loan program authorized by subchapter V of chapter 37 of title 38, United States Code, $615,000, which may be transferred to and merged with the appropriation for ''General operating expenses'': *Provided*, That no new loans in excess of $30,000,000 may be made in fiscal year 2007.

GUARANTEED TRANSITIONAL HOUSING LOANS FOR HOMELESS VETERANS PROGRAM ACCOUNT

For the administrative expenses to carry out the guaranteed transitional housing loan program authorized by subchapter VI of chapter 37 of title 38, United States Code, not to exceed $750,000 of the amounts appropriated by this Act for ''General operating expenses'' and ''Medical administration'' may be expended.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

MEDICAL SERVICES

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses for furnishing, as authorized by law, inpatient and outpatient care and treatment to beneficiaries of the Department of Veterans Affairs and veterans described in section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code, including care and treatment in facilities not under the jurisdiction of the Department, and including medical supplies and equipment and salaries and expenses of health-care employees hired under title 38, United States Code, and aid to State homes as authorized by section 1741 of title 38, United States Code; $25,412,000,000, plus reimbursements, of which not less than $2,800,000,000 shall be expended for specialty mental health care: *Provided*, That of the funds made available under this heading, not to exceed $1,100,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2008: *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a priority for treatment for veterans who are service-connected disabled, lower income, or have special needs: *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall give priority funding for the provision of basic medical benefits to veterans in enrollment priority groups 1 through 6: *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may authorize the dispensing of prescription drugs from Veterans Health Administration facilities to enrolled veterans with privately written prescriptions based on requirements established by the Secretary: *Provided further*, That the implementation of the program described in the previous proviso shall incur no additional cost to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FARR

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. FARR:

Page 39, line 22, strike ''$25,412,000,000'' and insert ''$26,875,000,000''.

Page 41, line 1, strike ''$3,277,000,000'' and insert ''$3,390,000,000''.

Page 42, line 2, strike ''$412,000,000'' and insert ''$460,000,000''.

Page 42, line 14, strike ''$1,480,764,000'' and insert ''$1,553,764,000''.

Page 44, line 21, strike ''$69,499,000'' and insert ''$77,499,000''.

Page 45, line 13, strike ''$283,670,000'' and insert ''$399,000,000''.

At the end of title II (page 56, after line 8), insert the following new section:

SEC. 223. In the case of taxpayers with income in excess of $1,000,000, for the calendar year beginning in 2007, the amount of tax reduction resulting from the enactment of Public Laws 107–16, 108–27, and 108–311 shall be reduced by 4.4 percent.

Mr. FARR (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. A point of order is reserved.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, this amendment provides $1.82 billion for veterans, particularly in the health care field. It is in 10 separate areas: mental health and prosthesis, patient workload backlog, research for prosthesis, nursing home beds for long-term care, priority 8 veterans health care for those veterans who earn as little as $27,000 a year, improving the VA casework backlog that currently takes more than 6 months, money for VA hospital construction, medical administration, the VA IG's office, and unproven efficiencies.

Now, why should you be supporting this amendment? Well, Mr. Chairman, next week we will all be going home for Memorial Day recess. And on Memorial Day, we will all, as Members of Congress, get up and tell our veterans all the things we are doing for them. You ought to tell them about this amendment because this amendment does what veterans have asked us to do.

The figures that I have proposed here are the independent budget recommendations for mental health, prosthesis, medical and prosthetic research accounts, and staffing levels to improve timely care. The independent budget was brought to the committee, and I want to applaud the chairman for allowing four veterans organizations to bring this, including AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Veterans of Foreign Wars. They provided our committee with a budget of what they thought needed to be done. And their budget estimates, according to the committee, were more on mark than the administration's figures last year.

So when you go home to the vets next week, you have a chance to tell them you supported the Farr amendment to add $300 million for mental health and $300 million for prosthetics. You can tell them that you have voted to add $119 million for additional staffing for increased patient workload. You can tell them that you voted for $48 million to pay for inflation in the medical and prosthesis research account.

This amendment is also because the adequate funding for vets has not been made by this bill. So we are helping this bill by adding also for the veterans nursing home beds. The current law requires that we provide 13,391 beds. We only have enough money for 11,100 beds. That is almost 3,000 beds below the level authorized in 1998. So we add $471 million for nursing home care to bring nursing home beds back into compliance with the law.

This amendment would also allow 214,000 priority 8 veterans. Who are priority 8 veterans? Those are veterans who make as little as $27,000 a year. You could claim poverty for the earned income tax credit at that salary, and all we are saying is we are going to make them eligible for the VA health care.

Every Member in this body should support this amendment because every Member has veterans who have been shut out of the VA's health system.

This amendment also pays for the backlog. It adds $73 million to provide increased funding for general operations expenses to help reduce the claims in processing. Every Member has district offices that are working on veterans' cases, 74,000 vets who are waiting more than 6 months to have their claims processed and much longer in some cases. As of last week, that number increased by over 21,000 to 95,000 vets who are waiting just for an answer.

This amendment also restores money for three high-priority projects, hospital construction. Three hospital construction projects in Denver, Colorado; Madison, Wisconsin; and Columbia, Missouri, were cut in the base bill to provide allowances for other accounts. Congressman BEAUPREZ of Colorado sent a letter to the Appropriations Committee earlier this month supporting the Colorado project.

Where does this money come from? We do this by an offset. Mr. Chairman, since the Republican leadership enacted the tax cuts in 2001, we have learned from all the reports and all the

papers that the rich have gotten richer. Our progressive tax system is becoming less progressive. Time and again the majority has prioritized the needs of people making more than $1 million a year ahead of the key investments such as health care for our veterans. As a result, our veterans will continue to wait too long for care. Many will not get the mental health assistance they need. Prosthetic research and services will be underfunded, and so-called ''wealthy'' lower priority veterans, those making as little as $27,000 a year, will continue to be denied access.

This is going to be ruled out of order, and I hope the Members will insist that we get this funding.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I make a point against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation on an appropriation bill and therefore violates clause 2 of rule XXI.

The rule states in pertinent part: ''An amendment to a general appropriation bill shall not be in order if changing existing law.'' This amendment changes the application of existing law.

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

If not, the Chair will rule.

The amendment proposes to prescribe a rule of law regarding the Federal income tax. As such, it constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2(c) of rule XXI.

The point of order is sustained. The amendment is not in order.

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, recently a concern about VA health care policy regarding certain anesthesia providers was brought to my attention. The VA is currently reviewing regulations to allow anesthesiologist assistants, also known as AAs, to provide care at VA medical facilities.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today to encourage the VA to continue to move forward to officially recognize AAs as anesthesia providers at VA medical facilities. AAs are a small but important contingent of mid-level anesthesia providers, who will be a welcome addition to the anesthesia care team at VA hospitals. In fact, the VA approved AAs to serve at VA facilities in February of 2004. It approved them in February of 2004. But because of bureaucrat delays, AAs are not recognized in the Veterans Health Administration's official provider handbook, not allowing them to practice.

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Mr. Chairman, more than 2 years has passed since the decision was made to include AAs as VA anesthesia providers, yet the program is still on hold. If new specific qualification standards for AAs are needed, then the VA should say so and finalize the regulatory process. In light of potential provider shortages at veterans medical facilities, veterans deserve to have every qualified caregiver as a resource. Anything else is a disservice to our veterans.

I know the chairman of the subcommittee is aware of this situation, and I look forward to working with him to have to help get the VA off the dime.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

MEDICAL ADMINISTRATION

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses in the administration of the medical, hospital, nursing home, domiciliary, construction, supply, and research activities, as authorized by law; administrative expenses in support of capital policy activities; and administrative and legal expenses of the Department for collecting and recovering amounts owed the Department as authorized under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, and the Federal Medical Care Recovery Act (42 U.S.C. 2651 et seq.); $3,277,000,000, plus reimbursements, of which $250,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2008.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses for the maintenance and operation of hospitals, nursing homes, and domiciliary facilities and other necessary facilities for the Veterans Health Administration; for administrative expenses in support of planning, design, project management, real property acquisition and disposition, construction and renovation of any facility under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department; for oversight, engineering and architectural activities not charged to project costs; for repairing, altering, improving or providing facilities in the several hospitals and homes under the jurisdiction of the Department, not otherwise provided for, either by contract or by the hire of temporary employees and purchase of materials; for leases of facilities; and for laundry and food services, $3,594,000,000, plus reimbursements, of which $250,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2008.

MEDICAL AND PROSTHETIC RESEARCH

For necessary expenses in carrying out programs of medical and prosthetic research and development as authorized by chapter 73 of title 38, United States Code, to remain available until September 30, 2008, $412,000,000, plus reimbursements.

Mr. WALSH (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of the bill through page 44, line 22, be considered as read, printed in the RECORD and open to amendment at any point.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill through page 44, line 22, is as follows:

DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION

GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES

For necessary operating expenses of the Department of Veterans Affairs, not otherwise provided for, including administrative expenses in support of Department-Wide capital planning, management and policy activities, uniforms or allowances therefor; not to exceed $25,000 for official reception and representation expenses; hire of passenger motor vehicles; and reimbursement of the General Services Administration for security guard services, and the Department of Defense for the cost of overseas employee mail, $1,480,764,000: *Provided,* That expenses for services and assistance authorized under paragraphs (1), (2), (5), and (11) of section 3104(a) of title 38, United States Code, that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines are necessary to enable entitled veterans: (1) to the maximum extent feasible, to become employable and to obtain and maintain suitable employment; or (2) to achieve maximum independence in daily living, shall be charged to this account: *Provided further,* That the Veterans Benefits Administration shall be funded at not less than $1,167,859,000: *Provided further,* That of the funds made available under this heading, not to exceed $75,000,000 shall be available for obligation until September 30, 2008: *Provided further,* That from the funds made available under this heading, the Veterans Benefits Administration may purchase (one-for-one replacement basis only) up to two passenger motor vehicles for use in operations of that Administration in Manila, Philippines.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS

For necessary expenses for information technology systems and telecommunications support, including developmental information systems and operational information systems; for the capital asset acquisition of information technology systems, including management and related contractual costs of said acquisitions, including contractual costs associated with operations authorized by chapter 3109 of title 5, United States Code, $1,302,330,000, plus reimbursements, to remain available until September 30, 2008: *Provided,* That none of these funds may be obligated until the Department of Veterans Affairs submits to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress, and such Committees approve, a plan for expenditure that: (1) meets the capital planning and investment control review requirements established by the Office of Management and Budget; (2) complies with the Department of Veterans Affairs enterprise architecture; (3) conforms with an established enterprise life cycle methodology; and (4) complies with the acquisition rules, requirements, guidelines, and systems acquisition management practices of the Federal Government: *Provided further,* That within 30 days of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress a reprogramming base letter which provides, by project, the costs included in this appropriation.

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

For necessary expenses of the National Cemetery Administration for operations and maintenance, not otherwise provided for, including uniforms or allowances therefor; cemeterial expenses as authorized by law; purchase of one passenger motor vehicle for use in cemeterial operations; and hire of passenger motor vehicles, $160,733,000, of which not to exceed $8,037,000 shall be available until September 30, 2008.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General in carrying out the provisions of the Inspector General Act of 1978, $69,499,000, to remain available until September 30, 2008.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

CONSTRUCTION, MAJOR PROJECTS

For constructing, altering, extending and improving any of the facilities including parking projects under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department of Veterans Affairs, or for any of the purposes set forth in

sections 316, 2404, 2406, 8102, 8103, 8106, 8108, 8109, 8110, and 8122 of title 38, United States Code, including planning, architectural and engineering services, construction management services, maintenance or guarantee period services costs associated with equipment guarantees provided under the project, services of claims analysts, offsite utility and storm drainage system construction costs, and site acquisition, where the estimated cost of a project is more than the amount set forth in section 8104(a)(3)(A) of title 38, United States Code, or where funds for a project were made available in a previous major project appropriation, $283,670,000, to remain available until expended, of which $2,000,000 shall be to make reimbursements as provided in section 13 of the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 (41 U.S.C. 612) for claims paid for contract disputes: *Provided*, That except for advance planning activities, including needs assessments which may or may not lead to capital investments, and other capital asset management related activities, such as portfolio development and management activities, and investment strategy studies funded through the advance planning fund and the planning and design activities funded through the design fund, including needs assessments which may or may not lead to capital investments, none of the funds appropriated under this heading shall be used for any project which has not been approved by the Congress in the budgetary process: *Provided further*, That funds provided in this appropriation for fiscal year 2007, for each approved project shall be obligated: (1) by the awarding of a construction documents contract by September 30, 2007; and (2) by the awarding of a construction contract by September 30, 2008: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall promptly report in writing to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress any approved major construction project in which obligations are not incurred within the time limitations established above: *Provided further*, That none of the funds in this or any other Act may be used to reduce the mission, services or infrastructure, including land, of the 18 facilities on the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) list requiring further study as specified by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs without prior approval of the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. MOORE OF WISCONSIN

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin:

Page 45, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert the following: ''(increased by $32,500,000)''.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman reserves a point of order.

The gentlewoman from Wisconsin is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, earlier this year, the VA made a priority request for $32.5 million for urgent and necessary upgrades for the spinal cord injury unit at the Zablocki VA Medical Center in Milwaukee. However, the subcommittee mark made a point of zeroing out this project. My amendment would restore the funding for this requested priority.

Mr. Chairman, I can tell you that I am new to this body, so I was very curious as to why they would do this. Clearly the Zablocki spinal cord injury unit is not a ''bridge to nowhere.'' It is one of only 23 spinal cord injury units in the country, serving more than 500 veterans as in-patients and over 10,000 patients on an outpatient basis each year.

Nationally, there are over 44,000 veterans suffering from spinal cord injuries that are now paraplegic and quadriplegic. At such a critical time when we are at war and the number of injured soldiers continues to increase, I had to ask myself, Mr. Chairman, what are they doing and why are we doing this?

So what I did as a new Member is I went to something called the committee record, I believe, and what they said here is that they did this because this was of ''relatively low priority.''

Well, I was really confused then, Mr. Chairman, because I then checked with the budget documentation submitted by the Department of Veterans Affairs and discovered that they had listed this as their number one priority for fiscal year 2007. Further, they went on to describe the spinal cord injury unit at Zablocki as having by far received the highest score under their project scoring session.

Mr. Chairman, I don't stand under this E. Pluribus Unum boring Members on and on often. I am here because I truly am trying to understand how other projects with lower priority scores were, indeed, funded.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, I will submit for the RECORD this corroborating evidence that this indeed is a highest priority of the fiscal year 2007 projects.

The Committee recommends an appropriation of $283,670,000 for Construction, Major Projects for fiscal year 2007. This is a decrease of $690,930,000 below the fiscal year 2006 enacted level and a decrease of $115,330,000 below the budget request. When adjusted for supplemental funding, the recommendation is $323,430,000 below the fiscal year 2006 enacted level.

The Committee recommendation does not include funding for refurbishment of operating rooms at the Columbia, Missouri VAMC, and refurbishment of the Spinal Cord Injury Center at the Milwaukee, Wisconsin VAMC, both of which are relatively low priority projects. The estimate submitted in the budget for the Capital Region Data Center project includes a contingency reserve of over 25 percent, well in excess of needs for such a project. The funding for this project is therefore reduced by $5,000,000, leaving 12.5 percent for a contingency reserve. The Committee recommendation includes no funding for the replacement hospital in Denver, Colorado. The Committee notes that less than two years ago, when original planning funds were appropriated for the Denver facility, the estimated total cost of the project was $328,000,000. The current estimate for the project is in the range of $621,000,000, almost double the previous estimate. This is not the only instance of large cost growth for construction projects of the Department, but this is a project at a stage where work can be halted before significant and irreversible financial damage is done. The Committee is concerned with the rapid escalation in the cost of building new facilities and cautions the Department that few, if any, projects will be approved in the future if such costs are not brought under control.

The Committee recommendation also includes a general provision which places restrictions on the use of funds previously appropriated for a new facility in Biloxi, Mississippi. It is the Committee's direction that no funds can be expended on a new facility unless it is a joint-use facility shared with Kessler Air Force Base.

The specific amounts recommended by the Committee are as follows:

Location and description	2007 request	Committee recommendation
Veterans Health Administration [VHA]:		
American Lake, WA Seismic Correction, NHCU & Dietetics	$38,220	$38,220
Columbia, MO, OR Replacement	25,830	0
Denver, CO Replacement Medical Center Facility	52,000	0
Long Beach, CA Seismic Correction, Bldg. 7 & 126	97,545	97,545
Milwaukee, WI Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Center	32,500	0
St. Louis (JB), MO Medical Facil Improv & Cem Exp	7,000	7,000
Advance planning fund: Various locations	39,255	39,255
Asbestos abatement: Various locations	5,000	5,000
Claims Analyses: Various locations	2,000	2,000
Judgment Fund: Various locations	2,000	2,000
Hazardous Waste: Various locations	2,000	2,000
Facility Security Fund: Various locations	4,000	4,000
Total VHA construction, major projects	307,350	197,020
National Cemetery Administration (NCA):		
Dallas/Fort Worth, TX Phase 2 Gravesite Expansion	13,000	13,000
Gerald B. H. Solomon-Saratoga, NY Phase 2 Gravesite Expansion	7,600	7,600
Great Lakes, MI Phase 1B Development	16,900	16,900
Design Fund: Various locations	2,300	2,300

TABLE 1–3 SUMMARY OF FY 2006 AND 2007 CARES CAPITAL PROJECTS

2006:				
10	Cleveland, OH	Cleveland-Brecksville Consolidation, Ph 2/2—Construction	FY05–2	$87,300
4	Pittsburgh, PA	Consolidation of Campuses, Ph 2—Construction	FY05–3	82,500
22	Las Vegas, NV	New Medical Center Facility, Ph 2/3—Construciton	FY05–6	199,000
8	Gainesville, FL	Correct Patient Privacy Deficiencies, Ph 2/2—Construction	FY05–7	76,400
20	Anchorage, AK	Outpatient Clinic & Regional Office, Ph 2/2—Construction	FY05–7	63,510
16	Biloxi [1], MS	Hospital Restoration/Consolidation	FY06–1	310,000
16	Fayetteville, AR	Clinical Addition, Ph–1—Design	FY06–5	5,800
	Various	Line Items		55,790
	New Orleans [2], LA	Restoration/Replacement of Medical Center Facility	N/A	75,000
Total 2006				$955,300
2007:				
19	Denver, CO	Replacement Medical Center Facility	FY05–10	52,000
22	Long Beach, CA	Seismic Corrections—Bldgs 7 & 126	FY05–16	97,545
12	Milwaukee, WI	SCI Center	FY07–1	32,500
15	St. Louis (JB), MO	Medical Facility Improvements and Cemetery Expansion	FY07–1	7,000
20	American Lake, WA	Seismic Corrections—NHCU & Dietetics	FY07–8	38,220
15	Columbia, MO	Operating Room Suite Replacement	FY07–21	25,830
	Various	Line Items		54,255
Total 2007				$307,350

[1] This project received $17.5M in FY2006 appropriations for design and an additional $292.5M in FY 2006 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations.
[2] This project was added as a result of public law 109–148 the FY 2006 Emergency Supplemental Appropriation.

FY 2007 Top-Twenty Major Medical Facility Projects.—In accordance with section 8107 of United States Code 38, below are the top-twenty medical facility projects that were considered for the FY 2007 budget. These projects were selected based on the CARES capital criteria.

TABLE 4–9 FY 2007 VHA TOP-TWENTY MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY PROJECTS

	VISN	Location	Project Title—Brief Description	Priority store	Estimated cost (000)	Annual cost (000)	Category
The projects listed below were funded in phases in prior years and are therefore considered as top priority projects until funding is complete. Priority scores are from the FY 2005 cycle project scoring session.							
1	4	Pittsburgh, PA	Consolidation of campus	.4532	$189,205	$5,805	General
2	22	Las Vegas, NV	New Medical Center Facility	.3981	$406,000	$142,000	General
3	19	Denver, CO	Replacement Medical Center Facility	.3424	$621,000	$255,700	General
4	8	Orlando, FL	New Medical Center Facility	.3314	$347,700	$138,030	General
5	8	San Juan, PR	Seismic Corrections—Bldg 1	.2888	$145,200	$324,000	Seismic
6	22	Los Angel, CA	Seismic Corrections—Bldgs. 500 & 501	.2536	$79,900	$461,000	Seismic
7	8	Lee County, FL	Outpatient Clinic	.2429	$65,100	$15,800	General
The project listed below was funded in a phase in a prior year and is therefore considered as a top priority projects until funding is completed. Priority score is from the FY 2006 cycle project scoring session.							
8	16	Fayetteville, AR	Clinical Addition	.2962	$56,163	$119,470	General
The projects listed below are additional prjects considered for the FY 2007 planning cycle. The priority scores are from the FY 2007 project scoring session.							
9	12	Milwaukee, WI	Spinal Cord Injury Center	.4412	$32,500	$10,964	General
10	8	Bay Pines, FL	Inpatient & Outpatient Renovation & Construction	.4189	$90,400	$17,310	General
11	17	Dallas, TX	Clinical Expansion & Renovation	.4072	$137,500	$56,071	General
12	4	Butler, PA	Outpatient Clinic & Demolition	.4011	$44,200	$54,744	General
13	21	East Bay, CA	New Outpatient Clinic 2	.3993	$44,000	$10,547	General
14	22	Long Beach, CA	Seismic Corrections—Bldgs. 128 & 133	.3479	$23,500	$2,000	Seismic
15	15	St. Louis (JB), MO	Medical Facility Improvements and Cemetery Expansion	.3414	$69,053	$3,741	General
16	20	American Lake, WA	Seismic Corrections—NHCU and Dietetics	.3376	$38,220	$8,142	Seismic
17	20	Settale, WA	Mental Health & Research Bldg.	.3231	$96,400	$5,459	General
18	22	Loma Linda, CA	Outpatient Clinic	.3113	$113,400	$27,349	General
19	3	Northport, NY	Renovation of Residential & Ambulatory Care Areas	.2808	$27,300	$10,344	General
20	5	Washington, DC	Outpatient Expansion & Renovation	.2769	$131,400	$312,094	General

[1] This project was withdrawn from consideration due the current project underway at Long Beach.
[2] This project is considered a top priority by VHA regardless of its priority score.

Mr. Chairman, I don't know what benchmarks are used with these scoring decisions, but truly it could not be based on the priorities of those valiant veterans that so readily serve our country and depend upon us for the treatments that this spinal cord injury unit provides, folks that are faced with irreversible catastrophic disabilities. This is a hard reality for these veterans and their families, and the very least we can do for them is to provide adequate facilities for them.

I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, that before I became a Member of this body, and indeed before I became a candidate for Congress, I had the opportunity to visit the Zablocki Spinal Cord Unit, and I can tell you that despite the dedication of the workers there, they are working under very, very hard conditions, outdated technology, limited space, it will not compensate for the deteriorating conditions at that facility.

Those spinal cord injury patients, Mr. Chairman, are on the tenth floor, the tenth floor, and they are lacking any adequate safety evacuation criteria. Certainly they are lacking in any ability to maximize their mobility, functionality and independence.

The Department says this is the highest priority. Veterans have said this is the highest priority. I am at a loss as to why the subcommittee believes it is such a low priority.

Before I yield back, Mr. Chairman, I just want to say that I have listened to countless hours of speeches on this floor about veterans and our love for them and our concern for them. You know, Mr. Chairman, it is time for us to do what we say.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it is in violation of section 302(f) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974. The Committee on Appropriations filed a suballocation of budget totals for fiscal year 2007 on May 18, 2006. The adoption of this amendment would cause the subcommittee's allocation for budget authority made under section 302(b) to be exceeded and it is not permitted under section 302(f) of the Act.

I ask for a ruling of the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, I do, briefly.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlewoman from Wisconsin is recognized.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, I understand that I will have to concede to the point of order, but I can tell you that I did not perceive that I had to provide an offset for this funding because it was deemed as the highest, the highest, priority.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is conceded and sustained. The amendment is not in order.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of the bill through page 56, line 8, be considered as read, printed in the RECORD and open to amendment at any point.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill through page 56, line 8, is as follows:

CONSTRUCTION, MINOR PROJECTS

For constructing, altering, extending, and improving any of the facilities including parking projects under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including planning and assessments of needs which may lead to capital investments, architectural and engineering services, maintenance or guarantee period services costs associated with equipment guarantees provided under the project, services of claims analysts, offsite utility and storm drainage system construction costs, and site acquisition, or for any of the purposes set forth in sections 316, 2404, 2406, 8102, 8103, 8106, 8108, 8109, 8110, 8122, and 8162 of title 38, United States Code, where the estimated cost of a project is equal to or less than the amount set forth in section 8104(a)(3)(A) of title 38, United States Code, $210,000,000, to remain available until expended, along with unobligated balances of previous ''Construction, minor projects'' appropriations which are hereby made available for any project where the estimated cost is equal to or less than the amount set forth in such section, for: (1) repairs to any of the nonmedical facilities under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department which are necessary because of loss or damage caused by any natural disaster or catastrophe; and (2) temporary measures necessary to prevent or to minimize further loss by such causes.

GRANTS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF STATE EXTENDED CARE FACILITIES

For grants to assist States to acquire or construct State nursing home and domiciliary facilities and to remodel, modify or alter existing hospital, nursing home and domiciliary facilities in State homes, for furnishing care to veterans as authorized by sections 8131–8137 of title 38, United States Code, $105,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided,* That not less than $20,000,000 shall be available only to correct life and patient safety deficiencies and minor modifications at existing facilities.

GRANTS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF STATE VETERANS CEMETERIES

For grants to aid States in establishing, expanding, or improving State veterans cemeteries as authorized by section 2408 of title 38, United States Code, $32,000,000, to remain available until expended.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

SEC. 201. Any appropriation for fiscal year 2007 for ''Compensation and pensions'', ''Readjustment benefits'', and ''Veterans insurance and indemnities'' may be transferred as necessary to any other of the mentioned appropriations: *Provided,* That before a transfer may take place, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall request from the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress the authority to make the transfer and an approval is issued, or absent a response, a period of 30 days has elapsed.

SEC. 202. Appropriations available in this title for salaries and expenses shall be available for services authorized by section 3109 of title 5, United States Code, hire of passenger motor vehicles; lease of a facility or land or both; and uniforms or allowances therefore, as authorized by sections 5901–5902 of title 5, United States Code.

SEC. 203. No appropriations in this title (except the appropriations for ''Construction, major projects'', and ''Construction, minor projects'') shall be available for the purchase of any site for or toward the construction of any new hospital or home.

SEC. 204. No appropriations in this title shall be available for hospitalization or examination of any persons (except beneficiaries entitled under the laws bestowing such benefits to veterans, and persons receiving such treatment under sections 7901–7904 of title 5, United States Code or the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.)), unless reimbursement of cost is made to the ''Medical services'' account at such rates as may be fixed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

SEC. 205. Appropriations available in this title for ''Compensation and pensions'', ''Readjustment benefits'', and ''Veterans insurance and indemnities'' shall be available for payment of prior year accrued obligations required to be recorded by law against the corresponding prior year accounts within the last quarter of fiscal year 2006.

SEC. 206. Appropriations available in this title shall be available to pay prior year obligations of corresponding prior year appropriations accounts resulting from sections 3328(a), 3334, and 3712(a) of title 31, United States Code, except that if such obligations are from trust fund accounts they shall be payable from ''Compensation and pensions''.

SEC. 207. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, during fiscal year 2007, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, from the National Service Life Insurance Fund (38 U.S.C. 1920), the Veterans' Special Life Insurance Fund (38 U.S.C. 1923), and the United States Government Life Insurance Fund (38 U.S.C. 1955), reimburse the ''General operating expenses'' account for the cost of administration of the insurance programs financed through those accounts: *Provided,* That reimbursement shall be made only from the surplus earnings accumulated in an insurance program in fiscal year 2007 that are available for dividends in that program after claims have been paid and actuarially determined reserves have been set aside: *Provided further,* That if the cost of administration of an insurance program exceeds the amount of surplus earnings accumulated in that program, reimbursement shall be made only to the extent of such surplus earnings: *Provided further,* That the Secretary shall determine the cost of administration for fiscal year 2007 which is properly allocable to the provision of each insurance program and to the provision of any total disability income insurance included in such insurance program.

SEC. 208. Amounts deducted from enhanced-use lease proceeds to reimburse an account for expenses incurred by that account during a prior fiscal year for providing enhanced-use lease services, may be obligated during the fiscal year in which the proceeds are received.

SEC. 209. Funds available in this title or funds for salaries and other administrative expenses shall also be available to reimburse the Office of Resolution Management and the Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication for all services provided at rates which will recover actual costs but not exceed $31,246,000 for the Office of Resolution Management and $3,059,000 for the Office of Employment and Discrimination Complaint Adjudication: *Provided,* That payments may be made in advance for services to be furnished based on estimated costs: *Provided further,* That amounts received shall be credited to ''General operating expenses'' for use by the office that provided the service.

SEC. 210. No appropriations in this title shall be available to enter into any new lease of real property if the estimated annual rental is more than $300,000 unless the Secretary submits a report which the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress approve within 30 days following the date on which the report is received.

SEC. 211. No funds of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall be available for hospital care, nursing home care, or medical services provided to any person under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, for a non-service-connected disability described in section 1729(a)(2) of such title, unless that person has disclosed to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in such form as the Secretary may require, current, accurate third-party reimbursement information for purposes of section 1729 of such title: *Provided,* That the Secretary may recover, in the same manner as any other debt due the United States, the reasonable charges for such care or services from any person who does not make such disclosure as required: *Provided further,* That any amounts so recovered for care or services provided in a prior fiscal year may be obligated by the Secretary during the fiscal year in which amounts are received.

SEC. 212. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, at the discretion of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, proceeds or revenues derived from enhanced-use leasing activities (including disposal) may be deposited into the ''Construction, major projects'' and ''Construction, minor projects'' accounts and be used for construction (including site acquisition and disposition), alterations and improvements of any medical facility under the jurisdiction or for the use of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Such sums as realized are in addition to the amount provided for in ''Construction, major projects'' and ''Construction, minor projects''.

SEC. 213. Amounts made available under ''Medical services'' are available—

(1) for furnishing recreational facilities, supplies, and equipment; and

(2) for funeral expenses, burial expenses, and other expenses incidental to funerals and burials for beneficiaries receiving care in the Department.

SEC. 214. Such sums as may be deposited to the Medical Care Collections Fund pursuant to section 1729A of title 38, United States Code, may be transferred to ''Medical services'', to remain available until expended for the purposes of this account.

SEC. 215. Amounts made available for fiscal year 2007 under the ''Medical services'', ''Medical administration'', and ''Medical facilities'' accounts may be transferred among the accounts to the extent necessary to implement the restructuring of the Veterans Health Administration accounts: *Provided,* That before a transfer may take place, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall request from the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress the authority to make the transfer and an approval is issued.

SEC. 216. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall allow veterans eligible under existing Department of Veterans Affairs medical care

requirements and who reside in Alaska to obtain medical care services from medical facilities supported by the Indian Health Service or tribal organizations. The Secretary shall: (1) limit the application of this provision to rural Alaskan veterans in areas where an existing Department of Veterans Affairs facility or Veterans Affairs-contracted service is unavailable; (2) require participating veterans and facilities to comply with all appropriate rules and regulations, as established by the Secretary; (3) require this provision to be consistent with Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services activities; and (4) result in no additional cost to the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Indian Health Service.

SEC. 217. Such sums as may be deposited to the Department of Veterans Affairs Capital Asset Fund pursuant to section 8118 of title 38, United States Code, may be transferred to the ''Construction, major projects'' and ''Construction, minor projects'' accounts, to remain available until expended for the purposes of these accounts.

SEC. 218. None of the funds available to the Department of Veterans Affairs, in this Act or any other Act, may be used to replace the current system by which the Veterans Integrated Service Networks select and contract for diabetes monitoring supplies and equipment.

SEC. 219. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to implement any policy prohibiting the Directors of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks from conducting outreach or marketing to enroll new veterans within their respective Networks.

SEC. 220. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress a quarterly report on the financial status of the Veterans Health Administration.

SEC. 221. Amounts made available for the ''Information technology systems'' account may be transferred between projects: *Provided*, That no project may be increased or decreased by more than $1,000,000 of cost prior to submitting a request to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress to make the transfer and an approval is issued, or absent a response, a period of 30 days has elapsed.

SEC. 222. The authority provided by section 2011 of title 38, United States Code, shall continue in effect through September 30, 2007.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. LYNCH

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. LYNCH:

At the end of title II (page 56, after line 8), insert the following:

SEC. 223. It is the sense of Congress that the Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs should—

(1) increase research collaboration and cooperation with the National Institutes of Health in order to facilitate and accelerate research for the screening, diagnosing, and managing of the medical issues associated with hepatitis C; and

(2) do more to—

(A) improve screening and testing for hepatitis C among all veterans;

(B) provide tests to other veterans in the health care system of the Department of Veterans Affairs who have risk factors for hepatitis C; and

(C) participate in a national outreach effort to inform all veterans about the disease.

Mr. LYNCH (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I regretfully reserve a point of order against the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. A point of order is reserved.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Chairman, first of all, I want to thank Chairman WALSH and I want to thank Mr. EDWARDS of Texas for their great work on behalf of veterans. I know that their attempts here have been to provide as much support as possible for men and women in uniform.

My amendment, Mr. Chairman, acknowledges that the Department of Veterans Affairs is the largest single provider of medical care to people with hepatitis C and liver disease in the United States, and I have introduced this amendment because I believe that the VA can and should be in the lead on research areas associated with hepatitis C and liver disease, and, importantly, the VA should be at the cutting edge of research and work and collaboration with the NIH to ensure that strides that both agencies have made in this area can be shared, and so that our veterans have access to the best technologies and treatments available.

Mr. Chairman, right now, because of the great work being done by Dr. Joseph Vacanti of Harvard Medical School and Bioengineering Networks and MIT and Draper Labs and others, we are at a critical point in developing amazing and revolutionary technologies and procedures, including constructing an artificial liver assist device by which new microfabrication techniques will allow us to grow liver replacement tissues from our own cells, minimizing the risk of organ rejection and completely eliminating the need to wait for compatible organ donors.

Right now in America, we have 90,000 people waiting for organ transplants. We have 18,000 folks waiting for liver transplants. For veterans with liver disease, Dr. Vacanti's work means the possibility of living a full life with hepatitis C without worrying about getting on a list for liver transplant. We now have an opportunity to revolutionize the way in which we treat liver disease, and this research needs to be funded.

Mr. Chairman, I realize the great work that has been done by Chairman WALSH of New York and Mr. EDWARDS of Texas, and I realize there are limits to what we can do on any one bill. So I am going to pledge my support for this bill, I am going to agree to withdraw my amendment, but I just ask the chairman and the ranking member to continue to work with me on this.

Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

TITLE III

RELATED AGENCIES

AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for, of the American Battle Monuments Commission, including the acquisition of land or interest in land in foreign countries; purchases and repair of uniforms for caretakers of national cemeteries and monuments outside of the United States and its territories and possessions; rent of office and garage space in foreign countries; purchase (one-for-one replacement basis only) and hire of passenger motor vehicles; not to exceed $7,500 for official reception and representation expenses; and insurance of official motor vehicles in foreign countries, when required by law of such countries, $37,088,000, to remain available until expended.

FOREIGN CURRENCY FLUCTUATIONS ACCOUNT

For necessary expenses, not otherwise provided for, of the American Battle Monuments Commission, $4,900,000, to remain available until expended, for purposes authorized by section 2109 of title 36, United States Code.

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses for the operation of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims as authorized by sections 7251–7298 of title 38, United States Code, $19,790,000, of which $1,260,000 shall be available for the purpose of providing financial assistance as described, and in accordance with the process and reporting procedures set forth, under this heading in Public Law 102–229.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE—CIVIL

CEMETERIAL EXPENSES, ARMY

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses, as authorized by law, for maintenance, operation, and improvement of Arlington National Cemetery and Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery, including the purchase of two passenger motor vehicles for replacement only, and not to exceed $1,000 for official reception and representation expenses, $26,550,000, to remain available until expended. In addition, such sums as may be necessary for parking maintenance, repairs and replacement, to be derived from the Lease of Department of Defense Real Property for Defense Agencies account.

ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME

For expenses necessary for the Armed Forces Retirement Home to operate and maintain the Armed Forces Retirement Home—Washington, District of Columbia and the Armed Forces Retirement Home—Gulfport, Mississippi, to be paid from funds available in the Armed Forces Retirement Home Trust Fund, $54,846,000.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. OBEY

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to consideration of the amendment at this point in the reading?

Without objection, the Clerk will report the amendment.

There was no objection.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 58, line 13 after ''$54,846,000'', insert (increased by $1) (reduced by $1)

Page 58, line 20, strike ''2011:'' and all that follows through line 25 and insert ''2011.''.

Page 59, line 4, strike ''2011:'' and all that follows through line 9 and insert ''2011.''.

Page 59, line 13, strike ''2011:'' and all that follows through line 18 and insert ''2011.''.

Page 59, line 22, strike ''2011:'' and all that follows through page 60, line 2, and insert ''2011.''.

Page 60, line 6, strike ''2011:'' and all that follows through line 11 and insert ''2011.''.

Page 60, line 15, strike ''2011:'' and all that follows through line 20 and insert ''2011.''.

At the end of title IV (page 60, after line 20), insert the following new section:

SEC. 401. In the case of taxpayers with income in excess of $1,000,000, for the calendar year beginning in 2007, the amount of tax reduction resulting from the enactment of Public Laws 107–16, 108–27, and 108–311 shall be reduced by 1.23 percent.

Mr. OBEY (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman reserves a point of order.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, as I indicated earlier in the debate, 2 days ago, the Republican majority passed a budget resolution which imposed a stringent ceiling on total appropriations for the year. The effect of that was to squeeze more than $1 billion of badly needed money out of this bill.

What the committee has tried to do in response is that the administration in this bill asked for about 307 military construction projects, items like barracks and the like, and the committee essentially took 20 of them and designated those as ''emergency spending'' and that freed up $507 million so that the committee could insert a number of projects which represented their highest priorities. That meant that the bill was effectively, if you are going to look at it in terms of budget accounting, $507 million above the amount allowed by the budget ceiling.

That didn't even take into account the fact that the committee is proceeding on the assumption that a good number of additional fees which the White House wants to impose on veterans might, in fact, go into effect. I don't believe they will. We don't deal with that issue in this amendment, but we do deal with the first issue.

What we are simply suggesting is that we recognize that these projects requested by the White House are necessary, but we believe that they ought to be paid for. So what we suggested in committee and what I am asking on the floor is that we simply limit the size of the tax cut which is scheduled to take place for people who make over $1 million, we are suggesting that we shrink that tax cut from $114,000 on average for a person who makes over $1 million, we are suggesting we shrink that by about $1,400.

□ 1230

That is hardly going to lay a glove on the most wealthy people in this country, but it would enable this bill to proceed with honest accounting, meeting high-priority needs of the military at various bases throughout the country and the world.

So, Mr. Chairman, it is very simple, if you think that we ought to proceed with the military construction priorities laid out by the administration, and if you think that we ought to pay for those, then you would support this amendment.

If you do not, then you would oppose it. I would suggest this is a fiscally responsible way to meet critical military needs, and I would hope that the House would see fit to approve the amendment.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order against the amendment because it proposes to change existing law and constitutes legislation on an appropriations bill, and therefore violates clause 2 of rule XXI.

The rule states, in pertinent part: ''An amendment to a general appropriation bill shall not be in order if changing existing law.'' The amendment changes the application of existing law. I ask for a ruling of the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I was here when the Budget Act was passed. And the purpose of that Budget Act was to reconcile spending with taxes to try to reduce the deficit.

So the purpose of the Budget Act is to try to see to it that appropriations, direct spending, and revenues all mesh in such a way as to reduce, to the greatest possible extent, the deficit.

That means that if this House takes an action on the tax side that provides large tax cuts, and if that action then imposes on the Appropriations Committee the requirement for deep cuts, that means that the two are, in fact, integrally connected.

It is hard for me to understand how a supposedly conservative party can take the position that we should proceed under the Budget Act to act in a way that pretends that what we do on the revenue side is irrelevant to what we do on the spending side.

This amendment, in my view, is within the spirit of the original intention of the Budget Act. Unfortunately, I must concede that under the way this House is being run these days, and under the rule under which this bill was brought to the floor, I must concede the point of order.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is conceded and sustained. The amendment is not in order.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

TITLE IV

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY

For an additional amount for ''Military Construction, Army'', $379,300,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That the amount under this heading is designated as making appropriations for contingency operations related to the global war on terrorism pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 376 (109th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2007.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I raise a point of order under clause 2 of rule XXI against the proviso beginning with ''provided'' on page 58, line 20 through page 58 line 25.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist that the point of order be extended to lie against the entire paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is made against the entire paragraph.

The gentlemen from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) may continue.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I would ask for a ruling of the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I regret that the gentlemen has asserted this point of order and put the House in this position. The budget resolution which the body adopted this week included a $50 billion bridge fund for the war.

In this bill, we use the $507 million from that fund to pay for urgent war-related military construction projects. This leaves the remaining $49.3 billion for the Defense Subcommittee to allocate to other war-related expenditures. Every single one of these projects directly supports the war on terror. And every single one of them was included in the Defense Authorization Act that the House passed nearly unanimously last week.

These projects support specialized urban warfare training, mobilization of critical assets in the gulf region, and the easing of troop rotations abroad.

Mr. Chairman, what arises here is the Rules Committee did not protect that designation of emergency funding, and I regret that. But I greatly regret that the gentleman from Texas has raised this point of order.

Mr. Chairman, does the gentleman not understand that we are at war? Does he not understand that we have people in harm's way across the entire southern tier of Asia, that are being fired upon as we speak; that these funds are essential to fight the global war on terror, to bring democracy to these scattered points around the world, that these are soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines are in dire need of this support, of these expenditures?

There is a fiscal point to be made here, a principle to be expressed here. I understand that. But if an emergency situation is not described by a Nation at war, I do not know what determines what an emergency is.

These funds are essential. The battles that our men and women are fighting in Fallujah, in Bayji and Tikrit and Tal Afar and across Afghanistan are supported by the training that they receive here in the United States, the urban warfare training. Their familiarity with the weapons that they use,

the weapons systems that they use, the familiarity with each other, that is essential to unit cohesion.

These funds, Mr. Chairman and my colleagues, are essential to our war effort. I would urge the gentleman to withdraw his point of order, support the body of the bill, let us go forward with these essential funds that ensure the quality of life and the health and welfare of our fighting men and women across the globe.

The CHAIRMAN. Arguments should be confined to the question of order. The underlying substantive issues may be debated by pro forma amendment.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) on the point of order

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I want to be clear about what this point of order would do. So I would like to raise this question of the Chair and perhaps other Members who would comment on this.

As I understand it, and I do think Members of this House on both sides of the aisle need to know what this point of order will do before the decision is made, as I understand it, this point of order will cut $379 million out of Army military construction projects during a time of war.

I want to be clear and ask, Mr. Chairman, if I understand it, this will cut over $100 million out of barracks and training facilities at Fort Drum, New York; it will cut a brigade complex at Fort Lewis, Washington. All of these are Army projects.

Mr. Chairman, I want to be clear whether this point of order is going to cut over $45 million out of two projects at Fort Stewart, Georgia. Is it going to cut a shooting range at Camp Atterbury in Indiana? Is it going to cut the block-and-brace facility in the vehicle maintenance shop at Fort Campbell, Kentucky in the Blue Grass Depot in Kentucky?

Mr. Chairman, my inquiry regarding this point of order is to have all Members fully understand while we have Army soldiers in harm's way in Iraq and Afghanistan today, this point of order, if sustained by the Chair, is going to cut over $379 million in Army projects, training, housing, other facilities that help support those troops that are risking their lives today, while we are debating technical points of order on the floor of the House.

Am I correct, Mr. Chairman, that the projects I listed, as well as additional Army military construction projects, would be cut by this point of order being made by the gentleman from Texas?

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order will excise the relevant paragraph, if sustained.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, parliamentary inquiry.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, if this point of order is upheld, does that mean that the House would be placing a higher value on the ideological accounting contained in the budget resolution than they would be on meeting the critical military needs of the country?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman has not stated a parliamentary inquiry.

Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order? If not, the Chair will rule.

The Chair finds that the paragraph includes special budgetary designations pursuant to the concurrent resolution on the budget. The paragraph therefore constitutes legislation in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI. The point of order is sustained and the paragraph is stricken from the bill.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I am rising to speak to this point of order and a series of points of order that may be coming to us, and in an effort to do that, I would like to have an exchange with the chairman of the committee, if I might, Mr. WALSH.

Mr. Chairman, first let me compliment you for the very fine job that you have done on this bill and compliment Members on both sides of the aisle who have worked with us on this very, very important item.

The point of order before us involves some $375 million of funding that affects our military expenditures and the availability of resources, especially in our effort on the war on terror in the Middle East.

There will be additional points of order, apparently raised that will increase that amount significantly if I am correct. Is that correct?

Mr. WALSH. If I understand, there will be other points of order that would further affect the appropriation, generally appropriations for this war on terror.

Mr. LEWIS of California. And so really what we would appear to have before us are Members unilaterally identifying paragraphs that they are not particularly pleased with that involve moneys, maybe at a level, say, of $375 million, that specifically affect our military effort in the Middle East.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I am deeply concerned about the impact of these.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, let me say to you, you have done a fabulous job with this bill. It is a very difficult bill. People oftentimes do not understand the difficulties of putting together a bill like this. To exercise themselves in a way that undermines our efforts on the war on terror is not just an affront to the work you are about; I believe it is an affront to the work that we are all about, on a bipartisan effort are attempting to make sure that we have some strength in this effort on the war on terror.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his support on this, and for the allocation we received. This is a tremendous blow to our effort to pass this bill that provides for the military quality of life of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines who are in harm's way.

Clearly, this builds the bases and the training facilities that they need to fight this incredibly difficult and dangerous war.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I do want the gentleman to know that I have great respect for the work that you and your staff have been about, but also the work that Mr. EDWARDS and others on the other side of the aisle have been about regarding this very important responsibility that we have here, and I appreciate very much your work.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I think it is important that we not personalize this issue. I do not like the fact that these gentlemen are evidently going to be knocking out funding for these important military projects. But I do think it is important to recognize that under the budget resolution which was imposed by the House Republican majority, and under the rule that was voted for by virtually every Republican today, they have that right. That is a parliamentary fact.

So I disagree with the judgment being made by the gentleman. But in all fairness, I think that the responsibility for this debacle lies squarely at the feet of the Speaker and the majority leader and the majority party leadership, because they broke arms for 3 weeks to impose a budget resolution on this House which required the allocation to the subcommittee which wound up being $824 million below the amount proposed by the President.

□ 1245

Because the majority party leadership decided that it was more important to provide $40 billion in tax cuts to people who make $1 million a year, because the majority party leadership decided that it was more important to provide over $60 billion in tax cuts to people in the top 1 percent of our population who make more than $400,000 a year, because the majority party leadership decided that those priorities were preferable to meeting our education needs, our health care needs, our military construction needs, and our science needs, then the Appropriations Committee is stuck with the dirty job of carrying out those mandates. And under the rule that was imposed by the Rules Committee, which is appointed on the majority side by the Speaker of this House, every last one of them, because that rule was voted on by that leadership ordered and dominated committee, that is the reason that these emotions are in order. And to avoid that, that is why I tried to offer the previous amendment which said: Look it, this is a phony accounting gimmick. Let us be honest about it and pay for it by scaling back those tax cuts for the most well off in this society by just a smidgeon.

So I think, if we are going to start passing out responsibility, this is not the responsibility of Mr. LEWIS, it is not the responsibility of the gentlemen who are going to be offering the points of order, although I think their judgment is defective, but it is, in fact, the responsibility of the majority party leadership of this House. And it illustrates that Mr. DELAY was absolutely right when he said a few months ago: ''This is what you get when you elect a Republican president, a Republican Senate, and a Republican House of Representatives,'' because it means there are no checks and balances in the system. It means that we have no way on stopping the majority party from putting tax cuts for the very wealthy ahead of the needs of our military, ahead of the needs of our kids, ahead of the needs of our workers and our sick in this society. This day illustrates how screwed up the priorities are on that side of the aisle.

Mr. EDWARDS. I move to strike the last word, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I had worked with Chairman WALSH on our subcommittee and our Appropriations Committee on a bipartisan basis to pass this bill today.

I am outraged at what has happened. A lot more important than that, every service man and woman and every veteran in America and every American that loves them and respects them ought to be just as outraged. And it is not just what has just been done by a handful of Republican House Members. I think the American people need to understand what has happened this week. Forty eight hours ago, this House on a totally partisan basis passed a budget resolution that, in my personal opinion, put a higher priority on tax breaks for people making over $1 million a year than it put on adequately funding national defense programs and supporting our military troops. We pleaded with our colleagues to vote against that budget resolution, but the vote was partisan and it passed.

Let me tell you what that resolution did. It gave Lee Raymond, who just retired as CEO of ExxonMobil, who, by the way got a $398 million retirement benefit from ExxonMobil, that budget resolution gave him a $2 million dividend tax cut. We said when that budget resolution passed giving Lee Raymond tax cuts is going to hurt education, health care, job training, and, yes, our national defense programs and our service men and women and our veterans. But others said, no, that is not going to happen. So let me tell you what has happened as a result of that budget resolution.

Our subcommittee, Mr. WALSH's and mine, and other subcommittee funding military quality of life, military construction, VA programs and defense health care, had to accept an $824 million cut below what President Bush said was needed to adequately fund these key national defense programs during a time of war. $824 million cut.

What happened? First, we had to accept that $316 million cut in military construction projects that were requested by the administration to implement the base closing process. That means barracks not built, training ranges not built, military facilities not built.

Well, then what was the second result in our subcommittee based on the budget resolution that Mr. Raymond is still smiling about, but our military people ought to be crying about at this moment? We had to fund military defense programs by $735 million below what President Bush said we needed.

What does that mean? That is not just a budget number. That means we potentially put at risk health care for our troops fighting in Iraq today while we are debating budget points of order here, it puts at risk military health care for our retirees, men and women who have already served in Iraq, already served in Afghanistan, already served in Korea, Vietnam, and World War II. It puts that health care system at risk. So that is a $735 million cut below what the administration said we needed.

Now, to add outrage to outrage, this technical point of order caused by the budget gimmicks that were a direct result of the budget resolution passed 2 days ago will cut $507 million out of vital military construction projects. That may not mean anything to some Members on this floor, but it means a lot to the troops at Fort Drum, New York, who have sacrificed immensely on behalf of the American people in our war on terrorism. It will mean a lot to the people at Camp Pendleton, the Marine camp, Camp Pendleton, when their bachelor enlisted quarters are cut and the light armored reconnaissance battalion facility will be cut.

It will mean a lot, even while Mr. Raymond is smiling, to harm the interests of our troops, our Army troops at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, Fort Devens, Massachusetts, at Sunny Point, North Carolina, and Indian Springs, Nevada. And, in Korea. This even cuts $2 million in vital construction projects for servicemen and women stationed in Korea today.

So what does that all mean? Because the budget resolution pushed through by the House leadership, not by the Appropriations Committee or this subcommittee, the House resolution, the budget resolution passed 2 days ago is forcing us to cut $1.5 billion out of vital defense programs even while our troops are risking their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan today. Training facilities, housing facilities, quality of life facilities. It is wrong, and this should not be done. Our military men and women deserve better than this.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

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

Mr. PENCE. I am still trying to recover, Mr. Chairman, from the remarks just made by the distinguished gentleman from Texas, raising objections to the good-faith efforts of the Members of this majority to live within the budget that we just adopted 2 days ago. Let me say, by way of compliment, that the chairman of the Appropriations Committee and the chairman of this subcommittee are not only my good friends, but my friends, men that I admire and respect, who are using the tools in the box they have been given to meet the needs that they believe represents the Nation's priorities. And I respect that. But, along with my colleague, Mr. HENSARLING, I respectfully disagree.

I rise, though, particularly animated at this moment, Mr. Chairman, because I am reading the minority views of the gentleman who just spoke, minority views listed in this legislation as additional views of Representative CHET EDWARDS, as well as other colleagues, including the distinguished ranking member of this committee. And I will quote it for the record. Speaking to the point of order issue that has been raised and will continue to be raised, the gentleman who just spoke wrote this: ''The second Democratic amendment,'' speaking of their bill, ''would have eliminated the budget gimmick that designated $507 million for 20 routine military construction projects as an emergency so this funding would not count against the bill's allocation.''

Mr. EDWARDS continues: ''None of these projects were unforeseen. The administration budget requested 310 military construction projects, including these 20 projects. They are all conventional military construction projects, things like hangars, barracks, and unit headquarters. These are projects selected through long-term planning exercises.''

He went on to say, ''Democrats recognize these projects as valid and continue to support them. However, the minority has a more fiscally disciplined and balanced approach to addressing these needs.'' And there I close the quote.

In the minority views, precisely that to which we are objecting was objected to, described as a budget gimmick that had no place in this legislation so conceived. And so I just say, I agree with what Mr. EDWARDS wrote.

It is time that we leveled with the American people. It is time that we stood for the principle that we mean what we say. And when we adopt a budget, we made the hard choices to live with within the budget. And those of us in the Congress who are committed to doing just that rise today and take this tough stand among friends to say, let's level with the American people, and let us not use what Mr. EDWARDS rightly wrote to be a budget gimmick to find our way around the budget discipline that we just embraced.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I appreciate the opportunity to tell you that back in Texas, we have a saying, bad day at Black Rock. This is one of the blackest days that we could possibly imagine in Texas and anywhere else. The gentleman that just spoke talked about good faith, talked about we have to live within our budget, the budget that we set, talked about the Nation's priorities, talked about hard choices, and finally talked about leveling with the American people.

Well, good faith, Mr. Chairman, is about coming here and doing what is right, making sure that at a time of war we take care of our men and women in uniform and the facilities that they need, the equipment that they depend on, and everything that depends so much on this war on terror.

Live within our budget. I voted against that budget a couple of days ago because I didn't think it was realistic. I knew there were going to be some cutbacks someplace, and now we find out it is cutbacks in our military's budget.

Nation's priorities? Well, I would submit we set the Nation's priorities. The Nation's priorities have been set way too long by the Republican leadership in this House, in the Senate, and in the White House.

Hard choices. Well, our hard choices, people have to live with. Our military people have to live with.

And finally, Mr. Chairman, leveling with the American people means telling the truth about tax cuts versus what is best for our military.

With that, I would like to yield the balance of my time to my good friend from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS).

Mr. EDWARDS. I thank the gentleman for his comments.

I respect my colleague, Mr. PENCE, from Indiana. He is a straight shooter. I will have to say in this particular case, in all due respect, you said you are still trying to recover. I hope you will forgive me in saying, Mr. Chairman and Mr. PENCE, that today I am more worried about our military troops whose lives are at risk all over the world to defend our country, I am more worried about them recovering from this half a billion dollar cut in vital defense programs than I am about any Member of this House, the gentleman or me or anyone else, recovering from this debate.

□ 1300

The gentleman quoted me, and I am glad he did. I think this is a budget gimmick. I think these military construction projects should have been funded in the normal course of the budget process, and that is exactly what my colleague Mr. OBEY tried to do, and I voted for the Obey amendment.

But my friend and his colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle chose to vote against the Obey amendment, and so then where I am left is to say that I would rather accept a budget gimmick forced by a Republican budget resolution that I adamantly opposed 2 days ago, than to ask men and women at Fort Drum, New York, an installation whose troops have made tremendous sacrifices in the war on terrorism, I would rather not ask them to make an additional sacrifice, even if that requires us to pass a budget gimmick.

So is this a budget gimmick? Yes, it is; but do we desperately need these $507 million, including $379 million going to Army facilities to support our troops in the war on terrorism? Absolutely, we do.

I would repeat what I said earlier: having represented 40,000 troops who have served in Iraq, having co-chaired the bipartisan House Army Caucus, having worked on a bipartisan effort in good faith with Chairman WALSH and the Appropriations Committee to pass this bill today, I think every serviceman and -woman in America ought to be outraged that the result of, in my opinion, a dishonest budget resolution that promised tax cuts to the retired chairman of ExxonMobil, without suggesting the pain that would be caused, I think every serviceman and -woman in America ought to be outraged by that because they were told it was a no-pain process, you have a tax cut, that will increase revenues and nobody has to suffer. Mr. Raymond can get his $2 million tax dividend and nobody has to suffer.

Now we are leveling with the American people. Forty-eight hours later we find out it is not American people that are suffering. It is our troops in Korea and here at home and Iraq and Afghanistan who will suffer because of a budget resolution that did not shoot straight with the American people.

This is a sad day for this country, and it is a particularly sad day for all those men and women who are serving in uniform.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I rise in support of the gentleman from Texas' (Mr. HENSARLING) point of order. If you look at the description of the bill here, you have a couple of pages. The first page has to do with what is being termed ''emergency spending.'' Let me simply note that these are items that the President has requested.

Now, I have often and all of us have been critical of the White House at times for designating emergency spending when it really is not an emergency. They did not designate one of these items. There are 20 spending items here, mostly facilities and barracks. Not one of them was listed by the White House as emergency. Yet they have been listed here as an emergency and I would submit simply to make room for other projects.

If you look at some other projects that are being funded that are not emergency, tell me if you can see a difference. Number one, there is an item that is an emergency, $18.1 million for bachelor-enlisted quarters at Camp Pendleton. All right. That is one that is an emergency.

Here is one that is not an emergency, $6.7 million for a special weapons assessment facility in Crane, Illinois. How can you designate one as an emergency and not another?

Here is another example: $3.5 million for a block and brace facility at Blue Grass Depot, Kentucky. That is an emergency apparently.

Second, $8.7 million for replacing a troop facility training facility in Savannah, Georgia, that is not an emergency. Tell me where the difference is.

Let me go on: $102 million for a brigade complex in Fort Lewis, Washington. That is an emergency.

There is another $18 million for a maintenance hangar in Fort Hood, Texas. That is not an emergency.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FLAKE. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I will be quick. The gentleman refers to this as emergency funding. It is not. That is incorrect. The funds are designated pursuant to section 402 of the budget resolution which is for ''contingency operations related to the global war on terrorism,'' not emergency spending.

Mr. FLAKE. Let me just go on. That is $508 million we set aside as a down payment on the supplemental, the war supplement coming up. We are simply taking from that, and that will be money that will not be spent in the supplemental later on or should be designated for the supplemental later on, but we have designated it saying it is emergency when there is really no difference between the categories here.

I would submit that if you really want to fund, as we are adding here $16.5 million for a rotary wing hangar in Qatar, then perhaps you ought to cut out $2 million for a child care center which is funded here in the bill that is not being challenged here in Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, or you could take out $9.8 million for an educational center complex in Little Rock, Arkansas, if you truly need to spend money, as we say we do, for Predator various facilities at Indian Springs, Nevada.

Now let me just give one more example: $9.7 million for an indoor wash rack in Washington. Perhaps you could take money from that and spend it, if we really do need it, on $3.1 million for shoot houses in Korea.

What I am saying is there ought to be integrity in the budget process. We did pass a budget. The ink is not even dry and here we are using a means to evade it, to actually get some head room up here so we can spend money on other priorities and earmarks.

I do not think it is lost on anyone that the earmark total in the bill is nearly $500 million, almost the same total here that was added as head room, so that we can spend these other dollars.

So I hope that the point of order on all of these is sustained. Let us bring some integrity back to the budget process.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Let us assume there is an infantry company first sergeant sitting here in our midst today and our friends on the other side would be trying to explain to him about the particulars of emergency spending, of points of order and parliamentary procedure. But the infantry company first sergeant would say, but what about my being able to train the troops better? What about being able to train them in emergency urban warfare, or in sharpshooting better or having better barracks conditions so that they will stay in the Army and not consider getting out? How would one explain to that infantry company first sergeant the complexities of what we are facing on this floor and the needs of those wonderful soldiers?

Mr. Chairman, I speak for those soldiers. We need them. We need them to be highly trained, well taken care of, and to try to explain things away on points of order and whether something fits within the ''emergency spending'' category would be foreign to him because all he knows, he wants to train his troops so they can fight in Afghanistan, Iraq and the war against terror.

That is what is important to this country. That is what is important to the soldiers. I am proud of them. I would like to say all of us in this room speak for them, but unfortunately, we are faced with a parliamentary situation that I could not explain to that first sergeant.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SKELTON. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin, my friend.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I did not vote to go to war in Iraq. Most of our friends on the other side of the aisle did, but after the Congress voted to send our troops to war, the troops did not ask, is this an emergency or is it regular order of business? They just went. They did their duty. Some of them have done it two and three and four times in Iraq.

I do not know why they should be stuck in the middle of a family squabble within the Republican Party in the Congress, a squabble between people who put tax cuts for the most well-off people first versus the people who put budget accounting nicety first versus people who think that there are some economic and social needs faced by the families of those soldiers.

What the committee tried to do is to cut it down the middle, hedge a little bit here, a little bit there. We do not like that on this side of the aisle. So we tried to substitute honest accounting, and the majority party insisted on knocking that amendment out on a point of order.

So at this point, we have to choose between a faulty accounting system or meeting the needs of the families of people who are in Iraq defending the national interests of this country; and while I have great misgivings about the advisability of having gone to war in the first place, I will be doggoned if I am going to stand here and allow somebody else's squabble about whether a budget item is an emergency or not get in the way of providing the school needs, the barracks needs and the other needs of the families in the military, who are not asking questions of their government; they are just doing their duty.

So I congratulate the gentleman for his comments, and I think that this day, I was going to say it is a sad day in the history of the Congress, but it is not because this finally illustrates what we have been trying to demonstrate for 3 years, that what you do on the tax side of the budget, what you give to Mr. Raymond and his friends, is directly related to what you have left on the table that you can give our military families, our school kids and people in this country who need a little help on the health care front. It is about time that people on the majority side of the aisle recognized that connection.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, coming from a district like mine, where I represent four military bases, and then looking at what is transpiring this afternoon really worries me. All we have to do is go visit the medical facilities at Bethesda and Walter Reed to be able to understand that these troops need our help now, and we talk about giving them more body armor.

The only emergency here is the completely inadequate allocation that my good friend Chairman WALSH received. This is nothing more than a budget gimmick that adds $500 million to the deficit, the deficit carried by all Americans, young and old, middle-aged, while at the same time millionaires are continuing to enjoy reduced taxes. This is not fair.

Just 2 days ago, we voted to give a tax break in the amount of $70 billion, but we cannot fund it. In fact, we are cutting.

I have military bases. We repair helicopters, and many times they have asked for help. We were forced to leave the air base in Uzbekistan. We have to build up our capabilities. At Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan; that is an emergency.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ORTIZ. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman, but I think I have said enough. I just would hope that this House would reconsider what they have done this week and use this incident to recognize that that budget resolution is simply insufficient to meet the needs of our military, the needs of our school children and a number of other seriously competing needs.

I would hope, and in fact I fully expect, that the Senate will not pass the budget resolution that has caused this problem.

The irony is that the Republican majority in this House had to pass a let-us-pretend resolution yesterday, which said we are going to move ahead with appropriation bills on the assumption that the full Congress had passed the budget resolution, which it has not done, because Republican moderates in the Senate recognize that the budget resolution that is being enforced on the majority side in this House is too extreme for their taste in the Senate.

□ 1315

Senators such as Senator SPECTER have already made that quite clear.

So it is ironic that a budget that hasn't even passed the Congress is being used to enforce these kinds of trade-offs. I don't think the American people are going to be very pleased.

I thank the gentleman.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word. I rise to try to clarify this debate and bring a little clarity here. It is true that we are really arguing over roughly $.5 billion and points are flying back and forth about what that means and whether or not this is a technical point.

But there has also been some focus here on the issue of whether or not our war effort is going to be harmed and whether or not our soldiers are going to be harmed. I want to be clear that there is no effort, in any way, to harm the efforts of our military, or to, in any way, inhibit our ability to fight the war on terror in the point of order that was raised by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING).

Indeed, there has never once been brought to this House by the President of the United States a single request for a war supplemental that this House has not funded. We have funded it, we are currently working on one that will be funded, and there will be another one funded very, very soon, as soon as we get a few more months down the line. There is no issue here about not funding the war on terror. And there is no issue here, ladies and gentlemen, about not funding the quality of life of our soldiers.

So what is the issue? What are we talking about? What we are talking about is sleight of hand. What we are talking about is, well, let us take the really defensible funds and call them a part of the war on terror and let us leave the money that we put in the bill, by the way, there is $.5 billion in this bill not requested by the Pentagon, $.5 billion that the Pentagon said it didn't need, $.5 billion that the Pentagon itself didn't say was necessary either for its ongoing operations, for quality of life for military personnel, or for the war on terror.

Interesting number, $.5 billion. Now, there is an additional $.5 billion listed here as, well, it is not emergency, but we are going to take it out of this fund to fund the war on terror. Now, that is

kind of interesting. We take the stuff that we wanted, we take the stuff that was not requested by the Pentagon, $.5 billion, and we put them over here in the bill. But then we say, well, we need another $.5 billion and we will call that critical for the war on terror.

This is not about whether or not we fund the war on terror, it is not about the military quality of life, it is about how we hide spending in this budget process and how we deal with it. And it just so happens that the President himself said none of these were emergencies. He doesn't even agree that these were essential for the war on terror at this point. But if we call them essential for the war on terror, and if we take them out of the fund that we have set up to deal with the war on terror, that enables us down the road to impose that additional $.5 billion burden on the American people.

That is what this discussion is about. It is not about military quality of life. It is not about fighting the war on terror. It is about being able to increase the overall spending and, quite frankly, being able to increase that overall spending for things the Pentagon did not even request.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word, and I yield to the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. I thank the gentlewoman.

I am sorry the gentleman wouldn't yield to me, but if he had, I would have asked them this question: He said ''we'' are engaging in sleight of hand. I just wanted to ask him who that ''we'' was. Because this report was put together by his own party. It was brought to the House floor by his own party. We on this side of the aisle tried to correct that faulty accounting and we were not allowed to do that by the majority party either.

So I just want to make certain that people understand that in this case the ''we'' is ''thee.''

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I would be happy as well to yield to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS), the ranking member of the subcommittee.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I believe Mr. SHADEGG, my colleague from Arizona, just said a few seconds ago that these projects were not requested by the administration. If I heard him correctly, that is a patently false statement.

These projects, these $379 million worth of army projects, I believe, were either all requested by the administration and the Pentagon or the vast, vast majority were requested by the administration and the Pentagon as being important projects that needed to be funded this year as part of our Nation's defense effort included in the war against terrorism.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the gentleman, and reclaiming my time, I would just say that this is a frustration for many of us. There is no doubt that there are some of us here that did not support the actions initially as our troops were, if you will, directed to go into Iraq, but at the same time, we recognize the responsibility that this Congress and this Nation has.

What frustrates many of us is that my good friends on the other side of the aisle are attempting to make a point. That is all I have heard in their debate, to make a point about the budget and about the appropriations, rather than acknowledging the fact that this is a request by their President of the United States; that it, in fact, strips soldiers who are either on the front lines or distributed around the Nation from the actual needs, job training, barriers, concrete fixtures that they need, physical facilities that they need to carry on the Nation's business of defense.

Why we would utilize this particular section to make a point and strip our soldiers of the necessities of their business one week before Memorial Day baffles me, as does the question of if there is a need to fix this, why could this not have been an internal fix, either with the House and the subcommittee or the President of the United States of America. Because what my friends are doing is, frankly, making scapegoats out of innocent military personnel who are in need of this kind of equipment.

Any of us who have traveled to facilities anywhere in the Nation or around the world know that we have, in some instances, facilities that are in dire need of repair or in dire need of replacement. Striking this point of order, this challenge, goes right to the heart of this equipment.

And I think it is important for the American people to understand. This is stripping away bricks and mortar that soldiers, husbands, wives, sons and daughters of the American people are in need of. And I would simply suggest that while we certainly agree on the war on terror, whether we agree or disagree on any war going on at this point, we cannot disagree on the resources necessary for these soldiers. So I would ask my colleagues to remind themselves of why we are here today.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

For an additional amount for ''Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps'', $26,037,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided,* That the amount under this heading is designated as making appropriations for contingency operations related to the global war on terrorism pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 376 (109th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2007.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order under clause 2 of Rule XXI against the proviso beginning with ''Provided'' on page 59, line 13, through page 59, line 18.

This language carries a designation of special budgetary treatment for contingency operations. This language constitutes legislation on an appropriations bill in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI, and I ask for a ruling of the Chair.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist the point of order be extended to lie against the entire paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is made against the entire paragraph. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I want to be sure I understand this point of order. Having just cut out $379 million for army military facilities needed by our troops, it is my understanding this point of order would cut $26 million out of Marine Corps facilities at Camp Pendleton in California.

So having gutted army military construction projects, we are now going to hurt those serving in the Marines at Camp Pendleton who are an important part of our war on terrorism. Am I correct, Mr. Chairman, in understanding that this point of order, if sustained, would cut marine projects at Camp Pendleton, California?

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order would excise the entire paragraph, if sustained.

Mr. EDWARDS. So in lay terms, I think that answer was yes.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair will rule on the point of order.

For the reasons previously stated, the point of order is sustained and the paragraph is stricken from the bill.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, AIR FORCE

For an additional amount for ''Military Construction, Air Force'', $49,923,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided,* That the amount under this heading is designated as making appropriations for contingency operations related to the global war on terrorism pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 376 (109th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2007.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I raise a point of order under clause 2 of rule XXI against the proviso beginning with ''Provided,'' on page 59 line 13 through page 59, line 18.

This language carries a designation for special budgetary treatment for contingency operations and constitutes legislation on an appropriations bill in violation of clause 2, Rule XXI, and I ask for a ruling of the Chair.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist that the point of order be extended to lie against the entire paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is made against the entire paragraph. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I would like Members to be clear, and I would like to be clear about what this point of order does. Having now cut vital, according to the administration, vital Army and Marine Corps military installations out of the budget, this point of order, as I understand it, would cut approximately $50 million

out of Air Force facilities that the Bush administration and the Pentagon said we needed for the Predator program, which the public might not understand is a vital unmanned aerial vehicle used in our war on terrorism.

Am I correct, Mr. Chairman, that the $50 million cut would affect the Predator Air Force program?

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order would excise the entire paragraph, if sustained.

Mr. EDWARDS. I believe the answer is yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any other Member wish to be heard? If not, the Chair will rule.

For the reasons previously stated, the point of order is sustained and the paragraph is stricken from the bill.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, DEFENSE-WIDE

For an additional amount for ''Military Construction, Defense-Wide'', $44,500,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided*, That the amount under this heading is designated as making appropriations for contingency operations related to the global war on terrorism pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 376 (109th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2007.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I raise a point of Order under clause 2 of Rule XXI against the proviso beginning with ''Provided'' on page 59, line 22, through page 60, line 2.

This language carries a designation for special budgetary treatment for contingency operations. This language constitutes legislation on an appropriations bill in violation of clause 2 of Rule XXI, and I ask for a ruling of the Chair.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist that the point of order be extended to lie against the entire paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is made against the entire paragraph. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, again, so Members can follow this, my question is: Does this point of order, if sustained, cut our U.S. military operations in Qatar, operations under the Special Operations Command that are directly related to our war on terrorism and the war in Iraq?

Mr. Chairman, is that what this point of order will accomplish?

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair continues to state that the point of order would excise the entire paragraph, if sustained .

Mr. EDWARDS. So the answer is yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there other Members that wish to be heard? If not, the Chair will rule.

For the reasons previously stated, the point of order is sustained and the paragraph is stricken from the bill.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I am somewhat amused by the fact that the last two times Mr. EDWARDS has tried to fully explain to the House what the impact of the point of order was that those who are responsible for the points of order tried to urge the Chair to cut off Mr. EDWARDS so that he could not, in fact, explain it. Let me simply say if I were offering these points of order, I would want to have as little discussion about them as possible also. I would not want to have them fully aired either.

Let me just make the point. I find it interesting that we have Members of this House objecting on bookkeeping fine points to what the committee has been trying to do to provide these facilities and services to our military, and they stand in high dudgeon about the fact that the budget resolution is being exceeded.

□ 1330

Yet I do not recall them objecting when the President has submitted to the Congress almost $400 billion in expenditures for Iraq, none of which has been submitted in the regular appropriations order. All of those requests have come in the form of supplemental appropriations, off budget, if you will.

So I find it interesting that we can fight an entire war, spend $400 billion in an off budget, hide-the-cost-from-the-public fashion, and yet when it comes to meeting these small construction needs, and as the gentleman points out, this is not in the United States, this is in the Middle East itself. My understanding is that one of the items affects the special ops unit, and yet the gentlemen feel that their ideological commitment to their precious budget resolution, which they cannot even sell to their compatriots in the United States Senate, ought to be the be all and end all above every other economic or social or moral consideration. I find that, indeed, very interesting and very revealing.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Chairman, parliamentary inquiry.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Chairman, it is my understanding that the Chair ruled earlier that once a point of order has been raised, it is not in order to discuss the merits of the underlying issue. It is only in order to discuss whether or not the point of order is appropriate. Is that not what the Chair ruled?

The CHAIRMAN. Arguments should be confined to the question of order.

Mr. SHADEGG. And so if it is the question of the order, that means not the substance underneath, but rather the question of the procedural issue of whether or not the point of order should be sustained?

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair would state arguments should be confined to the question of the order. The underlying substantive issues may be debated by pro forma amendment.

Mr. SHADEGG. By separate amendment not in that debate, is that correct?

The CHAIRMAN. Substantive issues may be addressed by pro forma amendment.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Chairman, does that mean by moving to strike the last word following the ruling of the Chair?

The CHAIRMAN. A pro forma amendment may be offered following the Chair's ruling on the point of order.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, parliamentary inquiry.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. OBEY. Doesn't this whole thing illustrate that there are some people here who are much more concerned about the technical niceties of the procedures of this House than they are on the human implications of what it is we do here?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman has not stated a parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, parliamentary inquiry.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. EDWARDS. If I move at this point to strike the last word, am I allowed 5 minutes to discuss the specific impact of the cuts in our military operations and Qatar and the Middle East which have just been put into effect by the Chair's ruling?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may debate substantive issues on a pro forma amendment.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I am somewhat bothered by my colleagues' effort not only to gut vital military construction projects at this important time in our country's history, but would even go the extra step to try to cut off the right of Members of this House to tell our military men and women who are fighting that war what has just been done to them.

So now that the Chair has given me that opportunity, despite Members' efforts to cut it off, let me explain exactly what has just happened based on this point of order.

The Special Operations Command and Qatar in the Middle East, again, a vital part of our war in Iraq, will lose $28 million requested by President Bush and the Pentagon for a special operations aircraft operations and maintenance hanger, a hanger needed to basically protect vital Special Operations Command components.

It will also cut $16.5 million out of another Special Operations Command facility and Qatar that was going to provide a hanger for Special Operations rotary wing equipment and facilities and operations. So $54 million has just been cut by this action in the House out of Special Operations facilities that the administration says are needed to carry out our Nation's defense and our war in Iraq.

Mr. Chairman, I try not to take things personally in this process, and I respect the rights of every other Member of the House, but I think the service men and women in Qatar and the servicemen and women at Fort Drum, New York, and our Marines at Camp Pendleton in California, and men and women who served our country in uniform in wars past are going to be deeply offended by what has happened

today. And I would like to reemphasize what has happened today was not just the action of two or three Members who are putting procedural budget points above the interests of our Nation's military, it was done also by the House leadership, which 2 days, ago forced through a budget resolution that promised no pain, promised $70 billion in tax cuts, many of those going to people making over a million dollars a year.

Today we are feeling the pain. It is pain that will hurt those who have already sacrificed the most for our country, those men and women serving in the war on terrorism. It is a shameful process.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

For an additional amount for ''Military Construction, Army National Guard'', $5,530,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided,* That the amount under this heading is designated as making appropriations for contingency operations related to the global war on terrorism pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 376 (109th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2007.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I make a point of order under clause 2 of rule XXI against the proviso beginning with ''Provided,'' on page 60, line 6, through page 60, line 11. This languages carries a designation for special budgetary treatment for contingency operations. This language constitutes legislation on an appropriation bill in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI, and I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist that the point of order be extended to lie against the entire paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is made against the entire paragraph.

Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order? If not, the Chair will rule.

For the reasons previously stated, the point of order is sustained, and the paragraph is stricken from the bill.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I think the Members of this House, I think Members of our Armed Forces, I think our Nation's veterans and the American people have a right to know that what this House just did, having already cut over $300 million out of Army programs, having cut Marine Corps programs and Air Force programs, having cut programs requested by the administration for Special Operations Command facilities and Qatar in the Middle East, the House has just now cut the Army National Guard, and not just the Guard, the training facilities for the Army National Guard, the very Guard that our military leaders say is a vital part of the total Army effort to defend our Nation and fight the war on terrorism.

In this particular case $2 million was just cut out of Camp Roberts in California, an Army National Guard facility. Based on this action, they will not have the infantry squad battle course funded. In addition to that, in Indiana, Camp Atterbury, the Army National Guard will no longer have funded the Live Fire Shoot House. So now, having already cut quality-of-life facilities and barracks and housing for our military and other vital facilities, and training ranges out of our active duty military, now we are gutting Army National Guard training facilities to help prepare our Guards men and women to be able to carry out their military duty and come back home safely to their families.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, ARMY RESERVE

For an additional amount for ''Military Construction, Army Reserve'', $1,713,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011: *Provided,* That the amount under this heading is designated as making appropriations for contingency operations related to the global war on terrorism pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 376 (109th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2007.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I raise a point of order under clause 2 of rule XXI against the proviso beginning with ''provided'' on page 60, line 15, through page 60, line 20. This language carries a designation for special budgetary treatment for contingency operations. This language constitutes legislation on an appropriation bill in violation of clause 2 of rule XXI. I ask for a ruling of the chair.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I insist that the point of order be extended to lie against the entire paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN. The point of order is extended against the entire paragraph.

Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order? If not, the Chair will rule.

For the reasons previously stated, the point of order is sustained and paragraph is stricken from the bill.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, again I think the Members and the American people have a right to know that what this House just did was to cut $1.7 million out of the Urban Assault Course Facility at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, for the Army Reserve. So now we can add it up, we have cut the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Marine Corps, the Army National Guard, and that was not enough, now we have to cut the Army Reserve Urban Assault Course, the very kind of training needed when we send our Army reservists over to Iraq to police the streets of Baghdad.

Mr. Chairman, with every minute of this process, I think I better understand why the American people at this point have such lowest esteem for the United States Congress. In one week, we have given the retired CEO of ExxonMobil, Mr. Lee Raymond, a $2 million dividend tax cut. And now we have said we cannot afford $507 million in vital military installations. I don't think that reflects the American people's values. Our military men and women deserve better than this.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I am disappointed with the recommendations that have just been made. We have just heard the President over the week talk about the need for 60,000 National Guard troops. Well, basically what we are doing now, it is going to impact the State of California and the family members in that area.

How can we comply then with the President of the United States saying that we need an additional 6,000 troops on the border when we are cutting back additional guards. Mr. President and the Nation should know what we are doing here today and the impact it is going to have on the National Guard and the State of California and the Federal Government to meet the needs of what the President has recommended. I am disappointed in what has been submitted right now.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, we have heard a lot about what this debate is about. That is not what it is about. This is not about whether or not this House is going to support our brave men and women in uniform as they fight this war on terror. Every time the Commander in Chief has come to us and asked us to pass a supplemental appropriation to put guns on the front lines, ammunition on the front lines, gasoline on the front lines, equipment on the front lines, we have done it. We have done it. That is not the question.

But as was brought up earlier in the debate, Mr. Chairman, if you look at this bill, we see that roughly half a billion dollars of projects are coming from what might be viewed as a contingency fund to fight the war on terror. It is not literally called an emergency fund, but functionally that is what it is.

Although I have great admiration and respect for the gentleman from New York when he opines about the purpose of that fund, as a member of the Budget Committee and one who has spoken with the chairman of the Budget Committee and the gentleman who wrote the budget and the gentleman who put that into the budget, this is not the purpose for which it was put there. That is not it.

Mr. Chairman, again, there are at least half a billion dollars of Member projects in this legislation. Now had those projects not been there, we would not have been here today. Half a billion dollars of spending that the Commander in Chief did not request, the Pentagon did not request, and I certainly hear my friends from the other side of the aisle be very vocal about wanting to take away tax relief because we have to support the brave

men and women on the front. I wonder if they would be as interested in reducing spending on their particular earmarks in order to achieve that particular purpose.

Again, Mr. Chairman, the question is not whether or not we are going to support our troops, the question is how are we going to do it and is our budget a farce. Is our budget meaningless, or does it actually stand for something?

Those on the other side of the aisle will never lose an opportunity to raise taxes, but maybe there is another option here. Maybe we ought to look at other spending. We know there will be a number of appropriation bills to come to this floor. I do not know what will be in all of them. I certainly know looking in my rear view mirror what some of the spending has been in the past.

In appropriation bills for 2006, we added $273,000 for garden mosaics in New York. Maybe that is money we could have spend today on this military construction. We added $179,000 for hydroponic tomato production. Maybe that money could have been spent on military construction. There was a million dollars for the Water-Free Urinal Conservation Initiative; maybe that money could have been spent. Again, we are debating where this money is going to come from.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HENSARLING. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WALSH. I would just like to ask the gentleman, those projects that he just mentioned, are those projects in this bill?

□ 1345

Mr. HENSARLING. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, this represents appropriations that took place in last year's appropriations bills, and I am using them as an example of pools of money that have been available.

Again, there are earmarks in this bill that did not have to be there. They did not have to be there, Mr. Chairman. So what we have is a budget sleight of hand. The ink is not even dry on the budget, and we are already attempting to violate it. And that is simply not right.

Clearly, the greatest threat, the greatest threat to our country is the war on terror. But we also have another threat, and that is out-of-control Federal spending. If we are going to buy the guns, we had better get a little lean on the butter, and we had better quit wrapping the butter in the American flag in this sleight of hand. It is wrong, Mr. Chairman. It is wrong to do it. We will support our troops, but to sit here and pay for all of these earmarks and all the pork projects wrapped in the American flag is the wrong thing to do.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, as I was sitting here, it struck me that the gentleman from Texas resembles a poor imitation of Vice President CHENEY because, like Vice President CHENEY, he is shooting at the wrong target. The first rule of thumb is that if you are going to shoot somebody or something, you make sure you are shooting the right person.

What the gentleman just said to us is almost unbelievable. I mean, it sounded to me like I was in a sophomore high school class rather than in the House of Representatives, which is supposed to be the greatest deliberative body in the world. We are told that because he was peaked about a hydroponic tomato project in a bill last year that somehow he was determined to take it out on the military by yanking out military construction projects that were asked for not by me, not by Mr. WALSH or anyone else, but by the President of the United States.

I do not have any projects in this bill. I have a district that has very little to do with military except with respect to the Guard, and almost all of them are stuck in Iraq. So I can speak objectively with respect to projects. But it does seem quaint to me that if the gentleman did not like something that happened in another bill in another year in the deep, dark, distant past that instead he is going to shoot the future by yanking out money that the President of the United States thought it was important enough to ask for. I think that says something about the judgment of the persons making these motions today.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I want to stipulate, Mr. Chairman, I do not have any projects in this bill. I also want to stipulate that the gentlemen that have been out here on the floor for the last 2 hours, talking about the fact that they support our troops, they support the idea that we should be funding our troops and funding the war, almost all of them voted against the rule that would have funded all of the money for the last supplemental for the war.

You all voted against the rule. So please do not come out here and lecture us on the idea that you are for supporting the troops when you voted against the rule. Every project that you had stricken today was authorized by the last Armed Services bill that was on the floor about 10 days ago. When I last checked the vote on that, only three people voted against that bill. None of you. So please do not come out here and lecture us.

You picked the wrong bill to have your earmark fight. Please do not tell us you support the troops. Please do not tell us you support the war. When you came out here and X'd out all of these important projects that help our troops, help us win the war, help the administration fight the war on terror.

Pick another bill, not this one, and then try to lecture all of us on the idea that you support all of this. You voted for it in the authorization bill; however, you did vote against it in the rule in the last supplemental, which would have funded the supplemental. So you cannot have it both ways. I know you would love to, but you cannot.

And I just want the record to show what happened here.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I want to thank my colleagues for their indulgence for just a moment.

On Wednesday we passed a budget. We did it, I think, in the right way. Members had ample time for debate. We had a 15-minute vote and the budget was passed. And I am proud of my colleagues on our side for coming together to make that happen.

Once that decision was made, we have got to allocate those funds, and we have got to make decisions. And we are beginning that process, yesterday with the Interior approps bill, today with the military quality of life.

I come here today because there is a process fight under way. Not a fight over policy. Not a fight over the quality of the spending that was in here. It was over how it was done. And the leadership could have intervened and could have protected this and irritated one group of Members in favor of another. We did not do that. But I rise to say that all of us in this House want to do everything we can for our troops. As my friend from Wisconsin, Mr. OBEY, would say, we can all pose for the holy pictures. But the points of order that have been raised on this go to a question of how this $50 billion that was set aside for the use of fighting the war on terror and Iraq is set aside to do that. Last year when we had the military quality of life bill, none of those funds were included in this. We worked with the appropriators today, and I have a better understanding of why it is in there. But we obviously have some Members that disagree about the fact that that money was used in this fashion.

But the reason I rise is to ask all of my colleagues to be patient. It is easy around here to get into a fight over issues of process that sound like some big policy fight when, in fact, it is not about the policy. It is not about the fact that we are not supporting our troops. There is a disagreement over about how this was done today. And I am going to pledge to work with the appropriators and all of my colleagues to make sure that we all have a clearer understanding of how this money is to be spent and the process by which it is spent.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

TITLE V

GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 501. No part of any appropriation contained in this Act shall remain available for obligation beyond the current fiscal year unless expressly so provided herein.

Mr. WALSH (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the remainder of the bill through page 62, line 19, be considered as read, printed in the RECORD, and open to amendment at any point.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill through page 62, line 19, is as follows:

SEC. 502. Such sums as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007 pay raises for programs funded by this Act shall be absorbed within the levels appropriated in this Act.

SEC. 503. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used for any program, project, or activity, when it is made known to the Federal entity or official to which the funds are made available that the program, project, or activity is not in compliance with any Federal law relating to risk assessment, the protection of private property rights, or unfunded mandates.

SEC. 504. No part of any funds appropriated in this Act shall be used by an agency of the executive branch, other than for normal and recognized executive-legislative relationships, for publicity or propaganda purposes, and for the preparation, distribution or use of any kit, pamphlet, booklet, publication, radio, television or film presentation designed to support or defeat legislation pending before Congress, except in presentation to Congress itself.

SEC. 505. All departments and agencies funded under this Act are encouraged, within the limits of the existing statutory authorities and funding, to expand their use of ''E-Commerce'' technologies and procedures in the conduct of their business practices and public service activities.

SEC. 506. None of the funds made available in this Act may be transferred to any department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States Government except pursuant to a transfer made by, or transfer authority provided in, this Act or any other appropriations Act.

SEC. 507. Unless stated otherwise, all reports and notifications required by this Act shall be submitted to the Subcommittee on Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

SEC. 508. The amounts appropriated in Division B, title I, chapter 7 of Public Law 109–148 under the headings ''Military Construction, Defense-Wide'' and ''Construction, Major Projects'' may be used only for construction, or modification of joint-use and/or co-located facilities.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. TIAHRT

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. TIAHRT:

At the end of the bill (before the short title) insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to promulgate regulations without consideration of the effect of such regulations on the competitiveness of American businesses.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order against the gentleman's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. A point of order is reserved.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, the elected Representatives of this great institution, the House of Representatives, should be very concerned about the direction of our current and future economy.

Over the last generation, past Congresses and this Congress have created and expanded barriers to keeping and creating jobs in America. And those congressionally constructed barriers are affecting us today.

Our trade deficit this year will be somewhere in the area of $700 billion. China will graduate more English-speaking electrical engineers this year than we do if current trends hold true. India will graduate more software engineers than all the universities and colleges in the United States of America added together. Chile is currently pursuing more trade agreements than the United States. And Ireland has taken their economy in the European Union from third-rate status to the hottest and most vibrant economy in the entire European Union.

There is no doubt that we have the number one economy in the world today, but we are jeopardizing that status by the barriers created by this Congress. Those barriers include health care policy, the fastest growing cost in the American economy. It is nearly 15 percent of our total gross domestic product today. Those higher costs mean some jobs will not be created. Those higher costs mean some jobs will be driven overseas.

Our tax policy punishes success and makes it more appealing to move workers overseas to countries like Ireland. Our regulatory burdens are huge roadblocks to new jobs.

Yesterday, this Congress rejected a commonsense proposal for reform with EPA regulations that would have reduced the costs and still retained 99 percent of the reporting data of the Toxic Properties Inventory Report. Small manufacturing firms of 20 employees or less right now spend more than $22,000 a year on regulatory compliance. If we could just put some commonsense reform and cut those jobs in half, we could increase jobs at those small firms by up to 50 percent by just reforming regulations. This Congress chose not to do that last night.

Our litigation expenses raise the cost through court costs, lawyer fees, and liability insurance costs. Lawsuits drive jobs overseas. Other barriers include engineering policy, energy policy, education policy, trade policy, and unfocused research and development investments.

A regulatory problem that directly affects this bill is related to a company called Agriboard. Agriboard is a panel made of wheat chaff. It is stronger than most manmade materials. It is fire resistant, blast resistant, even tested by the military, energy efficient, mold resistant, termite and insect resistant, environmentally safe, and sound resistant.

Agriboard Industries makes panels for construction for residential, commercial, or military buildings. But they are falling victim to the regulatory bureaucratic red tape fiasco at the Department of Defense.

These panels have been used in Sri Lanka for the tsunami victims and have passed or exceeded DOD structural blast tests. They are stronger, environmentally sound, cheaper, and more durable than most construction material. Yet they have had a hard time getting through the onerous procurement system to be considered by the Department of Defense for base construction. Agriboard products deserve consideration; yet our system is preventing them from that consideration.

Base commanders have limited flexibility on how those projects are constructed based on the value of the project. Instead, the process is handed from top down and is cumbersome and ineffective. A company has to get new materials approved by the Pentagon prior to being used in any significant projects. I am told that process for approval is laborious and complex. This makes our government inefficient. It also prevents American companies, such as Agriboard, from competing and expanding their businesses which would mean more high-paying jobs for America.

Mr. Chairman, it is time Congress removed economic barriers, streamlined the procurement process, because in doing so, we will reduce costs and create more opportunity in America to create and keep American jobs.

Mr. Chairman, I realize our rules would recognize that this is an authorization on the appropriations bill and therefore not in order. But I believe it is always in order to fight for American jobs.

Mr. Chairman, respectfully I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kansas?

There was no objection.

□ 1400

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON-LEE OF TEXAS

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas:

At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

TITLE VI—ADDITIONAL GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 601. None of the funds appropriated in this Act may be used to implement Paragraph 4.F of ''Public Affairs Guidance On Casualty and Mortuary Affairs in Military Operations,'' (R 311900Z) March 2003.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, first I would like to express my appreciation to Chairman WALSH and Ranking Member EDWARDS for their hard work on this hard task on behalf of the Nation's soldiers.

My task today is one of the saddest aspects of being part of the United States military, and that is when our soldiers fall, when they lose their lives in the service of this country on the battlefields around the world.

I remind my colleagues of a very stoic but very brave situation that occurred when President Reagan left the

White House in Washington, D.C. and went to Dover Air Force Base to welcome home the fallen soldiers who had died in Lebanon. All the Nation was able to mourn and all the Nation poured their heart out on behalf of those families and those fallen soldiers. I was then quite shocked to realize that there is now an advisory that directs this government not to honor our soldiers when they come, having fallen in battle, back to the soil of the United States of America.

Might I share with you the language. ''There will be no arrival ceremonies for or media coverage of deceased military personnel returning to or departing from Ramstein AB or Dover Air Force Base, to include interim stops.'' What a shocking statement to make to the Nation, that when our soldiers fall in battle or when they lose their lives as members of the United States military, there is a blanket order, an executive order, an order of this administration, not to pay honor and tribute to them.

Mr. Chairman, I am not speaking of disrespecting family members who desire no such formal ceremonies. What I am suggesting is it should be an option and that there should be no blanket barrier that would, in fact, stop the honoring of these soldiers.

I remind you of the words of Abe Lincoln, who said ''Family has made the costly sacrifice on the alter of freedom.'' We owe them the respect of this honor, and a grateful Nation should be permitted to show its gratitude. But with this blanket order that suggests that there can be no public ceremony, I believe we denigrate, we deny the opportunity for honor.

My colleagues will say that there are individual ceremonies and funerals and memorials. And they may be right. But I ask you as Americans and colleagues, how many times have we been able to mourn as a nation the soldiers who are in the war on terror, fighting in places around the world? In these recent years, we have seen none. We have not honored any publicly.

Yes, one week from now will be Memorial Day, but yet we are denied the right to be able to show our gratitude. My amendment is to comfort the widow and the orphans. My amendment is on behalf of Americans.

Mr. Chairman, let me simply say that in reading this language, I struggled with the reason and the premise. I know that my good friend, Chairman WALSH, is going to suggest that there is a point of order and it is not germane. What I would say to him is that because of its importance, I ask you to waive the point of order, because our families and our Nation is crying out to be able to honor these fallen soldiers.

Why can't we join together as patriots, respecting and recognizing the young lives that have been sacrificed, by the Reservists, the National Guard and all the service branches on behalf of this Nation? Why would you have this kind of prohibition with no basis, no premise, particularly when we saw flag-draped coffins being utilized after the tragedy of 9/11? Why would you not allow us as Americans to embrace the widows and orphans and be able to say to them, thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that the point of order be waived and I ask that my colleagues support this amendment.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I rise to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to oppose this nor do I intend to raise a point of order, but I want to make it absolutely 100 percent clear that this amendment will have absolutely no impact on this policy. The funds that the gentlelady proposes to limit are not in this bill. The paragraph 4(f) that she cites is not in this bill. This amendment has no impact whatsoever on this bill. For that reason, I have no objection to the gentlelady's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

The amendment was rejected.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I will only take 1 minute. I just want to respond to something the distinguished majority leader said. He indicated that what had occurred on the House floor today was a process fight.

That is not what it was at all. It was a priorities fight. We saw this unraveling today because the majority party insisted on sticking by a budget resolution which puts super-sized tax cuts for the most comfortable in this society ahead of every other consideration.

We may not see arguments quite as dramatic and as chaotic as we did today on this bill, but as appropriation bills move through this House, we will see similar conflicting priorities, because the budget which has caused the problem is a budget which does not put the needs of military families first, it does not put the needs of education first, it does not put the need to invest in critical programs that strengthen the economy of the country in the future first. Instead, it continues to insist that we provide over $40 billion in tax cuts to persons who make over $1 million a year. That is a priorities fight. It is not a technical process fight. I think we need to keep that in mind.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I rise to strike the last word. I don't know whether this will be the last word, but I hope it is, because enough has been said.

Mr. Chairman, I have made every effort throughout the process of constructing this bill to reach across the aisle and to do this in a bipartisan way, not only because I believe that is the way we should operate here, but because on a bill of this importance that involves our national security and the health and well-being of our soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines, we need to be bipartisan, and I am afraid because of the tenor of this debate that the vote, in the end, will not be. I don't know. I can't predict the outcome.

I do have to say, I very much regret the process fight that we had on our side of the aisle. I strongly disagree with my colleagues who chose this bill to make their fight over earmark reform. Every earmark in this bill is authorized. That is the process that we follow.

I also deeply regret that Members on the other side of the aisle chose to make this their political fight, to make their political points about tax cuts and revenues and to make it a partisan bill. This is not a partisan bill. It should not be a partisan bill.

So I feel badly that the tenor of the debate was not about the strength of our military and the importance of their mission, but it was about process and politics. In my mind, on this bill, there is no place for either. Our commitment is to our troops, to their lives, to their families and to our veterans, and I hope that both sides, now that the debate is over, will close ranks, stand shoulder to shoulder and send our troops a very, very clear signal that we support them, we support their mission, and that we support this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I would urge a unanimous vote on this very important subcommittee appropriations bill.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word. Out of respect for the chairman, I will yield to him, because I think he should have the last word. I won't take all 5 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I intend to vote for this bill for several reasons: One, because the chairman of this subcommittee worked on a professional and thoroughly bipartisan basis to take what I think was an inadequate budget allocation due to the budget resolution and do the very best with it that he could and we could, and we did that. I think we did a good job of it.

Secondly, despite the fact that I am offended that a half a billion dollars of vital Pentagon requested military construction projects were just taken out of this bill, I think our troops deserve the other projects that are still left in this bill, especially as so many of them are facing wartime. That is why I am going to vote for this bill, and I urge my Democratic colleagues to join with me if they share my views.

I do want to say that to the American people perhaps this has been confusing and seemed like a process, I want to summarize what has happened today.

Because of an inadequate budget resolution which many of us opposed 2 days ago, this House has cut $507 million out of military construction projects the Bush administration said were needed to be funded.

The second thing that has happened today is that because of the budget resolution, and, in my opinion, its overemphasis on tax cuts and its under-emphasis on putting the defense needs of

our country above those tax cuts, we have a bill that will cut $735 million out of what the administration requested for defense health care programs for active duty military men and women, including those in combat, and for our retirees.

The one place where I would respectfully disagree with my chairman, Mr. WALSH, is that for many of us, this debate wasn't about politics. For many of us, we pleaded genuinely for this House not to vote for a budget resolution that we felt would result in what has just happened today. We predicted it would happen, that we would end up underfunding key vital priorities for our country. We pleaded at the Appropriations Committee in good faith to not adopt a 302(b) appropriation allocation that for our subcommittee for this bill cut $824 million out of the President's request.

I think to talk about the price being paid because of the budget resolution passed earlier this week, it isn't about politics, it is about an honest difference of where our country should go and where we should place our priorities.

Having said that, where I have agreed with the chairman at every step of the way is in his effort to put together a budget for a subcommittee that didn't have enough money in a way that funded the highest possible priorities given those budget constraints. That was a good process, and that was a bipartisan process, and had the technical amendments and debate not been brought up by several colleagues on the chairman's side of the aisle, we wouldn't have had this fight today. We were going to vote for this on a bipartisan basis.

□ 1415

Having said that, I still hope we support this bill. But I think it is time for us to level with the American people. We cannot have our cake and eat it too. And if we are going to vote for budget resolutions, we cannot run from the impact those budget resolutions have on our military men and women, on education, health care, job training, and other programs as well.

Finally, I want to salute the staff, on both the Republican and Democratic side of this subcommittee, an outstanding professional staff, that did an excellent job of taking a tough budget allocation, doing the best with it that I think anybody could have done.

Mr. Chairman, I yield any remaining time to the chairman out of my respect for him so that he can have the last word.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I very much appreciate the acknowledgement that he gave to our staff who have worked very, very hard, both sides of the aisle, to make the best bill that we could. I assure my colleague and the Members of the House that as we go forward we will find the resources that we need to make sure that our troops have all of the resources at their hand to be successful in their mission.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. BLUMENAUER

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, the pending business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 151, noes 247, not voting 34, as follows:

[Roll No. 175]

AYES—151

Ackerman
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boswell
Brady (PA)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Case
Chandler
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Conyers
Cooper
Costello
Crowley
Davis (IL)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Ehlers
Emanuel
Eshoo
Farr
Filner
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Ford
Fortenberry
Frank (MA)
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Harman
Harris
Hastings (FL)
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hyde
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Kaptur
Kelly
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kucinich
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Lee
Lipinski
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Matsui
McCarthy
McCollum (MN)
McGovern
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Millender-McDonald
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Paul
Payne
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rangel
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sherman
Simmons
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Solis
Stearns
Sweeney
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Woolsey
Wu

NOES—247

Abercrombie
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Baca
Bachus
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boustany
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (TX)
Brown (OH)
Brown (SC)
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Cardin
Carson
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Chocola
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Costa
Cramer
Crenshaw
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeLay
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Emerson
Engel
Etheridge
Everett
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gibbons
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Green (WI)
Gutknecht
Hall
Hart
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Hostettler
Hoyer
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Istook
Jenkins
Jindal
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (OH)
Keller
Kennedy (MN)
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Marchant
Marshall
Matheson
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moran (KS)
Murphy
Murtha
Myrick
Neugebauer
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Ortiz
Osborne
Otter
Pastor
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pombo
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Royce
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Saxton
Schmidt
Schwartz (PA)
Schwarz (MI)
Scott (GA)
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (TX)
Snyder
Sodrel
Souder
Spratt
Sullivan
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Van Hollen
Walsh
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—34

Andrews
Baker
Beauprez
Bishop (GA)
Bonner
Boucher
Davis (AL)
Davis (FL)
Davis (KY)
Doyle
English (PA)
Evans
Fattah
Gohmert
Hulshof
Kanjorski
Kennedy (RI)
Larson (CT)
Lewis (GA)
Manzullo
McDermott
Musgrave
Nussle
Oxley
Pelosi
Reynolds
Salazar
Sanders
Smith (WA)
Stark
Strickland
Stupak
Tancredo
Thomas

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1437

Messrs. SMITH of Texas, BARTLETT of Maryland, WYNN, Ms. HART and Miss MCMORRIS changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Mr. WEXLER, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. HARRIS, and Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will read the last three lines.

The Clerk read as follows:

This Act may be cited as the ''Military Construction, Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2007''.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise and report the bill back to the House with the recommendation that the bill do pass.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WALDEN of Oregon) having assumed the chair, Mr. SHIMKUS, Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5385) making appropriations for military quality of life functions of the Department of Defense, military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes, had directed him to report the bill back to the House with the recommendation that the bill do pass.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 821, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

Pursuant to clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 395, nays 0, not voting 37, as follows:

[Roll No. 176]

YEAS—395

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (OH)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Carter
Case
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Chocola
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Farr
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Graves
Green (WI)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall
Harman
Harris
Hart
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hostettler
Hoyer
Hunter
Hyde
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jenkins
Jindal
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kaptur
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Maloney
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
McMorris
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy
Murtha
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Osborne
Otter
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz (PA)
Schwarz (MI)
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Snyder
Sodrel
Solis
Souder
Spratt
Stearns
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—37

Andrews
Baker
Beauprez
Bishop (GA)
Boehlert
Bonner
Boucher
Davis (AL)
Davis (FL)
Davis (KY)
Doyle
English (PA)
Evans
Fattah
Garrett (NJ)
Gohmert
Granger
Hulshof
Kanjorski
Kennedy (RI)
Larson (CT)
Lewis (GA)
Manzullo
McDermott
Musgrave
Nussle
Oxley
Pelosi
Reynolds
Salazar
Sanders
Smith (WA)
Stark
Strickland
Stupak
Tancredo
Thomas

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1454

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, due to a commitment of my time in Colorado this evening, I must leave before the end of voting on H.R. 5385, The Military Construction, Military quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act of 2007. Had I been able to finish voting on this bill I would have made the following votes: ''aye'' on the Blumenauer amendment and ''yea'' on final passage.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, May 19, 2006, I was absent from the House due to a prescheduled event with the President on his American Competitiveness Initiative at Northern Kentucky University. Had I been present I would have voted: Rollcall No. 173 (previous question)—''yea''; Rollcall No. 174 (rule)—''yea''; Rollcall No. 175 (Blumenauer amendment)—''no''; Rollcall No. 176 (final passage)—''yea.''

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit this statement for the RECORD and regret that I could not be present today, Friday, May 19, 2006 to vote on rollcall vote Nos. 173, 174, 175, and 176 due to a family medical emergency.

Had I been present, I would have voted: ''Nay'' on rollcall vote no. 173 on calling the previous question on H. Res. 821—the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 5385, the FY07 Military Quality of Life, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill; ''nay'' on rollcall vote no. 173 on passage of H. Res. 821—the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 5385, the FY07 Military Quality of Life, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. ''aye'' on rollcall vote no. 175 on an amendment to H.R. 5385 that increases the 1990 BRAC accounts by $27.5 million and increases environmental restoration on formerly used bases account by $50 million, and; ''yea'' on rollcall vote no. 176 on final passage of H.R. 5385, the FY07 Military

Quality of Life, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I had an unavoidable conflict on the afternoon of May 19, 2006, and was not able to vote. Had I been able, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall votes Nos. 175 and 176.

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 5385, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that in the engrossment of the bill, H.R. 5385, the Clerk be authorized to make technical corrections and conforming changes to the bill.

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

There was no objection.

REPORT ON H.R. 5427, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

Mr. HOBSON, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109–474) on the bill (H.R. 5427) making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1, rule XXI, all points of order are reserved on the bill.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise for the purpose of inquiring of the majority leader the schedule for the week to come, and I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), my friend, the majority leader.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, the House will convene on Monday at 12:30 for morning hour and at 2 p.m. for legislative business. We have items that will be considered under suspension of the rules. A final list of those bills will be in Members' offices by the end of the day. Any votes called on these will be taken after 6:30 on Monday evening.

On Tuesday and the balance of the week, the House will consider the Ag approps bill, which I anticipate will be scheduled on Tuesday; the Energy and Water appropriations bill, which I would anticipate to be Wednesday or Thursday; and the Homeland Security appropriations bill, which will be Wednesday or Thursday as well.

On Wednesday morning at 11 a.m. there will be a joint meeting of the Congress to receive the Prime Minister of Israel, Ehud Olmert.

We also anticipate action next week on H.R. 4939, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror and Hurricane Recovery, if it is finished.

Finally, I anticipate that we will likely consider energy legislation next week. Specifically, the issue of ANWR is likely to come to the floor.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for that information, and I, again, would simply emphasize that the majority leader said, as he did last week and accurately so, our Members need to make sure that they are available for a Friday session; am I correct on that?

Mr. BOEHNER. That is correct. As we all know, next Friday is the beginning of the holiday weekend. We do have an awful lot of work to do, and Members should anticipate that we will be here until 2 p.m. next Friday.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman. I was going to ask him about the days for the appropriation bills, but I believe the gentleman has already indicated which days you anticipate that: Tuesday, the Ag bill; Wednesday, the Energy and Water, or Wednesday and Thursday; and then Homeland Security on Thursday.

Would you anticipate that one of those bills might go over till Friday, or is there other legislation that might be on the calendar for Friday?

Mr. BOEHNER. I think the issue would center around the availability of the supplemental, if it is finished.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time, if the supplemental has not been completed by the conference committee, would you still anticipate that we would be in on Friday? I yield to my friend.

Mr. BOEHNER. It really depends on how quickly we get through the appropriations process. The House was in late on Wednesday night. The House was rather late last night. As the gentleman knows, I like to go to bed at 10 o'clock, and to the extent that we can finish our work during normal business hours would be my approach.

□ 1500

And considering Friday is a getaway day for the holiday weekend, we are going to work together to try to see how quickly these bills move.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the leader, and I want to comment that the leader has been very inclined to try to work together to make his schedule as accommodating for Members as possible. And I want you to know I personally appreciate it, and I believe we appreciate that on this side of the aisle.

Mr. Leader, on energy bills, you mentioned briefly, but do you anticipate, in addition to the ANWR bill that you mentioned as a possibility, any legislation on the refinery siting that might also be here?

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield.

Mr. HOYER. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. BOEHNER. There was anticipation that we would have the refinery bill up next week, the bill that did not receive the required two-thirds when it was brought up under suspension, but there have been some conversations under way, bipartisan conversations under way on that bill, and we have decided to let those conversations continue to see if there is some way for both sides to resolve their differences, which would mean that the bill would be brought up under some kind of structured rule as opposed to bringing up the same bill under a closed rule.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman. I am shuffling papers back and forth here, but, again, ANWR, can you anticipate what you might expect with respect to an ANWR bill?

Mr. BOEHNER. Just that we are very likely to have one next week.

Mr. HOYER. Next week?

Mr. BOEHNER. I wish I could be clearer in terms of what it would look like and how it would be considered; but as soon as those decisions are made, we will pass them on.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information.

Lastly, I want to ask about two conference committees, the supplemental appropriation conference and the pension conference, which we have discussed on a couple of occasions. Can you tell us what your expectations are with reference to those two situations?

Mr. BOEHNER. If the gentleman will yield.

Mr. HOYER. I yield to my friend.

Mr. BOEHNER. I will do the easy one first.

With the pension conference, there are conversations going on. There has been a lot of shuttle diplomacy, if you will, between offices, both Democrat and Republican, trying to bring this bill together. I do believe that we are making progress. We are relatively close. But considering the complexity of this issue and the necessity that it be correct, I am hopeful we will have an agreement next week, but I have got my doubts whether it can be put together in time to be brought to the floor. But my overall point is that I think we are getting close.

On the supplemental, I have made it very clear that the House will not consider a conference report on the supplemental spending bill that spends any more money than what the President called for for Katrina and the war in Iraq. And, secondly, I have made it clear that we ought to remember that the word "emergency" ought to be put back into the emergency spending bill.

And so I think that the appropriators on both sides of the Capitol have their marching orders. I know they have had conversations. It is hard for me to gauge at this point the chances of whether this bill will be up next week. I hope that it is, but I think they have a big job ahead of them.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for the information.

AUTHORIZING THE SPEAKER TO DECLARE A RECESS ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 2006, FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECEIVING IN JOINT MEETING HIS EXCELLENCY EHUD OLMERT, PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it may be in order at any time on Wednesday, May 24, 2006, for the Speaker to declare a recess, subject to the call of the Chair, for the purpose of receiving in joint meeting his Excellency Ehud Olmert, Prime Minister of Israel.

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

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, MAY 22, 2006

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debate.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBER TO ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION BOARD OF ADVISORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 214(a) of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 15344), and the order of the House of December 18, 2005, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following member on the part of the House to the Election Assistance Commission Board of Advisors to fill the existing vacancy thereon:

Mr. Thomas A. Fuentes, Lake Forest, California

HONORING B-COMPANY FIRST BATTALION, 108TH ARMOR REGIMENT OF THE 48TH MECHANIZED INFANTRY BRIGADE

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor a group of true American patriots from Georgia. This past Monday, I had the ultimate privilege to welcome home from Iraq members of the B-Company First Battalion, 108th Armor Regiment of the 48th Mechanized Infantry Brigade.

These brave men and women, known as the Rough Riders, have just returned home after a year-long tour of duty in south Baghdad. The B-Company First Battalion patrolled the streets gathering intelligence, looking for weapon caches, and keeping the peace in a hostile area.

Each of these patriots made remarkably selfless sacrifices for us, for their country, leaving behind family, friends, and careers to protect the liberty and freedoms we cherish in this Nation. It is only because of the brave men and women like the 108th that we are able to enjoy these freedoms. Our level of respect and appreciation for these soldiers should truly know no bounds. We all, as Americans, owe thanks to them and to all our armed services who risk their lives to protect all of us.

Mr. Speaker, the B-Company First Battalion are real-life heroes. We owe them our unwavering gratitude and support. God bless each and every one of them.

SPECIAL ORDERS

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

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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

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

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

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

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

(Mr. POE 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 Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO 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 Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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

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

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.)

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

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

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

(Mr. SCHIFF of North Carolina 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 California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR ON THE PART OF INSURANCE COMPANIES

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

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, as the Representative of the people of south Mississippi, I want to rise once again to thank my fellow citizens, both collectively and individually, for what they have done for the

people of south Mississippi in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. We have been the beneficiaries of tremendous generosity, and I don't want at any time for people to think that what they have done as individuals, through groups, through churches, through charities, and as taxpayers that we are in any way ungrateful for that.

Mr. Speaker, one of the continuing problems that persists in south Mississippi is the whole debate over insurance. When people lost their homes, when on the day after the storm there was nothing there and they tried to settle with their insurance company, in almost every instance the insurance companies refused to pay on homeowners' policies, citing those homes had been destroyed by water and not wind. And, of course, when your house isn't there, you don't have much of an arguing position.

That has affected the lives of tens of thousands of south Mississippians, and they suffer individually as a result of that. But, Mr. Speaker, what I am asking my colleagues to look into, and I will offer an amendment to the National Flood Insurance Program when it comes before this body next week or the following week, is to ask for the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security to look into whether or not a crime has been committed against the citizens of this country collectively.

Because when the Allstates, the Nationwides, the Farm Bureaus, the State Farms of the world refused to pay the claim on a homeowner's policy and shifted that cost to the National Flood Insurance Program, I suspect that they took costs that they should have paid out of their pockets and their stockholders' pockets and shifted those costs unfairly and, in my opinion, criminally to the taxpayer.

When an adjustment agent walked to any of the 10,000 slabs and said there is nothing there, your house was washed away, and there was no wind damage, that was completely contrary to what the Navy Meteorological Command tells us, that in communities like Bay St. Louis and Waveland there was 6 to 8 hours of 120-to-180-mile-an-hour winds before the water ever arrived. Even farther away from the eye, in towns like Biloxi and Ocean Springs, there were at least, according to the United States Navy, at least 3 hours of maximum wind before the high water arrived.

So when these agents looked the people in south Mississippi in the eye and denied their claims, they not only hurt them but they are hurting us all. Because, again, when that cost is shifted to the National Flood Insurance Program, billions of taxpayer dollars had to be shifted from other accounts and, more honestly, borrowed to help make up the difference. So it is not fair to them, and it is not fair to the American taxpayer.

I think, at the very least, this Congress ought to ask the Inspector General's office to look into it. I am going to offer that amendment, and at this time I am asking for my colleagues' help on that. We will be going before the Rules Committee next week. I do want to thank Chairman OXLEY for his generosity in hearing me out on this. He has offered a Government Accountability Office investigation. But in total honesty, that is already going on.

I think that when you believe a crime has been committed, then I think it calls for a criminal investigation. And everything I see in south Mississippi tells me a crime has been perpetrated on the people of south Mississippi and the taxpayers of this Nation, and I am asking my colleagues to look into what I think is a crime.

BORDER IMMIGRATION

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

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the privilege to be recognized to address you here on the floor of the United States Congress. Our work here today, like it is every day, is exceptionally important. There are a number of subjects that are on the minds and the hearts of the American people, and one of those subjects is what I intend to focus on, Mr. Speaker.

That subject is going to be the subject that brought the President to Arizona yesterday, along with Air Force One that had a pretty substantial congressional delegation from Arizona on board it.

□ 1515

They visited down there around the Yuma area. I would hope there were some local people that had objections to the position that has been taken by the White House with regard to the guest worker, temporary worker, and I hope they had an opportunity to speak to White House personnel as well as our Commander in Chief.

I find myself occasionally addressing that White House from this microphone or other microphones, not as often directly as I think it should be. I am wondering sometimes if the message is actually heard.

But I have made several trips down to the border myself. I have made at least one trip which was essentially a red carpet trip, maybe similar to the one that took place yesterday with Air Force One. It is impossible as a President of the United States Commander in Chief to go into a location like that and be able to actually observe and experience the full, unvarnished events that are driving the issues at the border. It is not something that any President would be able to do unless he wore a disguise and went on his own because the security has to be so tight. Events have to be planned, strategized. There has to be security that has to be built in. It cannot be spontaneous.

For those reasons, Mr. Speaker, and more, the trip for the President yesterday could not have been a trip that was rooted in fact-finding, but a trip that was rooted in sending a message to the American people that the President is committed to border security and border patrol. We know without doubt that he is committed to guest worker, temporary worker and a path to citizenship as we listened to his speech last Monday night.

As we address this subject matter, I have the privilege of exchanging some words with my good friend and colleague who I have known—grown to know and respect for his input to this process and the character that he brings to the floor, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. AKIN).

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman taking the time to take a look at this subject that obviously is so important to us, the whole area of border security and immigration. There are so many different facets to this. I just wanted to ask a question or two.

Aside from the technology of how do you enforce the border, how do you build at least from a physical point of view or a deterrent point of view, some of the different aspects of this question because the more that people look at it, it seems like there are more and more questions.

One is you have a couple of parents that are illegal immigrants. They have children. My understanding is that some of our judges have decided those children become automatically American citizens. But I also understand that could be very easily challenged, whether the Constitution should be understood in that way. I think that is one of the issues that we are dealing with.

Another one is the question of English as a language. Do we enforce the things that have made us unique as a Nation? Do we make English the official language of the United States? We assume it is, but we have never passed a law to do that very thing.

There are other questions. There are questions about the employees, whether employers should check Social Security numbers, names and birthdays before they hire somebody. Are we going to enforce that law or are we going to ignore it and go in the other direction?

All of these are significant questions. If it is all right, I would just inquire if you would like to talk about those questions in a little more detail with the time we have.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Missouri. As I listen to the subject matter, I am interested in all of them. I point out first the subject matter that you brought up, what we call birthright citizenship. It says in the Constitution that any person born in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof shall be a United States citizen.

I have not done a thorough, scholarly analysis of that, but rudimentary analysis boils down to this: The language was written into the Constitution with

the idea in mind that Native Americans would not necessarily be citizens because they are not necessarily subject to the jurisdiction of the United States—being a separate nation. That is an issue that Native Americans can answer more succinctly than I can answer. But I understood that was the root of that exception clause in there, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof.

Yet today we have a practice of granting birthright citizenship, anyone born on U.S. soil is a United States citizen by practice, not necessarily by Constitution. Some would argue we would need to amend the Constitution to end birthright citizenship. I would argue that our most efficient path to that would be to pass a statutory change that would make it clear that it is not the intent of Congress and our interpretation of the Constitution would be to end birthright citizenship and confer that upon someone who was born in the United States if one of their parents is a citizen. That is the position I would take.

Mr. AKIN. My understanding is the same thing. The understanding of that section in the Constitution dated back about to the time of the Civil War and it was dealing with a different situation and it does not necessarily apply to two people who are here illegally, or just the automatic granting of citizenship just because of where are you born.

From my understanding, we could pass a law, and it might be challenged and the courts would have to take a look at that, but there is a good case that could be made to support what you are saying, which is if we are going to talk about birthright, there needs to be at least one parent that is a citizen of the United States.

Also, it troubles me that America, and one of the things I love about this country is the fact that America has always been a place where there is just one class of people. We call them Americans. From our Declaration of Independence it says ''all men are created equal.'' That means equal before the law. Nobody is better than anybody else. We have one class of Americans.

Yet by us ignoring our own laws on immigration, de facto we are starting to move into or create sort of a second class of citizen that does not really have any rights. They are not subject to the minimum wage or any of those things. They do not have a chance to be part of organized labor or anything like that. They simply come here and if they say anything, they are threatened that they can be sent back over the border. We are almost creating a second class of citizenship, and that concerns me a lot.

I think it is absolutely time that we start to enforce the laws that apply to immigration in this country. There are some people who want to argue that we do not have a right to make any laws that control immigration. That is an interesting question, but we really have two choices. We either say we are going to open the borders wide open and no law is legitimate whatsoever, or we are going to enforce the laws we have. If we cannot enforce them, we can take them off the books.

The thing that concerns me is this whole idea of shifting what America really is, which is one people, Americans, instead of us being so weak in terms of enforcing law that we are starting to create a different America and one where people are not all equal.

I do not know if you have thought about that concept of two classes of Americans. It is very distasteful to me.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I have given considerable thought to this and have done some research and a fair amount of writing on this subject matter. We have an upper class in America that has gotten richer and richer, and I am for that. I am for success. Some of those people pulled themselves up by their bootstraps, and they are at the economic pinnacle in this country and in the world. A person like Bill Gates, for example, is a fine and shining example of somebody who had an idea, some creativity and some business skills to put that all together, and he put some good people together. He and Steven Jobs both have done an amazing thing in this era, and they have gotten very wealthy, but they have also created a lot of jobs. And the trickle-down of that wealth has been wonderful for America, as well as how the technology that they have produced has made us all more efficient and improved the quality of our lives as well as our production.

Mr. AKIN. The American dream, live and well.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Entrepreneurship is growing. There are many more people at the upper echelons of our economic society than there was a generation or two ago. As I watch that happen, I think that is a good thing for America. But I would point out that the strength for America has been in the breadth for a prosperous middle class that began to grow in a dramatic way during World War II when Rosie the Riveter went off to work. The middle class grew. We had 1.2 percent unemployment rate back during those years.

As the paycheck came back into the household, and I should also credit Henry Ford because when he put his automobile into production, he wanted to make sure that the people he hired had enough money to buy one of his cars, so he paid them a good wage. That was competitive and that spread across this Nation. So the prosperity of the middle class grew, and it grew from the early part of the 20th century and it grew dramatically in the second half of the 20th century. As it did, the greatness of America grew with it.

You could maybe be a high school dropout but if you were a good worker, you could punch a clock at the local factory and take home a paycheck that was adequate enough that you could buy a modest home and raise your family with dignity and pride and values. That middle class got broader and broader up until perhaps 10 years ago when we began to see it shrink. There was pressure on the middle class from the upper class. That is really not a bad thing, to have people moving from the middle class to the upper class. I applaud that.

But the other pressure comes from the lower side of this when many of the elitists in America figured out that with the click of a mouse, they could transfer capital around the world.

The impediments to business transactions diminished with the computer technology that was developed by Steven Jobs and Bill Gates and many, many others. As that happened, they began to feel the frustration that they couldn't transfer cheap labor as efficiently as they could transfer capital. So with that frustration, and business will always work on the most important issue, they began to transfer cheap labor. They wanted cheap labor in the United States because that is where the factories were. As they brought that cheap labor in, the wealthy got wealthier off that margin of profit they were making, and they had a competitive advantage against those who did not hire illegal labor. The Federal Government did not enforce that and so the wealth that came began to also put into people's minds that they had an entitlement to hiring cheap labor to work in their factories doing, quote, ''the work that Americans won't do.''

And I reject that concept. And at the same time, they wanted cheap servants to take care of their mansions and trim their lawns and nails. As this happened, this servant class which has been created by the elitists, the new ruling class, the servant class has grown and the elitist class has grown, and this has been at the price of the middle class. It has been at the price of the middle class so that an undereducated, American-born citizen that does not go off to college does not have nearly the opportunities that they had 10 or 20 years ago. Cheap labor has taken that away.

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, some of the studies that I have seen, the people that get hurt the most by having illegal immigrants working are the people at the lower end of the wage scale, because those are the people taking the jobs that would have been taken by people who are legal citizens of this country, people who waited in line, people who took the classes on citizenship. Now all of a sudden they want to be able to take a job and there is somebody who is taking the job for a couple of dollars less. Those are the ones that are hurt the most by this process of what is going on.

I guess the bottom line is that one of the things that people say is if you want less of something, you tax it. If you want more of it, you subsidize it. My concern is that some of the discussion I am hearing from the other body

and not so much from the House here is the idea that we are going to make it easy for the illegals just to basically give them citizenship or amnesty. My concern is whatever you reward, get more of.

In 1986, we granted amnesty to a number of people, and then we had a huge wave of other illegals coming here saying pretty soon they will do that again.

We need to avoid making that mistake, make the tough decision and say no amnesty and say we are going to enforce our laws. We have to say we are going to let the people waiting in line trying to follow our laws, we are going to reward those people and not reward law breakers.

My concern is that any proposal we deal with would not be rewarding law breakers because if we do, we will encourage more of them. I think those reasons, economic reasons and many others, we need to take a very good look at our policy on border security and immigration.

I know that you have done some innovative work in terms of what can be done on the border.

□ 1530

In some ways to have certain crossings where everybody knows that is where you go through and we stop just these hordes of thousands of people coming across every day. I really appreciate your imagination and your good work and also your scheduling this time to talk about what I believe is one of the questions that is really foremost on the minds and hearts of many Americans.

We all have a great deal of respect for the American Dream and for the fact that we are really all Americans. I do not even like to use the word ''class.'' I do not think it applies in America. But I know that you have that love and respect for this country, and I appreciate your taking a tough issue this afternoon and dealing with it, and I appreciate the fact that your views on this subject are ones which are going to strengthen our country overall. So thank you very much for taking a little time on that subject.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. AKIN, I thank you for your contributing to this debate in the fashion that you have and your willingness to be flexible in the manner that you delivered it. I really do appreciate that.

I would like to just take a couple of minutes and address the issue of English as the official language, which was part of the subject matter that you raised, and it is something that I have worked on for what is my 10th legislative year that I have promoted establishing English as the official language of the United States. And I spent 6 years actually working to establish that in Iowa to help paint our piece of the American map the color of English, so to speak. And that was a 6-year endeavor. It was far more difficult to accomplish than you would realize from talking to the American people, who out there are almost universal in their support of establishing English as the official language of the United States.

And those numbers are something like, which I saw some today, Democrats, about 82 percent support English as the official language; and Republicans, about 92 percent support English as the official language of the United States. I did not see what the Independents think, but one would think being a little more independent minded they might want it even more than Democrats or Republicans, but I am confident they are in that similar zone between 82 and 92 percent. There are not many issues in America that we can find that kind of an agreement on, but official English is one of them.

And as I brought legislation here to the House and I ended up with 150 different cosponsors on the legislation that would establish English as the official language, I have been trying to find an avenue to bring it through committee and bring it out here.

But what happened in the United States Senate yesterday was Senator INHOFE's bringing an amendment to the immigration bill that was before the Senate yesterday and remains before the Senate today and presumably for several more days before such time that it might be ready for final passage; and he was able to successfully introduce his amendment that would establish English as the official language of the United States and bring it to a vote on the floor of the United States Senate.

Now, we all think in this House that we are the quick reaction group, that we are the ones that are the most in touch with the feel and the mood of the American people. That is how our Founding Fathers envisioned it. They wanted us to be responsive, and that is why they required that we go back for reelection every 2 years. And generally we are substantially more responsive. We feel the mood of the American people. We hear from them. We have to go back and look them in the eye and explain to them what we have done on their behalf and how we have conducted ourselves in office, and they explain to us what they want us to do. And I continually hear from them, they want English as the official language of the United States.

So, happily, yesterday the Senate heard them and they moved and with, I believe the number was, 63 votes, passed English as the official language of the United States.

Now, it is interesting that the President has called for immigrants to learn English and, in fact, to demonstrate a proficiency in English in both reading and writing, essentially the same standard, as I interpret him, that is provided in the citizenship requirements, which are statutory and something that we require of everyone who is naturalized. So with the President advocating for the learning of English for newly arriving immigrants, both legal and illegal, and the Senate's passing legislation that establishes English as the official language of the United States, we sit here now in this House playing catch-up rather than being the leaders.

And I always want us to be the leaders in this Congress, Mr. Speaker. I want us to be the ones that are out there on the vanguard, out on the front, the tip of the spear, so to speak. We need to be the ones that initiate spending by the Constitution. It is our job to initiate the appropriations bills, and we need to be initiating the policy. But we have an opportunity now to link onto the initiation of good policy that was introduced by Senator INHOFE yesterday and introduced several days before, actually, debated to conclusion and voted upon yesterday with 63 votes. It is common sense.

And not only is it common sense; I did some research once to determine why does this make such simple sense to me and why does it make such simple sense to the American people. And I thought, well, I wonder how many countries have an official language. So I got out an almanac and I looked up the location where they have the flags of all the countries in the world. So there I found the names of the countries in the world, and I got out the only research that I had. This was several years ago, before the Internet, and I had the World Book Encyclopedia.

So I thumbed through there and I started with the first country, and I looked up every single country in the World Book Encyclopedia because there they have a list that shows the official language of each country as you look it up. I looked up every country that you could find in the almanac, looked up their official language, and I found that every single country according to that study, in the world, except the United States of America, had at least one official language. And for many of the countries, and it would be surprising, English is their official language. So I thought, well, there is one other sovereignty out there that I had not really checked on, and because of some issues that I had heard that were raised, I thought I should check out the official language of the Vatican. So I looked up the Vatican.

They are a sovereign state, yes. They have their independence within that part of Rome and that part of Italy. But the Vatican actually has two official languages. One is Latin and some of us grew up around Latin. And the other one is Italian. So if it is good enough for the Vatican to have an official language or two, it is good enough for the United States to have one. And throughout all of history, God recognized this, and I do not need to repeat the story of the Tower of Babel, but God recognized this when he scattered people to the four winds by confusing their tongues.

But a common language, a language that would be the same language for all

of us to speak, is the single most powerful unifying force known to all humanity. If you want to be unified as a nation, you need to speak all one language. And if we do that, we can work together, we can cooperate together, we can identify ourselves as Americans. There is a camaraderie involved there. There is a bonding agent involved in that language. And to be able to go anywhere in America and pick up a newspaper or go to a public meeting or walk into a business place and communicate in a single language is a very, very good thing for the future of this Nation.

And it is important for us to establish an official language. And I would tell you that if we had another language here that had the kind of penetration and usage that English has, I would be for that. If it were Swahili and 90-some percent of us spoke Swahili, I would be saying Swahili needs to be our official language. It is not the point of what the language is. It is the point of having one language that is official that binds you all together.

Now, the bill that I have and the bill that is in the Senate, as I understand it, does not preclude at any point utilization of other languages. It does not disparage any other languages. In fact, my bill, I believe, has language in it that says one shall not disparage any other language.

We think it is a good thing, and I think it is a good thing, for people to have multiple language skills. Those that are proficient in a number of different languages have an ability then to do business in other countries. And with the communications that we have today with the Internet and with the telephone prices being what they are with voice-over Internet, those who have more language skills have more business opportunities. That is a very good thing. Knowing that we need diplomats and diplomats that can go to foreign countries and be able to step in and understand the cultures of these foreign countries, it is important to encourage and promote the teaching and learning of languages in such a global country as the United States is, where we have people in every country of the world.

There is no country that has a more effective and more diversified diplomatic mission than the United States of America, and we need to draw for those missions from people that are trained in languages, and we need to exchange with other countries so that we can train our young people in languages.

But all of those things notwithstanding, Mr. Speaker, we must establish an official language for a number of good, logical, rational reasons. And among those reasons are, for example, if we do not have an official language, if we have two people that come together and they write up a contract on a business deal and one of those contracts is in German and the other one is in Japanese, and they say, Here, I have my German version and you have your Japanese version, let us sign these. You can keep the one that is your language and I will keep the one that is in my language. And those two people get into a disagreement and they go to court.

Now we bring those documents before the court, and the court has to rule on which one is the one we are going to go by, the Japanese version or the German version. And if so, is it an appropriate interpretation of one or the other. And often we come up with disagreements on interpretations, and that is why we need to have one official language. That would be the English language, one that everything is anchored back to, one that everything that is interpreted is interpreted from.

So as we watch what is happening here, we will see the Voting Rights Act come up on this floor sometime relatively soon, Mr. Speaker. And in that is the reauthorization of the bilingual ballots. And I have taken a stand, and I will continue to take the stand, that there is no reason in the United States of America to produce a bilingual ballot for anybody. This is not something that was part of the Voting Rights Act. There are not people that were being disenfranchised because they did not have ballots in different languages. In fact, because we print them in different languages, people are being disenfranchised. The bilingual ballot provision should be stricken from this bill.

There are only two reasons by which you could even ask for a ballot in a language other than English. And one of them is if you are a naturalized citizen to the United States and you did not speak, read, or write English. You could say, I came over from France and I only speak French, so I want a French ballot, and I am a naturalized citizen. You have to be a citizen to vote in America. And I would say to those people, whatever they might be from, naturalized in the United States of America, welcome. Welcome here. We are glad we have you as a fellow American. But I am sorry, we are not going to give you a ballot in French or any other language because you have to demonstrate proficiency in English in order to gain citizenship in the United States. And if you have somehow duped the system, I do not want to reward you by giving you a ballot and making us jump through hoops and come up with an interpretation that may or not be an accurate one. That is one example.

So a naturalized citizen already had to demonstrate proficiency in English. Therefore, there is no reason for them to ask for a ballot in a language other than English.

So the only other scenario would be if there is a birthright citizenship that Mr. AKIN raised a little bit ago. Someone is born in the United States. That makes them automatically an American citizen, at least by practice today. Not by Constitution, but by practice. And if that individual, by the time they are 18 years old, has not learned enough English to read a ballot that essentially has titles and names on it, for the Fifth Congressional District, STEVE KING, and my name is going to be the same whether it is in Spanish or French or English; so it is simply the title that you have to learn, if that situation where someone who is born in this country can get to be the age of 18 or more and not understand enough English to read a ballot, which I think I could learn to do, in at least anything but the Asian ballots, in a matter of a few hours, then I do not believe they understand the culture well enough in America to give them the authority to begin to contribute to establishing who will be the next leader of the free world, Mr. Speaker.

It would have only taken 527 different votes, half of them changing their minds in Florida, to give us Al Gore for President instead of George W. Bush. And how many of those instances does it take for people who are requiring a ballot in different languages, who have not learned the culture of the United States, and who were born here? So under no circumstances would I grant a pass, but I would encourage people to learn English, and that is the way we can do that. We do not need to be enablers. We do not need to be handing people ballots in languages when they did not request them, and we do that under today's bilingual ballot system.

We need to tie that all together, Mr. Speaker, and we need to have this single most unifying characteristic known to all humanity: a common language, an official language. The American people want it. The American people demand it. The Senate has reacted. The President has spoken favorably about learning English, although he has not endorsed the bill, to my knowledge. We need to bring it here to the floor of the United States Congress.

That would help bond us together as a people. And, Mr. Speaker, we are sorely in need of being bonded together as a people. We are so sorely in need that I am watching Republicans that are running scared, afraid that somehow they are going to alienate an ever-growing segment of the population of the United States. I think there is a lot more that qualifies people and a lot more to celebrate in people than necessarily their national origin.

I will argue this, Mr. Speaker, that we are all created in God's image. He draws no distinction between his creation. He blesses us all equally. We are born in different places in the world, citizens of different countries, but created in His image regardless of our ethnicity, our national origin, our skin color, whatever the case may be.

□ 1545

For us to draw distinctions between perceived differences in people based upon those things is an insult to God, because he draws no distinctions between his creation. He has created us

all equally. We are all created in his image. He doesn't draw distinctions, and neither do I, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I applaud everyone who can pull them up by their bootstraps. The spirit of humanity, the competitive nature, the need to take care of your family and the desire to do so.

But I also applaud patriotism. I applaud the things that made this Nation great. We very seldom talk about the things that have made this Nation great, but I submit in a short order this Nation derives its strength from a number of things, and that is the United States of America, of which Iowa is a vital constituent part, is the unchallenged greatest Nation in the world, and we derive our strength from Judeo-Christian values, free enterprise capitalism and western civilization.

When you anchor those things together, when our ancestors and the predecessors to us in this country came over across mostly the Atlantic Ocean and settled on the East Coast, where we stand today, they gave their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor to building a nation that believed in manifest destiny, and that was a nation that had low, and in many cases no taxes; in many cases low, and in many cases no regulation.

One could invest their capital and sweat equity in work and watch it grow. You had to work hard at it and be smart, and surely there were fetters along the way, there always are. That is part of the system. Some will succeed and some will fail. If we were guaranteed success in everything we do, then it wouldn't be any fun and we really wouldn't try. We would sit back and let it come to us.

But because there is failure, there is also something to measure on the other side for success. And that success allowed for the manifest destiny, for the settlement of this North American continent, for the Transcontinental Railroad to be built and the golden spike driven, tied the two continents together, and this continent was settled in the blink of an historical eye because of free enterprise capitalism, low and almost no taxation, low and almost no regulation.

Free enterprise capitalism and manifest destiny, on the back of western civilization, which gave us the understanding of science and technology, it was a foundation for this dynamic economy that came and this robust American experience that was the characterization of this great American experiment, which still is a robust Nation, still the unchallenged greatest Nation in the world, with the unchallenged dynamic economy that is rooted in free enterprise capitalism, that has grown from western civilization and the science and technology that goes clear back to ancient Greece. We learned from that, we built upon that, the Age of Reason to the Age of Enlightenment, to the North American continent to the United States of America.

But what has been so good about us is that we would have become, I believe, the most imperialistic, power hungry conquering Nation in the world if we hadn't been limiting our appetites for imperialism and conquest because of our religious values and our religious beliefs, our sense of humility, our sense of duty, a sense of being blessed by God with this Nation, and the governing aspects of holding back and giving to the rest of the world rather than taking from the rest of the world. That is what is different about the United States of America, and that short background that I have given is the biggest reason why people want to come here.

We sometimes have people leave the United States to go live somewhere else in the world, but they are few and small in numbers compared to the people that will do about anything to come to the United States to live here. In fact, we have seen plenty of that.

We have the most generous legal immigration policy in the world, both in terms of sheer numbers and as a percentage of our population. We have been extraordinarily liberal with our immigration policies, and yet every Nation must establish their immigration policies.

There has been a backlash to that in Europe. You will see in countries like Denmark, where they have started to shut down their immigration. The Netherlands, they have shut down to some degree, they started again to shut down their immigration. We saw what happened in France with thousands of cars that were burned. That is the results of essentially having more of an open borders policy, and you will see them tightening that down.

We did that in this country too in 1924 when we saw that the massive legal immigration that was coming into the United States that started in the last quarter of the 19th century and ended in the first quarter of the 20th century, the wisdom of the Members of this Congress in this very Chamber, Mr. Speaker, took the position that we needed to allow a rest time, a time out, so-to-speak, a break, so that there could be assimilation take place and that newly arrived immigrants could be assimilated into the American civilization, to the American economy, to the American culture and the American way of life.

Had we not done that, we wouldn't have this distinct character and quality that we have. We wouldn't have had this robust Nation, this sense of togetherness and patriotism that allowed us to fight and win World War II and essentially emerge from that conflict as the world's only surviving industry. The world's only surviving superpower was the United States of America, up on the world stage because we got assimilation right, we got free enterprise capitalism right, we got our values right, our faith in God and the qualities of that foundation that grew from old English common law and their faith that came with that, tied into our Declaration and Constitution and fused into the culture of America, and we have that dynamic, the Protestant work ethic some say.

But we emerged from World War II this dynamic Nation. And we held down the immigration throughout World War II and throughout the fifties, all the way up until 1965, and we did that because we wanted to allow for assimilation. We had a high birth rate. I am a product of the baby-boomer generation, as most of us in this Congress are, Mr. Speaker.

Then as the laws were changed in 1965, they put in place a thing that allows for the thing we now call chain migration. The chain migration, once you come into the United States, presumably legally, with the exception of the '86 amnesty and the six subsequent amnesties to that which we passed, you come into this country during chain migration, then if you become a citizen, even as a green card holder, you can bring in your spouse and your dependent children. When you become a citizen, then you can bring in your parents, your spouse, your dependent children and I believe your siblings.

But this allows for an uncontrolled immigration that is no longer controlled by statute, no longer controlled by Congress, it is controlled by the people who want to come to the United States, not by the people in the United States and not by the people in this Congress. At least we haven't intervened.

Yet we find ourselves today watching 11,000 people every single day pour across our southern border. I have gone down less than 2 weeks ago and sat in the dark on the border and listened as I heard the cars come up, and this is the Arizona-Mexico border, and sat and listened as I heard the cars come up across the desert with their lights out, about an a three-quarter, and I could hear the cars. I could hear one of them dragging a muffler, driving around the brush. They came to the same location each time, a larger mesquite tree, stop. You could hear the doors open, you could hear people get out, you could hear a little chatter. The doors would close, they would talk a little bit more and then hush. And then they would infiltrate through the trees and across the fence and into the United States.

I sat there and listened to load after load after load after load in one spot that I had, I will call him a guide pick, to take me down there to get a feel for what it is like.

Now, I don't know that they were bringing illegal drugs across the border, but I am very confident they were coming down there for the purposes of crossing the border. And all they had to do was take a five strand barbed wire fence and just cross through the spots that had already been stretched in the same places where the tracks already were and walk into the United States.

So some places we actually have a human barrier, a steel wall that is

maybe 20 feet high and actually in some cases, mostly, it is not that high. We installed it in a way that there are horizontal ribs, so they are like little steps to climb up. But those are short little sections.

Then we have some longer sections where we have vehicle barriers, and the vehicle barriers were a negotiation between the environmentalists, who wanted to make sure that you could get, well, let me see, I know for sure one of the species would be a desert pronghorn, so it could get down and walk underneath the barrier that is there. They did not want to upset the ecology.

Never mind all the damage that is being done to our natural resources. If the Members of this Congress, Mr. Speaker, could see the litter that is scattered over our national parks and the parts of our parks that are off limits to American citizens because they have been taken over by drug smugglers and illegals.

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument is one of those places where they simply said we can't do this anymore, we are going to mark this off so that we will keep the Americans out of here. It is too dangerous, essentially owned by smugglers and coyotes, and I don't mean the fury kind, I people mean the people smugglers that are there.

I have been to those places when I had some security, and it is a tragedy that we can set aside American property, set it aside for illegals who have invaded that part of our world and not let American citizens go there because it is occupied.

In fact the regions down there, many of them, are occupied. The peaks that are good vantage points along the drug smuggling routes are occupied. There are lookouts there. I could take you to any number of them, several dozen lookout locations where there are two men on top of a mountain, 24/7, with AK–47s, with infrared technology, with fine optical equipment, with solar panels to keep the batteries recharged, and they are being resupplied on a regular basis.

They sit up there with their radios that have encrypted messages in them so we can't hear them talk, and they are listening with their scanners to everything that our Border Patrol says. They know where our people are all the time. We don't apparently know that they are there, or for some reason we don't go pick them up off of these peaks.

I would not let the sun rise on a single pair of them if I were in command of this operation. I would have them off of there every single time. If I had to mount a raid every morning, we would go up there and lift them off or we would do it in the night with our infrared technology.

But we cannot allow the Mexican drug dealers to occupy the military positions in the United States, as much as 25 miles into the United States of America, for the purposes of smuggling, according to our Federal Government statistics, $60 billion worth of illegal drugs into the United States every year.

Ninety percent of the illegal drugs in America come across the southern border. Ninety percent, Mr. Speaker. That is $60 billion. There is $20 billion worth of wages, most of those wages earned by people that are in the United States illegally, that get sent back to Mexico. There is another $10 billion that goes to other Central American countries.

But the economic force on that border is $60 billion worth of drugs being sold, pushed into the United States. Now, the demand here is another subject entirely and it is something I am more than happy to address with my colleagues.

But I will address specifically the narrow part of this, which is drugs coming into the United States, $60 billion going to the other side of the border, $20 billion in wages matching that, $80 billion for Mexico alone, add another $10 billion to the Central American countries, there is $90 billion worth of pressure on our southern border, $90 billion.

And the cost in American lives is staggering. The loss of American lives to the people who came across the border illegally is in multiples of the deaths of September 11. That easily documentable. Twenty-eight percent of the inmates in our prisons in America, city, county, State and Federal, are criminal aliens; 28 percent. And they don't comprise anywhere near that percentage of the population. Perhaps 5 percent of the population are alien in one form or another.

But 28 percent of our prisons are occupied by criminal aliens. They aren't in the jail because they broke an immigration law. That hardly exists at all. They are there because they have committed murder, rape, assault, dealing in drugs, theft, grand larceny. That is costing us $6 billion a year in order to incarcerate the criminal aliens in America; $6 billion with a B, and that is a low number, Mr. Speaker.

We are spending another $6 billion to guard our southern border, the 2,000 miles down there; $6 billion. That comes out to be $3 million a mile.

So I had this thought. Me being a capitalist, and I have spoken favorably of capitalism here, what would it be like if you would give me $3 million and say pick your mile, STEVE KING, and go down and guard that. And you have got $3 million to work with for that mile.

I believe that I could set that mile up real easily so that there wouldn't be one soul get across my mile. I would bond it and I would guarantee it and I would make a ton of money doing it, and I would end up the first year a millionaire. Easy enough. $3 million a mile.

Why don't we open up a contract and allow entrepreneurs in America to bid these contracts and say pick out your section of the border that you want to defend and we want to take the best deal we can.

We are spending $3 million a mile. If you can come in here and protect a border for $1 million a mile, that saves $2 million a mile. That is a lot of capital to have left over.

If the Minutemen want to come in and bid that thing and sit in lawn chairs next to each other for a mile, let them bid that mile that way. Then we could count the footsteps, the tracks in the dust of those that get by. We will make them bonded, and for every one that gets by, we will dock their paycheck for that, because they did not do their job on that, and we will pay a unit price. Free enterprise capitalism. And whatever we dock out of the contract for those that get past that mile, we will give that money to the Border Patrol to chase them down.

□ 1600

We can set this structure up easily. And I can tell you what I would do. I would want to bid a lot of these miles. I would want at least 1,000 of them if they would let me do it. Maybe I could only get a mile. Maybe I could only get a demo, Mr. Speaker. But I happen to have, by happenstance, a demo next to me on what I think we can do with this border.

Mr. Speaker, this represents the desert. Pick your place. New Mexico. That is not the Rio Grande, so I do not presume it is Texas. I have to be a little gentle in this chamber when I talk about Texas. I do love Texas, and maybe one day maybe they will adopt me, not as a favored son, but just as a fellow colleague.

However, New Mexico, Arizona, parts of California, it is a desert. And it has got sand there. And now it has got a few rocks. But this would represent just the old flat desert. Now imagine a little brush growing back and forth here. So we go in there and we decide we are going to build a wall.

I do not want people going across my section, because I do not want my contract docked. I want all the money that I have contracted to earn.

So I go in here and I set a trencher in there on that end and I trench this on out. I cut myself a groove, at least 4 feet deep, a toe wall down through the middle. That is the hole we would have. I know there are rocks there. And we can kick some of those out, and some of them we are going to have to stop and go down and maybe drill and put some foundation rods in.

But we have this trench across the desert. Now, we have got a company up there that is a neighbor to me. And they can go in, and I talked to them the other day. I said, could you make me a machine that would slip-form a footing with a 4-foot deep trench and with the capabilities of going 6 foot deep, but also have it so I can have a 4-foot wide trench, 4-foot deep, 6 inches wide down below, but 4 foot wide up on top for 8 inches so that we can have a foundation to put in a 12-foot high concrete precast wall.

Now, here is what we have. This is the footing for the wall that I have designed, Mr. Speaker. And it is pretty simple. This is a 4-foot deep trench, 6 inches wide. Fits right in this trench. That is the trench. You go down, trench that out and pour that full of concrete with a slip-form. And that slip-form also lays the width of this footing, this side here is going to be another 2 feet on this side, and on that side, with a notch in the middle so we can put our precast concrete in there.

Now, as we run along with this trencher in this trench, and go right with the trencher integral with it, we come with a slip-form machine, and we pour this concrete footing. And it fits in the ground just like this, Mr. Speaker.

Now we have got a foundation for our wall. And that foundation will hold up to precast concrete. And it is at least 4-foot deep. And we can make it 6 foot or deeper if we choose to do that. That is actually a pretty cheap piece. That is a matter of the cost of the digging and the machine and laying the concrete. And you put some steel in here so it ties together. We let that cure for a couple a days, then we come along with these precast concrete panels.

They look like this. They are 12 feet high, they are 10 feet wide. And we simply set these precast concrete panels in this foundation with a crane or an excavator. And they go in just like this. And my little old construction company could do this. Now I am really out of the business, it is my son's construction company. I do not have any doubt they can throw these precast concrete panels together and drop them into this footing, they can pour the footing too, along with a lot of other skills that they have developed over the years.

But this is how you build this wall. Pick them up with a crane or the excavator, swing them in place, drop them down like this, sits right in there, put a little expansion in here so it does not buckle on you in that hot Texas sun, and keep throwing this wall together.

Now, we can build a mile of this a day, Mr. Speaker, with the operation that I have spent my life working with. And that is just a little old company. Think what you could do if you were somebody that was a little bigger, maybe like Haliburton or Bechtel or something like that.

But here we have now, in this little bit of time while I stood here, built this nice wall. It is 12 feet high, these are 10-foot wide panels. It is 6 inches thick. It has got steel in it. It has got reinforcement in it. We have got little eyes tied on top here. And that is not really a coincidence, Mr. Speaker, and the reason that it is not is because, you know, there are some folks that actually could find a way to get over the top of this wall.

And our military has determined that a safe and efficient way to keep people from going across those kind of places is if you just go in here and you put a little concertina wire right there. Okay. Concertina wire right on top. And you string that along. Now this is not going to be too fancy, because I am not going to take your time up with a lot of artwork here. But you are going to get the idea when I get done, that this is not all that complicated. Then I am going to tell you what it costs.

All right. I am going to leave that just lay. You get the idea. We have a little wire here on top. We can do that three rolls on top, if you like, it does not have to be one. And it will be easily affixed so that it stays.

We can also put infrared sensors up here, vibration sensors, and motion sensors, inside or outside of the wall. We can monitor this thing. We can put lights on the inside of it. One thing they cannot do is shoot through a concrete wall so good. And so the optical equipment that we put on the inside would be protected from the kind of rifle shots that generally come from the Mexican side of the border shooting out the cameras we have down there now.

Now, build this wall, Mr. Speaker. And the reason is because there is no amount of Border Patrol people that you can put down there, and no amount of National Guard people you can put down there that are going to keep the hoards of people from infiltrating across 2,000 miles of border.

If you think you are going to do that, you might as well go to the barn with a fly swatter and swat flies and think you are going to finish you job. You are not. You have got to do something that will actually stop the flow of human traffic.

And I will say this wall itself will be 90 percent effective. And then you have got to support it. You have got to support it with border patrol people and you have got to drag the wall and track people, and cut that sign and chase them down and catch them.

And over time they will decide it is not worth trying. And they will do something else with their time, Mr. Speaker. So now I have built a wall here pretty fast for you. And you are wondering, this probably costs a lot of money. Well, the reason that I brought this to the attention of the Congress is because it does not cost very much money.

We are spending $6 billion over the 2,000 miles of our southern border, $3 million a mile. The President has asked for another $1.9 billion to be able to start hiring more border patrol and fund 6,000 National Guard troops additionally.

That takes him up actually over $8 billion for our southern border, over $4 million a mile. This wall to these dimensions that I have drawn here can be put up, and I would bid it and I would bond it today, for $500,000 a mile. 500,000, $1 out of the $6 we are spending today, or $1 out of the $8 they will spend tomorrow under the President's proposal.

Mr. Speaker, it will do far more than 6,000 National Guard troops. Far, far more. It will be effective. It will be efficient. And it will send the right message.

Now, I am okay with putting a little website on the other side here in Spanish that tells how to come to the United States legally. I think we ought to do that on every single panel. Here is where you go to see the consulate to sign up for citizenship. I would cast it right in the concrete, just like it says, here is the boundary of the United States on those concrete pylons down there on the border from horizon to horizon.

I would put it right in there. Here is where you go. Hit this website. And then we have established now something that is due, the symbolism of a wall that says, you cannot come here. We are a sovereign Nation. We will establish our own immigration laws.

We are not going to allow people from other countries who have shown disrespect for our laws to establish immigration laws in the United States of America. That is our job here in this Congress, Mr. Speaker.

It seems as though as bright as they have been in the Senate in a few times in the last few days, it is not necessarily the way that they see that over there. And I am concerned. But we can build this cheaply, $500,000 a mile, instead of wasting all of that money that we are spending swatting flies in the barn, as I said, Mr. Speaker.

So this sends a message. It sends a message to Mexico. And it says, clean up your act. Clean up the corruption in your country. Give your people an opportunity. Look around the world and see where it is successful. Emulate those people that are successful. Adopt the policies that you covet. If you want to come to the United States and you want to live with the prosperity that we have here, you also have to learn the reasons for the prosperity of the United States, it is not just because we are a few hundred miles north.

It is not because we are any different as human beings than anyone else. We are created in God's image, as I said. The difference is, we have far less corruption in the United States. We do not have in existence a patronage system like you have in Mexico.

You can learn from us. You can adopt us. But the people of Mexico have got to rise up and change their country. And the very people that will be the change and the salvation in Mexico, are the ones that are coming here.

So one of the good things that can happen is, this free education that is being provided to the children that are in this country illegally gives them the background and the skills to one day go back to their home country and help grow that economy. And when that day comes, when that day comes, then we can say, we can say then to the leadership in Mexico and points on south, Mr. Fox, Vincente Fox, General Fox, because I think he commands a lot of troops that he is sending up this way, you need to clean up your act, you

need to get prosperity in your country. And when you do so, Mr. Fox, then and only then can we tear down this wall.

Clean up your country, Mr. Fox, so we can then tear down this wall and we can live together in peace and harmony. And I would happily go down there and pull these panels off and stack them in piles and wait for the next corrupt government to show up in Mexico, Mr. Speaker, and put the wall back up when that time came.

We are fighting a corrupt government in Mexico that is sending us $60 billion worth of illegal drugs, wiring at least $20 billion down south of real earned wages, which I do not really begrudge that so much, and another $10 billion to other parts.

But this policy that is over in the United States Senate today, this Hagel-Martinez policy, you can ask them how many people do they authorize into the United States? Is it 11 million? Is it 12 million? What is your number?

And they might concede 11 or 12 million. But I guarantee you they will not give you the real numbers. Robert Rector's study at the Heritage Foundation rolled out a number based upon language that was very conservatively founded. And that number was 103 to 193 million people legalized into the United States, not at the choice of Americans, but at the choice of the people from the other countries that want to come here.

And then they passed the Bingaman amendment, a Bingaman-Feingold amendment that capped the guest workers, took them from 325 and open-ended growth each year down to a 200,000 per year cap.

Then that number, when you only calculate that each of them would bring in 1.2 members of their family, then that number is only, only, only, Mr. Speaker, 66.1 million. Not 11 million, 12, million, 66.1 million people.

Ironically, when we go back to the beginning of the records of legal immigration in the United States of America, we only have records back to 1820. And we take those up to the year 2000. What is the number of people who have come into the United States legally in all of history?

66.1 million people. The very number that is authorized by Hagel-Martinez, if you low-ball it and each of them only brings in 1.2 people as their chain migration number for spouse, families, children. If you take it up to four, which is the number that is used by the United States Citizenship Immigration Services, four per every authorized guest worker, I will say illegal given amnesty, then that 66 million goes to 88 million.

And Lord knows when it stops. So I have to submit this question. And that is to the people that are advocating for open borders, is there such a thing as too much immigration? And, you know, you cannot get them to say yes to that question. They will not say yes, because they know the next question is, then how much is too much?

They will not put a number on that, because they do not want to discuss the numbers that they are legalizing and authorizing now. I will submit that there is such a thing as too much immigration. And 11 or 12 million is too much. We have our doors open to more than 1 million a year, the most generous of any place in the world. We have 66 also, well, this is actually a number that is not quite correlative, 60.1 million nonworking Americans between the ages of 16 and 65.

Now what country in their right mind, when they looked around and said we need the labor, and in fact if we do need the labor, would they go to a foreign country and bring in people that were illiterate and unskilled to do the work for people that have 60.1 million people that were sitting around not working?

And we would pay a good chunk of them not to work as American citizens and bring in other people to do our work for us. How rational is that? And they argue that there is work that Americans will not do? What is the most difficult, hot, dirty and dangerous job in all the world? I would say it is rooting terrorists out of Fallujah.

And what do we pay a young marine in 130-degree heat with a flack jacket on, his life on the line for you and me? $8.09 an hour if he gets in a 40-hour week. But it is more like a 70-hour week, so he is down to about $2.75.

There is no job Americans will not do, Mr. Speaker. And Americans will do the hot, dirty and dangerous work. We can seal this border. We can end birthright citizenship. And we can shut off the jobs magnet. We need to do all of that. Then and only then can we have a legitimate debate on whether or not we ought to have guest workers.

□ 1615

EFFECTS OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 60 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the United States is under attack. And like December 7, 1941, we are asleep on a Sunday morning. The reason, Mr. Speaker, is because this Nation is under attack by another nation. We are being invaded, we are being colonized, and there are insurgents from the nation of Mexico and their allies further south.

Mr. Speaker, in 1836, the State of Texas from which I hail from was invaded by Santa Ana and his Mexican Army, and they found those Texans who were seeking independence from Mexico in a beat-up old Spanish mission that was 100 years old at the time called the Alamo. They were led by a 27-year-old lawyer from South Carolina by the name of William Barret Travis. William Barret Travis knew the odds were against him, he knew that freedom was important, and he drew a line in the sand and he said, ''All of those who wish to die for liberty, cross this line.'' And they all did, save one individual who unfortunately hailed from the nation of France.

Texas lost the battle of the Alamo, and Mexico continued its conquering of Texas. General Sam Houston, who hailed from Tennessee, Governor of Tennessee, came to Texas, led the Texas Army at the Battle of San Jacinto. Texas was liberated from the nation of Mexico and gained independence on April 21, 1836.

I bring that history to the floor of the House because history is important for us to understand what is now taking place in the year 2006 in our country. Texas remained an independent nation for 10 years, and then in 1845 became a State in the United States. This body, along with the body down the hallway, admitted Texas to the Union by only one vote. Some wish even now the vote had gone the other way. But be that as it may, Texas became a part of the United States. And in history, the Southwest was first and foremost claimed by the nation of Spain, and I have on this map over here this beige color on the southwestern portion. And Spain claimed what was Texas west and went as far as California, and of course claimed Mexico. And Spain claimed that area and was Spanish for 100 years or more.

In 1810, Mexico decided to gain independence from the nation of Spain. They wanted their own country, and they fought from 1810 to 1821 to gain their independence. Spain lost Mexico because they were at war with Napoleon over in Europe, and Napoleon was hammering Spain at the same time the Mexicans were hammering Spain here in the Americas.

So Mexico became an independent nation, and Mexico claimed much of this area that was formally Spain's. Of course, in this same area lived those people that we call American Indians, mainly the Apaches and the Comanches. Now, they didn't really have towns; they just roamed that entire area that is in beige. So you have the American Indians and you have Mexico claiming this territory. And, of course, Texas was a part of Mexico at the time because it was settled under Spanish rule.

Texas decided to gain independence from Mexico, because Mexico went from a democracy to a dictatorship. Sounds familiar, does it not? That dictator was by the name of Santa Ana. And when Santa Ana became the dictator of Mexico, he abolished what we enjoy as human rights, civil liberties. And that is why Texas gained independence and fought for independence, to have those basic rights that now all Americans have.

Anyway, after Texas spent 10 glorious years being the Republic of Texas and joined the Union, Mexico was upset with that conduct, and in 1846, invaded the United States of America in three

places. One was in Matamoras, that is down here in the lower Rio Grande Valley as we call it, and came across the river. Also at that time they came in Palo Alto, Texas, in a place called Palma that no longer exists.

Of course, the United States, seeing that we were invaded and Mexico was trying to reconquer the Southwest, actually declared war on Mexico. Thus, the Mexican-American war.

And just so we understand, Mr. Speaker, what the intentions of Mexico were in 1846, the President of Mexico, President Paradas, spoke of occupying not only Texas, but taking Louisiana, New Orleans, and even going as far as Mobile, Alabama. Well, his desire to conquer the Southwest and part of the South never materialized, because American troops along with Texas Rangers went into Mexico and defeated the Mexican Army at Vera Cruz, occupied Mexico City; civil war broke out in Mexico, the government was replaced.

California is declared an independent republic for a period of time, and the American forces conquered this entire area of the Southwest, California, New Mexico, and Texas, once again. And the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed, and Mexico ceded California and New Mexico to the United States. It also recognized the boundary line of Texas and Mexico as the Rio Grande River. That was already done in the previous treaty that Mexico signed when Texas became an independent nation.

So the second time Mexico reaffirmed the border of the Southwest being the Rio Grande River. Mexico got 15 million for this acquisition along with forgiveness of all of the debts that were owed to American citizens in Mexico. And then in 1853, the United States bought more land from Mexico called the Gadsden Purchase, and in that document reaffirmed for the third time that the border between the United States and Mexico was the Rio Grande River.

Now, the reason I mention all of that, Mr. Speaker, is because now today, the year 2006, there are some who still want Mexico to occupy this entire land. And it is obvious from the actions from Generalissimo Fox in Mexico that this is his intention. In fact, let me give you some examples.

The nation of Mexico has furnished school books to the school districts in Los Angeles. Of course, they are in Spanish. And in those books they teach that this land, Los Angeles, still belongs to Mexico. We even have people who live in the United States of Hispanic descent that teach the same thing, that California really belongs to Mexico and they wish to reconquer it.

You know, Vicente Fox, Generalissimo Fox, is really a fox in fox clothing. Unlike his ancestor, Santa Ana who invaded the United States, he won't bring troops into this country. He stays behind the border and sends his people here and expects them to colonize and invade the United States. I will give you an example of that, Mr. Speaker.

We have here on this chart part of a document, a coloring book that is published by the Mexican Government, Vicente Fox's government, and this is handed out to Mexican nationals before they come into the United States telling them how to get into the United States illegally. And this is a portion of the book that I have put for you on this chart, Mr. Speaker; and it is a guide for the Mexican migrante. Here it shows illegally crossing the border. This other panel shows what happens when you come in contact with those mean old border security agents in the United States, what to do about a human smuggler or a coyote and how to pay those individuals, and then this last panel shows another place of where to cross or not to cross.

This whole booklet is given to Mexican nationals so they know where to cross so they can avoid places where the border security is, avoid places where maybe the wall will be built like Mr. KING is proposing to do.

But in any event, it is an insurgency in the United States that seems to me to be sponsored by Generalissimo Fox. You know, it appears to me that Mexico is at war with the United States and we don't even know it. We have 5,000 people a day illegally crossing into the State of Texas. As Mr. KING pointed out earlier, we have 11,000 coming across the entire southwestern portion of the United States every day, and they are not all coming here to work. There are three types of people.

We know that the drug cartels are bringing drugs in this country like never before. We also know that those people that want to do us harm, we still call those people terrorists, they are coming across the southern border of the United States. And there are other people coming here illegally. And what are we doing about it? Well, we have a place called Maywood, California where the public officials have decided that this town in the United States is going to be a sanctuary for illegals. In other words, if you are an illegal from another country, you can go to Maywood, California, and they will make sure that the local police don't arrest you for being in the country illegally. They even want to name a new elementary school there in Maywood, California, U.S.A. by the name of President Benito Juarez. Of course, he happened to be President of Mexico at one time. Colonization of the United States, Mr. Speaker, is taking place.

And to carry it further, last week when it was reported that the National Guard may go down on our borders, the Mexico City newspaper was outraged about this and quoted a lot of locals about what they thought about it. One Mexican national said in the Mexico City newspaper, ''No wall, no fence will keep us out. For Mexico, there are no obstacles.'' It sounds to me like folks are coming over here uninvited and appears to be an invasion.

You know, certain groups in the United States want Mexico to retake California and the Southwest, and they advocate such. Two of those groups, Aztlan and MEChA, both are groups that you can see are in favor of colonization of this country and turning it back over to Mexico.

To give you an example of that, we have one elected official in Baja, California, a reported Gloria Vargas, that says, ''Many Mexicans are nourishing the ground in the United States. This was once our land. Those same lands we are reconquering for our country, Mexico.''

It seems a bit odd we have American elected officials preaching and advocating that this country, part of it, ought to go back to Mexico.

So apparently there is a movement to conquer the United States. And I wonder, Mr. Speaker, are we going to cross the line and fight for our Nation, or are we going to remain asleep on a Sunday morning while the invasion takes place? The line obviously is drawn in the sand.

I want to mention those three types of groups that are coming into this country. Now, I hail from Texas, southeast Texas. Where I come from is right on the Gulf of Mexico and it borders Louisiana, and so I have been very familiar with the outbreak of folks coming in the United States illegally from all nations. I have spent some time down on the Texas border with our local sheriffs all the way from Roma, Texas, up to Langtry, Texas. Probably no one in this House has ever heard of either one of those places. There was a favorite judge of mine by the name of Judge Roy Bean who used to hold court in Langtry, Texas.

But be that as it may, I was down on the border with some of our Texas sheriffs, and at one time I was there with Rick Flores from Webb County and Ziggi Gonzales from Zapata County, and I wanted to see how the drug dealers were bringing dope into the United States. Now, Webb County is where Laredo, Texas is; across the river is Nuevo Laredo. And so the sheriff said, Okay, I will take you to portions of the Texas-Mexico border, but I am not taking you down to certain portions of the border unless you go with my SWAT team and you are wearing a bullet-proof vest. And I said, Why do I got to wear a bullet-proof vest for? And he says, You go down to the river in certain parts, those drug dealers are going to shoot at you, not from the American side, but from the Mexican side.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have got a problem with that. I have got a problem with being on sovereign U.S. soil standing on the border getting shot at from the other side. Now, I wonder if that offends anybody besides myself.

Anyway, we went down to the border. We saw what takes place on the Texas-Mexico border, because the drug cartels are fighting every inch to bring that dope into the United States. It is a

very well-organized movement. Nuevo Laredo, as I mentioned to you, used to be a town which shared common interests with Texas and Mexico, frequent border crossings, legal border crossings, and tourists would go to Nuevo Laredo. Nuevo Laredo now is a war zone. It is run by the corrupt officials and the drug cartels. Over the past 2 years, the murder rate in Nuevo Laredo is the highest in the world because the drug dealers are killing off the police and they are killing off the citizens and they are fighting with each other. There have been 44 kidnappings in Nuevo Laredo and Laredo of American citizens; and yet of those 44 kidnappings, not one, Mr. Speaker, not one has been solved.

□ 1630

All of those murders in Nuevo Laredo of the police and of the citizens and of the good people in Mexico, not one have been solved. That is what is going on because of the drug cartels using Nuevo Laredo as the staging area to bring that dope into the United States and sell it among Americans.

It is an epidemic, it is organized, and these folks not only have the narcotics, they have the money and they have the fire power.

I was talking to Sheriff Flores of Webb County. Webb County is about the size of Rhode Island, and he has about 27–30 deputies. At any given time, he has seven deputies on patrol in a county the size of Rhode Island. He was telling me, you know, the drug dealers, they have got more money than we do. And let me give you an example: he said, I make $44,000 a year. My deputies, they make about $27,000 a year. A drug dealer, he makes $30,000 a week bringing drugs into the United States. So there is more money in lawlessness than there is in following the law.

Anyway, he said they had better equipment and they have better fire power and better communications. He said that, you know, when we are out on patrol and we use our cell phones, those drug dealers in Mexico track us with GPS; they know exactly where we are, and they have better vehicles than we do as well.

So that is the armed invasion that we are fighting on the border, and not just in Texas, but it occurs in Arizona and New Mexico and California as well. So it is important that we take care of business and protect the dignity of the United States, to keep the drug dealers from bringing those drugs into the United States for money.

You see, it is all about money, and we will get to more about that in a minute, but you follow the money trail and you will see why people do what they do when they invade the United States.

On the second trip down to the border, I was with other Texas sheriffs, and we saw the same thing where the drug dealers sneak into the United States, and they have paths into our country and they know what we know. Let me explain to you that.

The Border Patrol of the United States patrols the first 25 miles from the border inland. So the drug dealers make sure that they get that dope 30 miles inland because once it is 30 miles into the United States, they can take it anywhere else they want to in the United States. This is all they have to do is avoid the Border Patrol for the first 25 miles because that is all the Border Patrol is allowed to patrol by law. That is why we need not only the Border Patrol but the sheriffs, the Texas sheriffs, the Arizona sheriffs and the California and New Mexico sheriffs, all involved in border security.

So that is the first group that we have to protect ourselves against. That is the duty of government, Mr. Speaker, is to protect the public, protect the people. In this House, we pontificate every day about what government ought to be involved in. Let me tell you something, the first duty of government is national security, protect the people of these United States. Oh, programs and building bridges and that kind of stuff may be important, but it is not as important as the number one duty of government which is to protect us, and our government has the duty to protect us from those criminals who are vicious that are bringing dope into this country.

The second people that we need to be concerned about are terrorists; and, Mr. Speaker, I serve on the International Relations Committee and the Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation, and we understand that terrorists want to do us harm. We forget our history too quickly. September 11 was not that long ago, but the next terrorist attack that occurs against us is probably not going to be because somebody gets on some airplane and flies into Reagan National over here and gets off the airplane and says I wonder what damage I can do to Washington D.C. It is not going to happen that way, even though we are doing the best we can in the airline industry.

It is going to happen that somebody crosses the border into the United States because this country still has porous, open borders. It is easier to cross the border, and we know that has already occurred, Mr. Speaker. How many of those people that are here are going to do us harm? We do not know, but we do know that there are people who wish to do us harm that are forming cells in Mexico, assimilating into the Mexican population, learning Spanish and then sneaking into the United States as migrant workers and setting up cells in this country and some day hoping to do us harm.

We have an obligation to fight the war on terror at our borders. We are protecting the borders of other nations. Why are we not protecting our own border against terrorists? That is the second group of people that we have to demand that we keep out of this country, and those are the terrorists.

Then the third group of the people are those human traffickers. We call those people coyotes because that is what they are is a bunch of coyotes who bring people into the United States for money, and the human smugglers work with the drug dealers. That is what we have got to understand; and that little group of terrorists, we know they are kind of involved in all of that, too. You see, these three groups all work together because they know the routes into the United States to bring drugs, damage or weapons and bring human beings, and for those reasons, we have to protect the dignity of our country.

We know, of course, that the Mexican Government, Generalissimo Vicente Fox is not doing anything to stop this, contrary to what he says, contrary to the comments he makes, that apparently he is not doing anything to stop this nonsense.

We recently understand that in Hudspeth County, Texas, an armed group of military from Mexico, in other words, Mexican soldiers, were on American soil helping drug dealers. The Hudspeth County sheriff so relates this event; and we know that in the last several years, since 1996, there have been 200 recorded incidences of Federal military from Mexico on the American side of the border. Why are they here? Well, they are not over here looking for work, Mr. Speaker.

So now we use our military to go down to the border, the proposal to use the National Guard to enforce the border, enforce the rule of law, to help our border sheriffs, to help our Border Patrol. So what is Mexico's response? They are going to sue us. Well, we are going to take you to court in your own court and try to prevent those military, those American soldiers, from being on our side of the border, protecting us from them. How outrageous is that, going to sue to prevent that from occurring.

Not only that, you know, over in Maricopa County in Arizona, the sheriff there is trying to enforce the rule of law and arrest folks that are illegally in the United States. They threatened to sue him, too, because you do not have the authority to do that says the Mexican Government, and so they are going to take him to court, trying to prevent local law enforcement from enforcing American law.

So how have we allowed ourselves to get in a situation where we have a foreign nation taking us to court in our own courts, preventing us from protecting our borders? Just like in 1836, when William Barret Travis and those volunteers at the Alamo, volunteers from every State in the United States and 13 foreign countries, including Mexico, fighting for dignity were under siege of Santa Ana, it appears that the United States, at least on our southern border, is under siege by Generalissimo Santa Ana Vicente Fox.

The invasion, of course, benefits Mexico and its allies—$20 billion a year in

remittance go to Mexico since Mexican nationals working in the United States send that money south of the border. The number happens to be $20 billion. That is just a number. You know, here in Washington, $1 billion here, $1 billion there, does not mean anything; but to Mexico, that $20 billion of money going south of the border into the coffers of Mexico is the second largest amount of foreign income into Mexico, save only the crude oil that they sell on the world market.

We also now understand the population of the northern states of Mexico has declined 35 percent. Well, where are those people? They are all in the United States. When I was down on the Texas-Mexico border, the sheriffs were explaining to me, the border towns across the river, many of which you could see, are almost totally empty of the male population. The only people there are kids and women and older citizens. Well, where is the male population? They are all in the United States, sending money back to Mexico. Mexico, the border towns in Mexico have become ghost towns because those people have come to the United States.

President Fox is making his problem our problem. His failure to get rid of corruption in Mexico, his failure to have a stable economy, his failure to take advantage of the workers in Mexico and the natural resources in Mexico to make that nation a prosperous country, he is making his problems our problems.

Let me at this time, Mr. Speaker, recite to you an immigration policy: number one, if you migrate to this country, you must speak the language. Two, you have to be a professional or investor; no unskilled workers are allowed. Number three, there will be no special bilingual programs in the school, no special ballots or elections, and all government business will be conducted in just one language. Four, foreigners will not have the right to vote. Five, foreigners will never be able to hold public office. Six, foreigners will not be a burden to taxpayers; there will be no welfare, no health care, no government assistance. Seven, if foreigners come and want to buy land, this is highly restricted. Eight, foreigners may not protest; no demonstration, no foreign flag, no political organizing and no criticizing the President or the policies. Nine, if you come into the country illegally, you will be arrested by our Federal police, sent to jail and then deported.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the U.S. immigration policy, but this is the alleged policy of President Vicente Fox in Mexico. It appears to me that the immigration policy of Mexico is quite hypocritical because they have a policy that they do not want us to have in this country, and it is ironic that Mexico defends its southern border from illegals coming in from the South American countries and from Central American countries, has an immigration policy like this, and the United States is harassed, intimidated and criticized for trying to have a simple and fair immigration policy.

Let me continue to show you how absurd this problem has become.

There is this little document called the matricula consular card. Now, what that is, is a card that is issued to people illegally in the United States. That is an identification card, and that matricula consular card is not just used for identification, but it allows people—illegally in the United States—to go and open a bank account. Then the bank, working with the illegal that is in the United States, can ship that money that they are earning here back home to whatever country they come from. Some say there are 11 million people here illegally. Others argue that there are 15 million, maybe 20 million people illegally in the United States.

Let us talk about immigration. Let us talk a little bit about the guest worker program. Oh, how the United States has been criticized by certain countries because we do not let people come here. The United States is a Nation of immigrants, we all know that. It still has the most liberal immigration policy in the world. We let more people in legally in the United States every year than all of Europe does, and let me give you an example of how many people.

This chart shows since 2000 how many people we legally let in the United States each year: 2000, it was about 1 million; 2001, 1.1 million; 2002, 1.1 million; 2003, 1.2 million; 2004, 1.1 million. These are people legally allowed into the United States; and you notice, most of these people stay in the United States. They have a legal permit to be here. Under whatever system they come here legally allows them to stay 3 to 5 years. So we have several million people already in the United States legally. We also know that 40 percent of them that come here legally, when they are supposed to go home, they do not do it. That is another issue.

So this business about we do not have a guest worker program is nonsense. What has this done? Has allowing 1.1 million people legally in the country every year stopped illegal entry into this country? Absolutely not. In fact, all it has done is encourage more people to come here illegally because people are going to come here whether we let them in or not, and that is just the way it seems to be. So the guest worker program does not stop illegal entry into this country.

This body down the hallway from us who want to increase the number of people legally coming here under a guest worker program must understand that that will do nothing to stop the illegal entry into this United States.

We hear that they are taking jobs away from Americans. I think that is nonsense. That is just an excuse to let people who come here illegally and come here legally as an excuse to pay them subpar wages. It appears to me that the United States is sort of staring down the barrel of this big battle and embracing the enemy.

□ 1645

And if we were at the Alamo, it would be similar to asking Santa Anna to come on into the Alamo for whiskey before he takes us over, because we do not seem to understand this problem and the affects on our Nation. If affects our country.

Let us talk about education. Many States are looking for money to educate their youth. Education is one of the bedrocks of this Nation, educating the young to be all they can be. But most States, and I do not know any State that has more money than they need in the area of education, but part of their education problem is they have to educate people that are here illegally because that is the way it is. They have to educate those people. In some States, my State for example, up to 20 percent of the cost of the education system in the State is based upon the fact they are educating people illegally in the United States.

Why don't we talk about that? Why don't we deal with that issue? Is there any other country in the world that one of us in this room could illegally go into and demand an education in our own language and get it? I think not. But in the United States we do it, and we pay the consequences for the illegal entry into our country.

The second one is health care. Every American is concerned about health care and the cost of health care. There are so many Americans in the middle class that are opting out of insurance because they can't afford insurance and they are concerned about health care for themselves and their families and what is going to happen to them down the road. It is one of the biggest concerns all of us in this House hear about every day, the cost of health care. Well, about 23 percent of the cost of health care is being paid by us because people who are in the system aren't paying for it.

And I am not talking about the uninsured. I am talking about the people here illegally in the United States. Just a couple of weeks ago, a hospital down in my district just spent $250,000 on one patient, and he happened to be in the United States illegally. Because of an injury that he had, we paid for it because he certainly didn't have any means to take care of himself.

We know illegals go to the emergency rooms. The highest most expensive costs in our health care system are the trauma rooms, the emergency rooms, and they go there to get taken care of because we don't turn anybody down. That is our system in this country. Does that make any sense at all?

So what are the hospitals doing? They are closing their emergency rooms. Some hospitals are closing down because they can't afford to stay in business because they are treating people that don't pay their own way.

And Americans are not getting health care because we are having to pay for the health care of those people who are here illegally in the United States.

The third category, besides education and health care, is the criminal justice system. Before I came to this House, I spent all my time in the criminal justice system, first as a prosecutor, and then 22 years as a judge down in Texas trying felony cases. And about 20 percent of the people that come through our criminal justice system are illegally in the United States. So they are not only committing crimes, they are getting caught, then going through the justice system that taxpayers pay for, and then they go to our penitentiaries, if convicted, and we have to pay for that system too.

So we get hit twice by criminals from other countries all over the world. First, it is the crime, and second, we pay for the crime because we furnish them the system and then we pay for their incarceration as well.

The fourth category, of course, is social services, such as Social Security benefits. Our Social Security System was never designed to be a system that took care of people illegally in the United States and allowed them to send their Social Security benefits back home to the country they came from, and yet that is occurring. The Social Security System was never designed to be an identifying system that employers have got to check Social Security numbers.

Social Security was never designed to be an identification for who you are. It is a retirement system. So we have abused the Social Security System, or allowed it to be abused by those people who don't even belong in the United States.

Another category that I just cannot comprehend is how we allow folks that are illegally in the United States, and I am not talking about legal aliens or immigrants that are here legally, we will get to them in a minute, I am talking about folks who are here illegally in the United States, who graduate from one of our high schools and then want to go to college. Now, if one of these folks from some foreign country, any foreign country, illegally in the United States, gets admitted to one of our State universities in Texas, they pay in-State tuition. They pay the same tuition anybody else in the State of Texas would pay.

Remember, we wonder, do we not, why are they going to school anyway if they are illegally in the country? But let's say you are from Oklahoma. We can talk about Oklahoma or Iowa, where Mr. KING is from, and let's say one of those students, American citizen, legal immigrant, wishes to go to school in the State of Texas to a State school. They pay out of State tuition because they are not from around here. They are from some other place. So we make them pay out of state tuition.

So I ask this question, Mr. Speaker: Why do we discriminate against American citizens in other States, legal immigrants in other States, make them pay out of State tuition and furnish an in-State tuition fee to a person illegally in our own State? That is an absurd policy. I don't understand why we do that. That is certainly not fair to people that are legally in the country or to American citizens.

One thing that has been mentioned and continues to be mentioned is the concept of the fraud that is perpetrated on the United States based upon the 14th amendment. Let me give an example.

Down in south Texas, frequently pregnant ladies come across the Texas River, illegally coming to the United States from all over the world, and then they have a child born then in the United States. We assume that child is an American citizen. And because it is our policy to assume that person is an American citizen, the mother gets to stay. If the husband is here, he gets to stay. And before you know it, the whole family is allowed to stay because of the fraud perpetrated on the American people by that pregnant individual coming into the United States illegally and having a child.

It is based upon a phrase in the 14th amendment that says that ''All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof'' are citizens. Now, notice, Mr. Speaker, what the phrase says. It says ''all persons born or naturalized and subject to the jurisdiction thereof'' are citizens.

Well, I think the argument should be made that that individual that perpetrated a fraud on the United States, illegally coming into the country, is not subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. She is subject to the jurisdiction of whatever country she came from. And, hopefully, this matter will be resolved by either legislation from this body or by our Supreme Court across the street to determine whether or not those people really are subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and whether they should be granted automatic citizenship or not. That will be left for another time.

But just to show you how we are our own worst enemy and how we are inviting the insurgents into our country, we have cities in this Nation, it is usually the large cities, the big cities, and, unfortunately, it happens to be my city of Houston, Texas, that have sanctuary policies. What a sanctuary policy is that local police officers are instructed that they are not to stop people and inquire as to their legal status in the country. If they do so, then they will be disciplined. This gives an open invitation to people, because they know they will not be stopped by the police, arrested and deported.

What used to happen, Mr. Speaker, was local police would stop somebody on a traffic or some other minor offense, find out they were here illegally in the United States, and they would turn them over to the immigration officials and immigration officials would then deport that individual. That doesn't happen any more. Now they may stop them and realize they are from some other country, but they let them go because cities have sanctuary policies. Don't arrest people here illegally in the United States.

This means you can get arrested for jaywalking but you can't be arrested for being here illegally in this country. Makes me wonder whether or not we have lost our common sense.

Let me read some letters and correspondence I have gotten and received from individuals about this whole issue of unlawful entry into the country. As many Members of the House have done, we have received numerous comments, e-mails, letters and phone calls of what people think about this whole issue of the border and border security, which is the issue.

One of the towns I represent is a small town called Humble, Texas, and Zine from Humble has written me this comment: She says, ''I am an immigrant myself, who was blessed to have the privilege of becoming an American citizen. I came to this country legally many years ago with my two daughters. As soon as we arrived, my daughters were enrolled in school so they could learn English and we spoke only English at home. My sister, who sponsored us, took us to McDonald's and told my daughters that they couldn't really be Americans unless they ate hamburgers and drank Coca-Cola. Five years later, we became U.S. citizens. We are Brazilian by birth and Americans by choice, and we did it legally. We never demanded any rights because we had none until we became citizens. We pay taxes, we obey the law, we love this country with its tradition and all it stands for, and we do not wish to see it destroyed or changed. In 2004, I had to go to the emergency room of a local hospital. I was there for 7½ hours because the waiting room was full of illegals who, according to the law, had to be taken care of. I pay taxes, they don't. Where are my rights?

Another letter I received from Jack, in Houston, Texas, tells me this. He says, ''My wife, who I love dearly, is an immigrant, a legal immigrant who took the time and effort and wanted to do the right thing that would allow her to come and stay in this country legally. For illegal immigrants to demand their citizenship and rights I think pretty much violates all this country stands for, which is fair and equal treatment under the law of the land, which they seen fit to break. To me, this is akin to convicts in prison demanding to be released because they want to be released regardless of crimes that they have committed.''

Another U.S. citizen of Hispanic descent, Marinell, from Houston, proudly writes, ''Speaking for the Hispanic community who are U.S. citizens, I'm asking you for your support to secure the borders. There are some issues that are very important and are simple that

should be followed. One, close the border. Two, make illegal entry into the United States a felony. Three, no amnesty programs by any name. Four, guest workers should be fingerprinted and background checked. Five, any detained illegals should be immediately deported.

Six, English only. The cost to us for accommodating so many languages is overwhelming. Seven, no more automatic citizenship for people born in America of parents who are not U.S. citizens. Eight, exact a tax on money wired out of the United States by illegals. Nine, stop listening to illegals and start listening to Hispanics who are U.S. citizens.

Ten, don't believe that our economy will collapse if we don't have illegals. We would all rather pay a little more for goods and services and less for our health care premiums.''

Wise common sense by a person who did it the right way, proud to be in the United States and proud to be here legally.

Philip from Montgomery, Texas, says, ''I've heard it argued that illegals are only coming to improve their economic standing. Can not the same be said of anyone who commits larceny? They want to improve their economic standing as well. Illegals are systematically robbing our public coffers, denying our citizens adequate education, medical care and other essential services. Enough is enough.''

Carl from Beaumont, Texas, writes, ''The argument used to justify illegal aliens is that they will do the work that Americans won't do. Well, that is not correct. Americans will do the work if paid the going wage, not less than the minimum wage. I am disheartened that we reward employers who rob Americans of honest work by cheap labor. This has to stop. This country has grown into a powerhouse without resorting to economic slavery of immigrants.''

Just this week I received a letter from a member of a local union down in Beaumont, Texas. He sent me a newspaper article. This newspaper article headlines ''Fabricator requests 300 Mexican workers. Company claims there's not enough Americans to work.'' And the article goes ahead and points out that there are three businesses down in Beaumont, Texas, that want pipefitters and welders to come on board from other nations because there is not workers. Well, that is preposterous. This local pipefitters union member wrote me a letter saying he hadn't even heard about this, and his whole responsibility is finding jobs for local citizens as pipefitters and as welders.

And you notice we are talking about pipefitters and we are talking about welders. We are not talking about someone doing unskilled labor. These are good wages. And some of the businesses would rather hire people from other nations, claiming there are no Americans that will take these jobs, and then pay subpar wages. Mr. Speaker, this is just not right, and these individuals certainly, who are American citizens and are legally here, ought to be receiving the jobs over people from other nations.

So what are the solutions? The first one, the government has to fight for America. Some have said that our government's at war but it is at war with the American public, at war with the American will. We ought to make sure our government has the moral will to protect the dignity of our country, the borders, both the northern border and the southern border.

Our government has to quit working for other nations. There are reports even this week that the Minutemen, nonviolent individuals who go and sit on the border and watch for illegals coming in and then notify the Border Patrol, there are reports that the Border Patrol is telling the Mexican government where these Minutemen are so that the illegals crossing into the United States go around them.

I do not know if this is true or not, but we are going to find out if that is true and it is going to stop. The American Government has to work for America not for foreign governments.

We have to protect our borders. I mentioned earlier that we protect the borders of other nations, so maybe we ought to protect the borders of our own Nation. Third world countries protect their borders better than the United States does.

□ 1700

The reason is we do not have the moral will to protect the dignity of the border. We talk about how we are going to protect the border, but we have not done it. There was talk about it in 1996 when this House talked about border security and a guest worker program. Nothing happened. We got the guest worker program, we just didn't get border security.

My grandfather used to say when all is said and done, more is said than done. That is what is going on. We are talking about it and there is a lot of publicity about it, but it does not seem that we are demanding and securing the border.

We have to help the Border Patrol do their job. We need to give them the best equipment. Just like we give our military the best equipment, we need to give our border patrol the best equipment.

The National Guard, they are part of the military. Their responsibility is to protect us. It is a good idea to use them immediately because no wall can be built overnight, yet the National Guard can be deployed overnight. Even if Generalissimo Vicente Fox does not like it, we ought to do it.

We should consider using a fence in appropriate areas. I know other Members of Congress have received all types of correspondence and mail. We get all kinds of things sent to us. But recently, I had an individual from Texas send me four cases of bricks. Here is one of those bricks. He sent a letter along with it. In the letter he said, why don't you use this brick and these other bricks to build a wall to protect us from people illegally coming into the United States. Other Members of Congress have received these bricks as well.

The American public wants something done. Whatever it takes to secure the dignity of the United States, we certainly ought to do it. Maybe we ought to have Extreme Makeover go down to the Texas border and have an ''Extreme Makeover Border'' edition. As fast as they build something, they would not take long to build a wall. The reason we are building the wall is because of those people illegally coming into the United States. No American should ever feel guilty about that.

Mr. Speaker, we need to use the best law enforcement groups in the United States and that is the sheriffs, the Texas sheriff, the border sheriffs in California, Arizona and New Mexico. Those are some right-thinking folks. They know the area. They know the people. They have dedicated their lives to enforcing the law. But the way the law is written now, we cannot use the border sheriffs in detaining illegals that come into our country, and we ought to use them. We ought to give them the law enforcement power to turn illegals over to Federal authorities and have Federal authorities deport those individuals.

Rick Flores of Webb County made the comment, he said this is not a partisan issue. It is not a Republican issue or a Democratic issue, and he is a Democrat. He said this is a red, white and blue issue. He is right. Our border sheriffs ought to be used because they all grew up in these particular areas. They know the people and know who shouldn't be in those particular areas. So we should give them the money to do this.

The second thing we need to do after we secure the border, and we secure the borders before we start talking about people who are here illegally or any other immigration policy because you must stop the bleeding before you can solve the problem.

Once we secure the dignity of the border, we have to go back and look at our immigration policy. It is chaos in my opinion. It takes too long for people to come here legally. I have had individuals from Mexico who have tried to get into the United States, and it has taken years. People in my district, it took them a long time to come in legally. We seem to discriminate against people. We do not treat them all alike. We have to look at our immigration policy, maybe start over and make it fair and put the world on notice here is how you enter the United States legally.

Whether you want to work here, or whether you want to be a resident alien or become an American citizen. We have to stop the chaos in the immigration department.

One thing that we ought to do, it seems real obvious to me, when people cross from the nation of Mexico or Canada or the Caribbean, they can show one of several hundred documents to prove that they are from some other nation. They can even use a baptismal certificate. Our border agents have to shuffle through all of these different papers to figure out whether these people in this car are legally coming into the United States.

Why do we make it so difficult on ourselves? Why don't we do what every other nation does, and that is if you come to the United States legally, you have to have a passport, just like they do in every other nation in the world. When we let people into this country legally, we do not even know who they are. When they leave, we do not record that they left. With the bar code in a passport, we can check people's criminal record. We can record and keep a database if they are legally coming into this country and when they have to go home.

Then the employer can have a photograph on a visa and the employer can use a government document rather than some Social Security number to see if the person he is hiring is legally in the United States and quit making police officers out of our businesses.

Why people are opposed to a passport, I do not know. We talk about all kinds of identification cards that we want people to carry; simple, universal, worldwide, because we are in the world community, a worldwide document, a passport to enter the United States.

Then we ought to deport felons that are convicted automatically. Let me tell you what happens. Someone would be in this country, they are caught committing a crime. They are tried. They are sent to the Texas penitentiary. You would think that our government would automatically deport those people. But we do not do that. What we do is let them go back in the county in which they were convicted. Then the immigration service has to recapture them and have a deportation hearing and may or may not deport them.

I tried people back in Texas who were illegally in the United States and never deported. They were released, went back and committed another crime, and went back to the penitentiary. We ought to deport people who are convicted of a felony if they are from another country.

Probably the best example of an individual who abused our system was an individual by the name of Angel Resendiz. He came to the United States. He was captured several times, deported a few times. After being released, he committed nine murders in the United States. He was released by Federal authorities after being captured several other times. Resendiz is sitting now on death row in Texas waiting to be executed.

I haven't even talked about those people from all over the world who come here just to commit crime. So deport people who are convicted of felonies in our Nation as soon as they serve their sentence. We have to abolish this catch-and-release policy. Catch and release is a phrase that fishermen use. Catch and release is you catch them, take them off the hook and you let them go.

That is what they do with fish, catch and release. Because we claim we do not have enough facilities to detain individuals. People from Mexico, if you are captured illegally, we deport you. We send you back home. But if you are from some other nation other than Mexico, OTMs, if you are from China or Peru or France, instead of deporting you automatically, you are released. Thus, the catch and release. What they do, they stand before a magistrate and swear that they will come back for their deportation hearing in 6 months.

Mr. Speaker, does it surprise anybody that more than 90 percent of those people we never see them again. They just move on. We catch them, we let them go. This is absurd. Police officers work too hard to capture these individuals just to let them go. We have to find facilities to house these people until they are deported. Put them on old military bases.

We have 10,000 trailers sitting in Hope, Arkansas, owned by FEMA. They are in Hope because they would not bring them down to hurricane areas like Texas because of the floodplain. That violates one of their policies. Why not use FEMA trailers as temporary housing for OTMs. Here we discriminate against Mexican nationals here illegally because we send them home. But if you are from some other Nation other than Mexico, you are released and told to come back. And then we are shocked that people do not come back.

We ought to deny benefits for people here illegally in this country. They shouldn't receive health care, education, welfare, housing, AFDC, Social Security and they certainly should not receive amnesty. The idea that we are going to tell people here is what we are going to do, we are going to give you amnesty, but you are going to have to pay a fine, pay some back taxes and learn English. What if they do not do that? We are going to do nothing because that is what we have been doing, nothing. What prompts those people to do that. They have been dealing with a cash economy. They do not even know what their back taxes are. So this whole idea of rewarding illegal behavior is wrong.

We ought to also go after employers that knowingly hire people illegally in this country. You know, 3 or 4 weeks ago we heard about a couple of businesses in the United States that were raided and captured folks that were here illegally, and the business was being prosecuted for hiring illegals. That has gone away. That is not in the news anymore. Why not? Because all that was a publicity stunt, in my opinion.

There are many businesses that hire people legally from other nations, and there are other businesses for cheap, plantation labor hiring them subpar. We ought to go after those people. It is follow the money. Follow the money trail, and that is something that we ought to do.

There are people with different motives that do not want our borders protected. There are some on the left, those northeastern elites who I think for political gain don't want our borders protected. There are people on the right for cheap labor that do not want our borders protected. Our borders need to be protected because all people in this country have the right to have our borders protected.

Mr. Speaker, the battle for America and its dignity is upon us. I think we ought to fight for our homeland. This has nothing to do with race. It has everything to do with the law. As I have mentioned, there are many good folks from other nations that are legally in this country that have become citizens. But those people that illegally flaunt our Nation and our laws should be held accountable. Our Nation has to be engaged in this process.

I am concerned that maybe our Nation is not engaged. Maybe we do not understand that there are those who wish to colonize our country. We cannot allow this unlawful, illegal invasion and insurgency and colonization to occur. The line has been drawn in the sand, and I hope we are willing to cross it and protect our border. The number one duty of government is public safety. We had better get in the fight. Instead of waving the white flag of indifference, we have to understand that our Nation is sovereign. Part of sovereignty is protecting the borders.

Mr. Speaker, history will reflect on these days and one wonders in the long lamentable catalog of human conduct, were these the best of days or were these the end of our days. Only history will tell how we as a people react to protecting our Nation, to establishing border security, to establishing a fair immigration policy, and then establishing a policy on what to do with those folks already here illegally. We can solve these problems, Mr. Speaker. America has always been able to solve every problem. With the good Lord's help, we have solved every problem we have ever had, but we must have the moral will, we must have the moral desire and the moral integrity to defend our borders.

Mr. Speaker, that's just the way it is.

COMMUNICATION FROM CHIEF OF STAFF OF HONORABLE ROBERT W. NEY, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHENRY) laid before the House the following communication from William Heaton, Chief of Staff to the Honorable ROBERT W. NEY, Member of Congress:

MAY 18, 2006.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, I am notifying you that I have received a judicial subpoena from the United States District Court for the District of Columbia directing me to appear as a witness and provide testimony.

As required by Rule VIII 3., I shall undertake to determine whether the issuance of the subpoena is, among other matters, consistent with the privileges and precedents of the House.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM HEATON,
Chief of Staff,
The Honorable Robert W. Ney.

COMMUNICATION FROM COUNSEL, COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Paul D. Vinovich, Counsel, Committee on House Administration:

MAY 19, 2006.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, I am hereby notifying you that I have received a judicial subpoena from the United States District Court for the District of Columbia directing me to appear as a witness and provide testimony.

As required by rule VIII(3), I shall undertake to determine whether the issuance of the subpoena is; among other things, consistent with the privileges and precedents of the House.

Sincerely,

PAUL D. VINOVICH,
Counsel, Committee on House Administration.

VACATING 5-MINUTE SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the order for a 5-minute speech by Mr. POE is vacated.

There was no objection.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. KANJORSKI (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today after 1:00 p.m. on account of official business in the district.

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for the week of May 15.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of a family medical emergency.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of family reasons.

Mr. MANZULLO (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of son's graduation from college.

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. TAYLOR of Mississippi) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SCHIFF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. PRICE of Georgia) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. OSBORNE, for 5 minutes, May 22 and 23.

Mr. MCHENRY, for 5 minutes, May 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 193. An act to increase the penalties for violations by television and radio broadcasters of the prohibitions against transmission of obscene, indecent, and profane language; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Mrs. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1499. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow members of the Armed Forces serving in a combat zone to make contributions to their individual retirement plans even if the compensation on which such contribution is based is excluded from gross income, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, May 22, 2006, at 12:30 p.m., for morning hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

7588. 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. 30480; Amdt. No. 3154] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7589. 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. 30478; Amdt. No. 3152] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7590. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30488; Amdt. No. 3161] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7591. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30490; Amdt. No. 3163] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7592. 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. 30482; Amdt. No. 3156] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7593. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30483; Amdt. No. 3157] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7594. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — IFR Altitude; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30477; Amdt. No. 459] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7595. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30485; Amdt. No. 3159] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7596. 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. 30484; Amdt. No. 3158] received April 27, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7597. A letter from the Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — IFR Altitudes; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30486; Amdt. No. 460] received April 27, 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, report of committee were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SENSENBRENNER: Committee on he Judiciary. H.R. 4356. A bill to amend title 18 United States Code, with respect to fraud in connection with major disaster or emergency funds (Rept. 109–473). Referred to the Committee of the whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. HOBSON: Committee on Appropriations. H.R. 5427. A bill making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes (Rept. 109–474). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. WELLER (for himself, Mr. RUSH, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. HYDE, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. BEAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. KIRK, Mr. COSTELLO, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. EVANS, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. HASTERT):

H.R. 5426. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 326 South Main Street in Princeton, Illinois, as the ''Congressman Owen Lovejoy Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. HOBSON:

H.R. 5427. A bill making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes.

By Mr. WELLER (for himself, Mr. RUSH, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. HYDE, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. BEAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. KIRK, Mr. COSTELLO, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. EVANS, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. HASTERT):

H.R. 5428. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 202 East Washington Street in Morris, Illinois, as the ''Joshua A. Terando Princeton Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. POMBO:

H.R. 5429. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish and implement a competitive oil and gas leasing program that will result in an environmentally sound program for the exploration, development, and production of the oil and gas resources of the Coastal Plain of Alaska, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. BERMAN:

H.R. 5430. A bill to establish sound criteria for civilian nuclear cooperation with certain countries; to the Committee on International Relations, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, 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. BOSWELL:

H.R. 5431. A bill to amend the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States to extend the tariff duties on ethanol; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself, Mr. RAHALL, and Mr. MOLLOHAN):

H.R. 5432. A bill to amend the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 to improve the safety of miners; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. HOOLEY (for herself, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 5433. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a Medicare Prescription Drug Ombudsman; 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. NEY (for himself, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. HOBSON, Mr. STRICKLAND, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. GILLMOR, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. REGULA, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. TURNER, Mr. OXLEY, Mr. CHABOT, Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, and Mr. BOEHNER):

H.R. 5434. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 40 South Walnut Street in Chillicothe, Ohio, as the ''Larry Cox Post Office''; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. REYES:

H.R. 5435. A bill to amend the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 to extend by one year the deadline for the implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. SCHIFF (for himself and Ms. HART):

H.R. 5436. A bill to improve foster care court capacity through loan forgiveness and performance measurement; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, and the Judiciary, 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. SHAW:

H.R. 5437. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend for 6 months the eligibility period for the ''Welcome to Medicare'' physical examination and to eliminate coinsurance for screening mammography and colorectal cancer screening tests in order to promote the early detection of cancer; 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. LANTOS (for himself, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. BERMAN, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. PENCE, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. KIRK, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. SOUDER, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. LYNCH, and Mrs. MALONEY):

H.J. Res. 86. A joint resolution approving the renewal of import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania (for himself and Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania):

H. Con. Res. 407. Concurrent resolution condemning the decision by the city of St. Denis, France, to name a street in honor of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the convicted murderer of Philadelphia Police Officer Danny Faulkner; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on International Relations, 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. BURTON of Indiana:

H. Con. Res. 408. Concurrent resolution commending the Government of Canada for its renewed commitment to the Global War on Terror; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. LEACH (for himself, Mr. LANTOS, and Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA):

H. Con. Res. 409. Concurrent resolution commemorating the 60th anniversary of the ascension to the throne of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY (for herself, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. STARK, Ms. LEE, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. KUCINICH, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. EVANS, Mr. FARR, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HINCHEY, Ms. NORTON, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. NADLER, Mr. OLVER, Mr. OWENS, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. WATERS, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. WYNN):

H. Con. Res. 410. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the enactment of legislation that provides access to comprehensive health care for all Americans; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin:

H. Res. 823. A resolution commending the outstanding efforts by members of faith-based and community organizations in response to Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Ms. HARRIS (for herself, Mr. MACK, Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. FOLEY, and Ms. BORDALLO):

H. Res. 824. A resolution recognizing the effects of harmful algal blooms, including Red Tide, on the environment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, and in addition to the Committee on Resources, 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 Ms. KAPTUR:

H. Res. 825. A resolution to support the goals of an annual National Time-Out Day to promote patient safety and optimal outcomes in the operating room; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MCINTYRE (for himself, Mr. HULSHOF, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. KIND, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. WAMP, Mr. TIAHRT, and Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire):

H. Res. 826. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a National Youth Sports Week should be established; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Ms. NORTON (for herself, Ms. LEE, Mr. RANGEL, and Mrs. CHRISTENSEN):

H. Res. 827. A resolution honoring the life and accomplishments of Damu Amiri Imara Smith; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. PITTS (for himself, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. LEACH, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PUTNAM, and Mr. LANTOS):

H. Res. 828. A resolution commending the people of Mongolia, on the 800th anniversary of Mongolian statehood, for building strong, democratic institutions, and expressing the support of the House of Representatives for efforts by the United States to continue to strengthen its partnership with that country; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. SOUDER (for himself, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. COLE of Oklahoma):

H. Res. 829. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Shadow Wolves should be preserved and fostered as one unit, located on the Tohono O'odham lands; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS TO PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 65: Mr. BACHUS, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire, and Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 547: Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan.

H.R. 561: Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 784: Mr. WEXLER.

H.R. 801: Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. MCCOTTER, and Mr. CROWLEY.

H.R. 807: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 817: Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 881: Mr. RAMSTAD.

H.R. 896: Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan.

H.R. 916: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. COLE of Oklahoma, and Mr. KUHL of New York.

H.R. 997: Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota and Mr. MORAN of Kansas.

H.R. 1108: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 1130: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ and Mr. WU.

H.R. 1175: Mr. BOOZMAN.

H.R. 1306: Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 1429: Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. BOUCHER, and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 1438: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.

H.R. 1589: Mr. MCNULTY.

H.R. 1633: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 1707: Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania and Ms. Moore of Wisconsin.

H.R. 1708: Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania, Mr. BARROW, and Mr. UPTON.

H.R. 1951: Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H.R. 2070: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 2073: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 2088: Mr. SODREL.

H.R. 2134: Mr. KUHL of New York.

H.R. 2238: Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire and Mr. ISTOOK.

H.R. 2257: Mr. HAYWORTH.

H.R. 2295: Mr. BROWN of South Carolina.

H.R. 3145: Mr. GERLACH and Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota.

H.R. 3155: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 3159: Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 3323: Mr. SWEENEY.

H.R. 3360: Mr. SNYDER.

H.R. 3427: Mr. FERGUSON and Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 3478: Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 3559: Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. PETRI, Mrs. MCCARTHY, and Mr. BACHUS.

H.R. 3579: Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3883: Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia.

H.R. 4188: Mr. LEVIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 4222: Ms. CARSON.

H.R. 4259: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN and Mr. ORTIZ.

H.R. 4298: Ms. HERSETH.

H.R. 4381: Mrs. MYRICK and Mr. GILLMOR.

H.R. 4542: Mr. WELLER.

H.R. 4547: Mr. SODREL and Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 4560: Mr. PETRI and Mrs. JONES of Ohio.

H.R. 4574: Mr. BECERRA, Mr. SABO, Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. CALVERT, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mr. DICKS.

H.R. 4736: Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 4755: Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. HOSTETTLER, and Mr. WELLER.

H.R. 4761: Mrs. SCHMIDT.

H.R. 4769: Mr. PORTER.

H.R. 4772: Mr. POE and Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 4808: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.

H.R. 4873: Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota.

H.R. 4894: Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. PETRI.

H.R. 4980: Mr. CASE.

H.R. 5005: Mr. SODREL.

H.R. 5013: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, and Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey.

H.R. 5014: Ms. WATSON and Mr. GONZALEZ.

H.R. 5017: Mr. MCNULTY.

H.R. 5018: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 5033: Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 5058: Mr. MCHUGH.

H.R. 5063: Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 5067: Mrs. MYRICK and Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan.

H.R. 5072: Mr. BOSWELL.

H.R. 5092: Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Ms. FOXX, Mr. ISTOOK, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. KLINE, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. CARTER, Mr. DELAY, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. GOODE, Mr. SESSIONS, and Ms. HART.

H.R. 5106: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 5118: Mr. OSBORNE.

H.R. 5121: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. GOODE, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania, and Mrs. BIGGERT.

H.R. 5139: Mr. EHLERS.

H.R. 5140: Mr. EHLERS.

H.R. 5148: Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. WAXMAN, and Mr. CARDIN.

H.R. 5150: Mr. CARDIN.

H.R. 5159: Mr. GORDON.

H.R. 5166: Mr. MCCOTTER, Ms. HART, and Miss MCMORRIS.

H.R. 5167: Mr. REYES, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. BOEHLERT, Ms. LEE, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. STARK, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. BALDWIN, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 5171: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 5177: Mr. RYUN of Kansas and Mr. LINDER.

H.R. 5182: Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky.

H.R. 5196: Mr. MCCOTTER and Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 5199: Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, and Mr. CASE.

H.R. 5201: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, and Mr. FORD.

H.R. 5206: Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mr. WYNN.

H.R. 5217: Mr. FORD Mr. MCINTYRE.

H.R. 5230: Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey.

H.R. 5238: Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. ORTIZ, and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 5246: Mr. EVERETT, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. LAHOOD, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. HOLDEN, H.R. Mr. GIBBONS, Mr. CAMP of Michigan, and Mr. LUCAS.

H.R. 5255: Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky.

H.R. 5262: Mr. SOUDER.

H.R. 5264: Mr. GORDON.

H.R. 5269: Ms. WOOLSEY and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 5286: Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota.

H.R. 5289: Mr. KIRK.

H.R. 5308: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 5309: Mr. RAMSTAD and Mr. CAMP of Michigan.

H.R. 5316: Mr. MCINTYRE.

H.R. 5329: Mr. CAMPbell of California.

H.R. 5341: Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 5353: Mr. OTTER.

H.R. 5363: Mr. COLE of Oklahoma.

H.R. 5364: Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SOLIS, and Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 5365: Mr. ALLEN, Mr. ROSS, Mr. GORDON, Mr. KILDEE, and Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 5371: Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. OLVER.

H.R. 5372: Mr. MCINTYRE, Mrs. MCCARTHY, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. TANNER, Mr. SKELTON, and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 5390: Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. WOLF, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. WYNN, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 5420: Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, and Mr. GONZALEZ.

H. Con. Res. 368: Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania, Mr. KUHL of New York, and Mr. WEXLER.

H. Con. Res. 380: Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H. Con. Res. 391: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H. Con. Res. 397: Mr. JEFFERSON.

H. Con. Res. 401: Mr. BAIRD and Ms. CARSON.

H. Con. Res. 402: Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania.

H. Con. Res. 403: Mr. HAYWORTH.

H. Res. 295: Mr. CAPUANO and Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan.

H. Res. 318: Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. WYNN, Mr. TERRY, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, and Mr. MEEKS of New York.

H. Res. 323: Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. BAKER, and Mr. MCCRERY.

H. Res. 723: Mr. HIGGINS, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. CHANDLER, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. NADLER.

H. Res. 735: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. STARK, Mr. HINCHEY, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H. Res. 739: Mr. SCOTT of Georgia.

H. Res. 790: Mr. RAHALL.

H. Res. 792: Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. WELLER, and Ms. LEE.

H. Res. 799: Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. GERLACH, and Mr. BURTON of Indiana.

H. Res. 812: Mr. CONYERS.

DISCHARGE PETITIONS—ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

The following Members added their names to the following discharge petitions:

Petition 6 by Mr. ABERCROMBIE on House Resolution 543: Chaka Fattah, Adam B. Schiff, Eddie Bernice Johnson, and Bobby L. Rush.

Petition 12 by Mr. MARKEY on H.R. 4263: Danny K. Davis.

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 5385

OFFERED BY: MR. BLUMENAUER

AMENDMENT NO. 1: Under the heading ''DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE ACCOUNT 1990'', insert after the dollar amount

(page 11, line 17) the following: ''(increased by $27,500,000)''.

Under the heading ''DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE ACCOUNT 2005'', insert after the dollar amount (page 11, line 24) the following: ''(reduced by $440,000,000)''.

Under the heading ''ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION, FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES'', insert after the dollar amount (page 18, line 14) the following: ''(increased by 50,000,000)''.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 152 WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, MAY 19, 2006 No. 63

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

May we pray.

O Sovereign Lord, make even our thoughts pleasing to You. Banish bitter thoughts that erect walls between people. Banish proud thoughts that prompt us to become preoccupied with power and prestige. Banish selfish thoughts that keep us from hearing the cries of the marginalized. Banish impure thoughts that would tempt us to dishonor You.

Control the minds of our Senators. Infuse them with the peace that comes from reflecting on Your purposes. Give them pure and loving thoughts that will empower them to serve You by serving others.

We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today we return to the comprehensive immigration bill. We had a very constructive day and evening yesterday. I appreciate everyone's patience and participation in moving the debate along. We worked late last night, up to about 11 o'clock, and we had votes over the course of the day and the night. Because of that, and our agreement for multiple votes on Monday afternoon, we were able to announce no rollcall votes for today.

I do encourage Members to take advantage of the session today if they desire to speak on the immigration legislation, to look over amendments that are likely to be proposed, and to spend time getting ready for those amendments once they reach the floor. Today would be a great opportunity to come to speak on some of those amendments in advance as well.

It is my intention to complete action on the bill next week, and it would expedite the process if Members would use the time productively today and Monday.

BROADCAST DECENCY ENFORCEMENT ACT

Mr. FRIST. I want to comment on a couple of issues and take advantage of the time that we have this morning.

Late last night, in closing, we passed the Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act to address abuses and potential abuses in the broadcast arena and to raise indecency fines by a factor of 10.

We told broadcasters in a loud and direct and unanimous voice—it was a unanimous vote last night: Clean up your act or face the consequences.

When families are watching Sunday night football games, they should not have to brace themselves for a televised striptease. I am, of course, referring to Janet Jackson's infamous ''wardrobe malfunction'' during that 2004 Super Bowl.

While this particular incident represented a new low in broadcasting, unfortunately, as all of us know who do watch television regularly, it was not an isolated incident. Numerous studies have shown that prime-time network programming is growing, has grown, and continues to grow over time increasingly coarse, even during the evening family hour when children are most likely to be watching TV either by themselves or with their other family members or parents.

That Super Bowl stunt was just the latest in the ever-worsening attempts to grab out commercial attention. It is obvious why this tried to appeal to a low, broad, very coarse common denominator—to make people look, and to make people look to increase those commercial ratings and thus end up accumulating more money.

Between the hours of 6 a.m. and 10 p.m, when there is a reasonable chance that children are watching, broadcasters are required to keep television clean. The requirement is there. Families should be able to turn on that television during that period of time and trust the broadcasters to abide by the law. Broadcasters should know that if they cross the line the penalties will be serious. That is why this legislation is so important.

Broadcasting has become such big business that, steadily, the current FCC fines have become a little drop in this sloshing bucket of profits. This bill, the bill we passed late last night, the Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act, will help change all of that. The fact is, airwaves are a limited natural resource that we, in essence, all own.

In return for free access to this limited space, this limited supply, broadcasters are obligated to serve the public's interest. If adults want to watch adult material in the middle of the day, there are plenty of pay stations they can go out and purchase so they can see that material. And late at night, between 10 o'clock and 6 a.m, the FCC rules allow a safe harbor for material adults can handle but kids really should not be seeing. When they know kids are watching on free TV, broadcasters should not be able to shrug their shoulders, to look the other way, to disobey the rules.

I hope to see the decency bill we passed last night become actual law

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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and toughen those penalties. I hope TV becomes smarter, becomes more engaging. That is a task not for us but for the people who make TV. Our job as legislators is to protect those basic standards of decency.

LITTLE BOY BLUE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, briefly on another issue, just because each day we are bombarded with so much bad news, disappointing news, news that makes you want to put the newspaper down or turn off the television, I want to share with my colleagues a piece of good news, heartwarming news, news that is reflective of the compassion that we as an American people have, that we have the opportunity to express at times, and this particular incident, I believe, represents it quite concretely. It is about a very special 7-year-old boy from Afghanistan.

His name is Mohammad Omar. He suffers from a congenital anomaly, a birth defect that is not all that rare but we didn't know how to treat until the beginning of the 1940s, 1950s, when the research was initially done. Before that, it had a 100-percent mortality rate. As you will tell from the outcome of the story, surgery has changed that.

His defect is called tetralogy of Fallot. Tetralogy means there are four things—It doesn't matter what they are—but it is a hole between two chambers of the heart; a ventricular septal defect it is called. The second is an outflow tract obstruction from the right ventricle to the lungs, and therefore the obstruction there means the blood does not get up through the lungs. There is an overriding VSD and then there is some right ventricular hypertrophy—the right side of the heart is big and very muscular.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, will the Senator yield? Would you like me to help explain some of that for you?

Mr. FRIST. That is three of the four tetralogies. I know my colleague knows the fourth is that right ventricular hypertrophy. I would be happy to yield to the Democratic leader.

Mr. REID. I have forgotten quite a bit about that, so maybe you should go ahead and explain it.

Mr. FRIST. I will be brief. But what is fascinating is that with science and with the great progress that is made, today it can be cured, where before it couldn't. What is interesting about the overall story is that Mohammed's father, Fateh, about a year ago—this is over in Afghanistan—brought his son to an American military hospital, reaching out, not knowing where to go. The province is the Khowst Province. He happened to run across my colleagues, or colleagues in the military, who are cardiologists, who are heart specialists. And looking at the blue appearance—because you don't get this oxygen flow through the heart, blood through the right side of the heart—they said it was probably tetralogy of Fallot.

With a few tests they made the diagnosis and they petitioned Mohammed to come to the States for treatment, but the visa applications by Mohammed and his dad, Fateh, were initially denied. But somewhere out there was a little angel looking out, and sure enough they ran into a fellow who happened to be a student of mine back at Vanderbilt, Dr. Sloane Guy, whom I hadn't seen for a while, and I was with him at a time when he was looking to the future, didn't know where he was going, whether it was heart medicine, cardiology, heart surgery. He was on active duty in Afghanistan.

He called me and said: Isn't there anything that we can do? So, working together, I—and this is really compassion, reaching out, going beyond what a lot of people usually do—but working with the State Department, again reaching out, the Department of Defense, we were able to get approval for young Mohammed to come here and, indeed, on Tuesday, just 3 days ago, they arrived at Andrews Air Force Base.

Yesterday morning, Mohammed underwent surgery at the Children's National Medical Center. Straightforward surgery, it would be described by Dr. Jonas, Richard Jonas, who is a renowned cardiac surgeon, fellow cardiac surgeon, but does the surgery over at Children's National Medical Center—fairly routine surgery, although it was pretty complex surgery in truth, repairing the hole between the ventricles—the right outflow obstruction—and hooking things back up so they flow normally. Right now the young boy is still in the intensive care unit. That is the normal course, but he is recuperating nicely. You never want to predict the long-term outcome because in the first 5 or 6 days anything can happen.

But my point is, that is the kind of story you don't hear. It took a lot of people reaching out, coming together, the best of the public sector, the best of the private sector, the best of the generosity of doctors, the compassion of individuals in Afghanistan who made the initial diagnosis coming together with the result that just a few miles from here is unfolding.

Larry King, whom you know, although sometimes we are here after he is on at night, many of us turn him on at night, just about every night—the Larry King Cardiac Foundation provided much of the financial support to bring him here. The Afghan Embassy, right now, is providing support for the family and support with interpreters and food and the like. Dr. Jonas and his cardiac surgical team, including the people who run the part of the pulmonary bypass machine, and all the technicians there who contributed their time, the great resource of the Children's National Medical Center, which is right here—everybody came together to make this story possible.

To me, this reflects the stories that never get told. But it also shows how humanitarian outreach can be used as a currency for peace. It is built around trust. It is built around outreach. It is built around selflessness and going beyond faces that you see every day; everybody working towards a common goal.

So I just wanted to take the opportunity to tell that very brief story. I do wish Mohammed a speedy recovery and wish his dad the very best. While waiting in Afghanistan, not knowing whether or not this lifesaving surgery—without surgery he would die—without knowing whether this lifesaving surgery would be provided by people in a country they had no idea even existed, in terms of the people, he became known as the little blue boy; Little Boy Blue, I guess, is what they called him because of that blue appearance.

So it will be a great story because that blue appearance, Little Boy Blue no longer will be Little Boy Blue. He will be a healthy young child with a normal lifespan thereafter.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM ACT OF 2006

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2611, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2611) to provide for comprehensive immigration reform and for other purposes.

Pending:

Ensign/Graham modified amendment No. 4076, to authorize the use of the National Guard to secure the southern border of the United States.

Chambliss/Isakson amendment No. 4009, to modify the wage requirements for employers seeking to hire H–2A and blue card agricultural workers.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, while the majority leader and the Democratic leader are still in the Chamber, I wish to express my gratitude to each of them, as well as the managers of the comprehensive immigration reform bill that is in the Chamber and that we have been debating this week, for the progress we have made. I think it has been in the greatest traditions of the Senate that we have taken a controversial subject where debate that has been long overdue and we have had an open and honest and vigorous debate on many important amendments that have helped improve the bill, from my perspective. But this is the Senate at its best. While we know we will not always agree with one another, there is one place on the face of the planet

where we have the freedom, we have the opportunity to have debates and try to build consensus.

I know there are some—and I was just on a talk show moments before I came to the floor, and the person hosting that had expressed some frustration about what has been going on here, and I encouraged him to think of this according to the old adage that watching legislation being made is somehow like watching sausage being made.

Parenthetically, I note sometimes that we maybe give sausage-making a bad name, but in all sincerity the important thing is that we are having the debate, we are having votes, and majorities are ruling. I do not necessarily always like the outcome of those votes. Sometimes I do. But the fact is that we are having votes and we are letting the process move forward. Hopefully we will have a comprehensive reform bill passed by the Senate, a bill we can be proud of and will then be sent to the President's desk for consideration and possible signature. My hope is we will continue to have this process move forward and have an opportunity to call up additional amendments.

I wanted to speak briefly about an amendment I intend to offer not today but at a later time. I have previously spoken about this issue.

The compromise bill that is currently in the Chamber contains language that prohibits information sharing and restricts how the Department of Homeland Security may use information submitted in applications. The text in the underlying bill is exactly the same as that contained in the 1986 amnesty legislation. Twenty years ago now, we know from hindsight and experience, those provisions led to hundreds of thousands of ineligible aliens receiving green cards. The amendment I intend to offer does not eliminate the confidentiality provisions. It does, however, state that once an individual's application is denied, there is no longer a need for confidentiality, and that information may be shared with law enforcement personnel, that may be necessary to investigate fraud and bring others to justice.

The underlying bill says that information furnished by an applicant can only be used to make a determination on that specific application. The information may also be used in connection with a criminal investigation or prosecution. But if the Department of Homeland Security identifies a pattern of fraud, it would be prohibited from using that information in one fraudulent application to deny another application that was submitted as part of a criminal conspiracy. The same restrictions were included in the 1986 legislation program, and that caused widespread fraud and abuse. There is no reason to treat legalization applications any differently from any other immigration application submitted to the Department of Homeland Security.

The New York Times described the 1986 agricultural worker amnesty as ''One of the most extensive immigration frauds ever perpetrated against the United States Government.'' Although the estimated size of the illegal alien population engaged in agricultural work in the 1980s was only about 300,000 to 400,000 out of a total agricultural workforce of 2.5 million, 1.3 million aliens were amnestied under the program.

Let me make sure that is clear. Although the estimated size of the illegal alien population engaged in agricultural work in the 1980s was only 300,000 to 400,000, 1.3 million aliens were amnestied under that program.

The confidentiality provisions of the 1986 act were credited with causing the widespread fraud and abuse. In 1999, the General Counsel during the Clinton administration testified before the House that ''the confidentiality restrictions of the law in the 1986 amnesty also prevented the Immigration and Naturalization Service from pursuing cases of possible fraud detected during the application process.''

In 1995, a man by the name of Jose Velez, the ex-president of LULAC, was found guilty of immigration fraud after he filed fraudulent applications under the 1986 amnesty. The task force that brought down that particular conspiracy resulted in guilty pleas or convictions of 20 individuals who together were responsible for filing false legalization applications for in excess of an estimated 11,000 unqualified aliens. In other words, 20 people pled guilty to falsified legalization applications for in excess of 11,000 unqualified aliens.

Between March of 1988 and January 1991, Velez and his coconspirators submitted approximately 3,000 fraudulent applications. In connection with the 1986 legalization program, there were 920 arrests, 822 indictments, 513 convictions for fraud and related criminal activity.

(Mr. ISAKSON assumed the Chair.)

Mr. CORNYN. This is not about history. This is about what is also happening even today. I am reminded of the report of the 9/11 Commission and the studies and investigations we conducted after 9/11 which indicated a consensus that we had to bring down some of the stovepipes that prohibited information sharing in our intelligence community. Essentially this amendment is designed to bring down the stovepipes that have prohibited the Department of Homeland Security from sharing information that would lead to discovery of evidence of massive fraud in our immigration system. I hope that when the amendment is called up, when we have a chance to vote on it, my colleagues will support it.

But again, this is not just about history. This is about what is happening today. I have in front of me a news release dated May 19, 2006, from the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency entitled ''Six People Indicted in Multi-State Amnesty Fraud Conspiracy.''

This is out of Atlanta, GA, which may be of particular interest to the Presiding Officer. Several individuals—it looks like six individuals were indicted by a Federal grand jury on May 9, 2006, on charges of conspiracy to encourage and induce aliens to reside unlawfully in the United States and to make false statements in applications presented to the Department of Homeland Security. They were charged in separate counts for making false statements in applications presented to the Department of Homeland Security, and also there were two counts of money laundering.

The U.S. attorney in charge described this conspiracy in these words:

> The six individuals indicted in this conspiracy were involved in a multi-state scheme to solicit immigrants who were illegally present in the United States to file fraudulent applications for amnesty with the Department of Homeland Security. The defendants, as part of a money making scheme, allegedly assisted immigrants who did not meet legitimate amnesty program requirements to file applications containing false statements. This office—

The Office of the U.S. Attorney—

> is committed to vigorous investigation and prosecution of schemes such as this one as part of the President's initiative to strengthen enforcement of our Nation's immigration laws.

The U.S. attorney goes on to say:

> Not only did these individuals seek to exploit our legal immigration system for personal financial gain, they used their positions as religious leaders to prey upon the immigrant community.

That statement was attributed to Ken Smith, special agent in charge of the Office of Immigration and Custom Enforcement. That office is located in Atlanta. He goes on to say:

> This case highlights the importance of ICE's close partnership with other law enforcement agencies as we seek to dismantle criminal document and benefit fraud networks.

Mr. President, I will not read the rest of this news release, but I will ask unanimous consent that at the end of my remarks this document be made part of the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. CORNYN. I thank the Chair.

So, Mr. President, we have had a productive week in the Senate dealing with the issue of comprehensive immigration reform. Each of us has perhaps won some and lost some in terms of the amendments we favored or disfavored, but I think it has been a good week for the Senate, a good week for the cause of securing our borders and restoring public respect for our laws. At the same time, as we continue to be a nation that does welcome legal immigration, one of the things that I will say that I hope we continue to focus on is what in our immigration system really is in America's best interest—recognizing that we can't simply open our borders to anyone and everyone who wants to come to the United States or we would be swamped by a veritable tsunami of humanity.

We should continue to be a welcoming country but one that respects not only our heritage as a nation of immigrants but also respects our heritage as a nation of laws. Indeed, at this time, we are trying to export that heritage as not only the Democratic country that respects democracy but one that respects the rule of law in places such as Afghanistan and Iraq, and so we need to tend to business here at home.

But as we continue to debate and discuss and hopefully pass laws that are in America's best interest and improve our system, we will look at exactly what type of legal immigration we should encourage. I would ask my colleagues to not only focus on the massive low-skilled immigration that is part of this underlying bill but also focus on those people who have special talents and special educational credentials and experience, highly skilled individuals whom we ought to encourage to come to this country and, if they want to become American citizens, provide them an opportunity to do so. When we look at the costs associated with the underlying bill, what we have learned is low-skilled, poorly educated individuals are more likely to be a financial burden on the American taxpayer than those who are highly skilled and highly educated. Indeed, those highly skilled and highly educated legal immigrants whom we ought to be encouraging to come to the United States and become part of this great country are people who are going to help America to continue to be competitive in the global marketplace. That includes, of course, foreign students who study at our universities.

I personally believe that when someone graduates with one of these important advance degrees in math, science, engineering, the very sorts of skills and talents which will make America competitive, we ought to give them preferential treatment when it comes to their application for legal permanent residency and putting them in line for American citizenship, if that is their wish.

I hope what is not lost in all of this debate about immigration reform is America's great heritage as a nation of immigrants, our heritage as a nation that believes in the rule of law. What that means to me is we ought to be encouraging legal immigration that is in the best interests of this Nation while discouraging and preventing illegal immigration by comprehensive border security, interior enforcement, worksite verification, and sanctions against employers who cheat, while we also create a legal immigration system to deal with the workforce needs and our prosperity in America going forward.

I yield the floor.

EXHIBIT 1

U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT,
May 19, 2006.

NEWS RELEASE

SIX PEOPLE INDICTED IN MULTI-STATE AMNESTY FRAUD CONSPIRACY

ATLANTA, GA.—Emma Gerald, 54, of Kennesaw, Ruy Brasil Silva, 49, of Roswell, Marcos Amador, 19, of Atlanta, Denise Silva, 45, of Roswell, Douglas Ross, 29, of Marietta, and Hudson Araujo, 27, of Brockton, Massachusetts, were indicted by a federal grand jury on May 9, 2006, on charges of conspiracy to encourage and induce aliens to reside unlawfully in the United States and to make false statements in applications presented to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Emma Gerald, Ruy Brasil Silva, and Marcos Amador are charged in separate counts for making false statements in applications presented to DHS. Emma Gerald is also charged with two counts of money laundering.

Ross was arraigned today in Atlanta. Araujo was taken into custody by federal agents in Brockton, Massachusetts, and had his initial appearance in federal court in Boston today. Denise Silva is a fugitive being sought by federal law enforcement authorities. Gerald, Ruy Brasil Silva, and Amador were indicted on related charges on February 14, 2006. Gerald was released on a secured bond and Ruy Brasil Silva and Amador are in custody. Their arraignments on this indictment have not yet been scheduled.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said, ''The six individuals indicted in this conspiracy were involved in a multi-state scheme to solicit immigrants who were illegally present in the United States to file fraudulent applications for amnesty with the Department of Homeland Security. The defendants, as part of a moneymaking scheme, allegedly assisted immigrants who did not meet legitimate amnesty program requirements to file applications containing false statements. This office is committed to vigorous investigation and prosecution of schemes such as this one, as part of the President's initiative to strengthen enforcement of the Nation's immigration laws,''

''Not only did these individuals seek to exploit our legal immigration system for personal financial gain, they used their positions as religious leaders to prey upon the immigrant community,'' said Ken Smith, Special Agent-in-Charge of ICE's office of Investigations in Atlanta. ''The case highlights the importance of ICE's close partnerships with other law enforcement agencies as we seek to dismantle criminal document and benefit fraud networks.''

According to United States Attorney Nahmias, the charges and other information presented in court: Emma Gerald, the pastor of a local church, held herself out as a consultant to aliens seeking amnesty in the United States. Gerald did business under the name ''EJ Consulting Services.'' Under a program known as the ''Catholic Social Services/Lulac/Newman Amnesty Program'' (the ''CSS Amnesty Program''), certain aliens who were illegally in the United States were eligible to apply for temporary residence in this country. In order to be eligible, an alien had to meet certain requirements, including having been present in the United States unlawfully from prior to January 1982; and having previously applied for temporary residence but having been turned down because the alien left and re-entered the United States without the permission of the now-defunct Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

Gerald conducted meetings at Marietta churches to solicit aliens, largely Brazilian nationals who were illegally present in the United States, to apply for the CSS Amnesty Program. Ruy Brasil Silva was a pastor of one of the churches and made it available to Gerald for the meetings. Marcos Amador acted as a translator and assistant to Gerald. Gerald advised the Brazilian aliens that the Department of Homeland Security did not have records to establish whether an alien met the CSS Amnesty Program requirements as to length of residence in the United States or previous unsuccessful application for amnesty, so that they could apply even if they did not qualify. Over the course of the scheme, Gerald charged the aliens between $300 per person/$500 per married couple to approximately $600 per person/$1100 per married couple. For an extra fee, Gerald and Amador would provide the aliens with letters falsely stating that they met the program requirements as to length of residence and previous application for amnesty. Douglas Ross, Gerald's son, attended the meetings, assisting Gerald with preparing and collecting applications and collecting money from the aliens.

Gerald, Ruy Brasil Silva, Amador, Ross, and Denise Silva conducted similar meetings in Florida, collecting money from Brazilian aliens to assist them in filing fraudulent applications. Gerald, Ross, and Hudson Araujo conducted meetings in Brockton, Massachusetts.

The United States is seeking forfeiture of Gerald's Kennesaw, Georgia home and several vehicles, including Gerald's Mercedes-Benz automobile, on the grounds that they were purchased with proceeds of the criminal scheme or were used to facilitate the criminal activity. The United States is also seeking forfeiture of several bank and investment accounts, on the grounds that criminal proceeds were deposited into the accounts.

The indictment charges one count of conspiracy against all the defendants, one count of false statement against Gerald and Amador, one count of false statement against Gerald and Ruy Brasil Silva, and two counts of money laundering against Gerald. The conspiracy charge and false statement charges each carry a maximum sentence of 5 years in prison and a fine of up to $250,000. The money laundering charges each carry a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a fine of up to $250,000.

This case is being investigated by special agents of the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and postal inspectors of the United States Postal Inspection Service.

Assistant United States Attorneys Teresa D. Hoyt and Jon-Peter Kelly are prosecuting the case.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment contains only allegations. A defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove a defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. REED are printed in today's RECORD under ''Morning Business.'')

Mr. REED. I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 4038, AS MODIFIED

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that amendment No. 4038, previously agreed to, be modified to reflect a technical change in the instruction line of the amendment. The modification is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the amendment is modified.

The amendment (No. 4038), as modified, is as follows:

On page 264, strike lines 10 through 20.

On page 370, line 21, strike ''this subsection'' and insert ''paragraphs (2) and (3)''.

Mr. CORNYN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, we have had some good debate this week on the immigration bill that is before the Senate. We made some progress toward improving the legislation. I think to some degree the good and decent and deeply felt views of the American people are beginning to be heard—but not clearly enough in this body. We still need to listen to them more.

I submit that on every single issue the American people have it right. We discussed last night and debated last night some key issues. I know one of the supporters of the bill described this as a difficult issue, complicated, emotional, but we are trying to do something. He suggested that was courageous and we should be not afraid to move forward. Well, we do need to move forward but we did not have to move forward on this bill. We could have moved forward, as the House did, taking the first step to ensure that we have a legitimate legal system of enforcement that works, and then we could move on to the comprehensive solution of what to do with the illegal alien population and the future immigration policies of the United states. We can do that separately, or we can try to do them together at the same time.

I was inclined to believe that we weren't ready to deal with this issue comprehensively. That is why I thought the House's idea wasn't so bad. But it was complained about on this side, with great moral superiority, that their approach to security first was somehow bad and not worthy of respect.

I think it is very worthy of respect. In fact, I think this bill would show that we probably would have been better off to have followed their lead. This is the great Senate of the United States of America, and we are not here just to do something, anything. We are here to do the right thing. We are here to confront one of the big issues of our time, and to do it in a way that is consistent with our laws and our values and the values of the American people. That is what we should do. That is our responsibility to our constituents, to our posterity, to the heritage we have been given. That is absolutely our responsibility.

I will tell you, and I will say it plainly, and others may not, but this legislation fails miserably in that regard. It is unworthy of the Senate. It should never pass, it should never become the law of the United States of America. It does not meet our highest ideals. It does not create a system that is consistent with the national interest of the United States.

Let me say with regard to the work that we did this week, I will sort of run down and point out some of the things that occurred, some good things occurred, and some things that were not so good that occurred. Also, in my time today, I want to move from that to a more thoughtful discussion of what any good immigration reform bill should have in it, what issues it should deal with, and point out how this bill is defective in the most fundamental way it lacks the basic principles of any good immigration reform bill.

We started out on the floor of the Senate with a 614-page bill , My staff, Cindy Hayden and her team, discovered that the bill on the floor that they were urging passage of would have brought 78.7 to 217 million legal immigrants into the United States in 20 years, equal to 26 to 66 percent of the entire total population of the United States of America of 298 million. That is what we were being asked to vote on.

I believe we were correct. We were the only group, apparently, to have ever researched this, and I think that includes the authors themselves.

Those who were opposed to this bill were being accused of wanting to lock up people and close our borders and not let anybody in and do all these horrible things, which was never the case. We simply said let's talk about a good policy for America.

We attempted to deal with the important issue of making sure enforcement will happen. I raised it in the Judiciary Committee and got a modest amendment on this issue passed. The Presiding Officer, Senator ISAKSON from Georgia, went right to the heart of the issue and drafted a very good amendment that I thought had a very good chance to pass, and should have passed, and it deals with this fundamental problem, most clearly demonstrated by what happened in 1986.

In 1986, they passed comprehensive amnesty and immigration reform. Those who were in the Senate then—I was not yet here—and remember the debate know it was an amnesty to end all amnesties. It was supposed to create a legal immigration system, and we were told we would not have to do this again. Those concerned about it warned, however, one amnesty begets another amnesty. The more you go down that path, the easier it is. This sends a signal to the world that we are not serious about our laws. In that one bill in 1986, we passed the amnesty, and we authorized a number of things to occur that were supposed to result in an effective legal system. Well, the amnesty became law just like that. But the other things that the enforcement side took—the required funding and congressional assistance, and mostly Presidential leadership—never occurred. It didn't occur.

So Senator ISAKSON came up with an amendment this week that I thought was pretty good. It basically would have ensured that the borders were secure before any of the amnesty provisions could be implemented. They are telling us constantly that the borders are going to be made secure if we pass this bill, so let's hold their feet to the fire and say this time the American people want to have a little hold on you before you grant amnesty again. Let's be sure the borders are secure first, that Congress won't forget that goal after the bill passes. Without the Isakson language, the amnesty provisions in the bill take effect the day the bill is signed. But we didn't accept that amendment. Instead, we will remain in the position where we hope that we will have immigration enforcement in the future. We accepted the Salazar trigger amendment that simply requires the President to determine that the bill's amnesty and guest worker provisions will ''strengthen the national security of the United States.''

That is not sufficient. That doesn't go to the meat of the issue like Senator ISAKSON proposed. And why was it rejected? Why was it rejected? I have had a suspicion and a growing suspicion over the years that this Congress is always willing to pass some bits of legislation dealing with immigration. But if any piece of legislation hits the floor of the Senate that will actually work, that is when the system pushes back and, for one reason or another, one excuse after another, it never happens. So I think this would have worked, and that is the reason it got rejected.

What else occurred, good and bad, through the week? My amendment was accepted 83 to 16 to put 870 miles of physical barriers on the border, 370 miles of fencing, and 500 miles of vehicle barriers—a good amendment, consistent with what the Secretary of Homeland Security and the President said they desired. We probably need more, but we need at least that. It was accepted.

Amusingly, I saw in the paper—I wasn't there when the final vote was counted, but I saw in the paper that 17 Senators changed their votes, mostly on the other side, the Democratic side, after it became clear the amendment was going to pass. Many Senators, for months, have been rolling their eyes

and said we don't need fences. That is not very good. That is not a good thing to do. Fences will work, trust me. They will work. But that, of course, begets the objection, I suspect. But when we voted, it was interesting that we ended up with a vote of 83 to 16, suggesting that the American people are beginning to have their voices heard a little bit in Congress.

Then perhaps the most significant amendment that was adopted was a Bingaman amendment. It would reduce the incredible escalating number under the new H–2C visa foreign worker program. Under the original bill, the numbers were unbelievable. The amendment reduced the total number of immigrants that would have come into the United States if that bill became law from 78 to 217 million to a lower 73 million to 93 million. That was a strong vote for that provision and we make progress in reducing the numbers.

However, this bill, S. 2611, still enacts a four- to fivefold increase over the current levels of legal immigration into America over 20 years. Current law would bring in 18.9 million over 20 years. Did you get that? This bill, if passed today, even after the Bingaman amendment passed by a substantial majority, would still bring into our country three, four, five times—at least four times, I suggest—the number of people who can come into our country legally today.

That is a huge number and will lead us at the end of 20 years to have the highest percentage of foreign-born Americans this Nation has ever had in its history, including the great migration period between 1880 and 1925. It is a colossal bill still in terms of those numbers.

The Senate also accepted, after rejecting it 3 weeks ago when the bill first came up—the bill was pulled from the floor because we couldn't get a vote on Senator KYL's amendment to make certain that criminals are not given amnesty under the bill. It was a simple amendment to say criminals, felons, couldn't be given amnesty, and we couldn't get a vote on that amendment. It was so bad apparently, the Democratic leader was so determined to block this vote, that Senator FRIST pulled the bill down.

As time went on, we were ready to vote on that amendment, and they accepted it, not graciously, but they took it. It certainly makes sense that we do that.

The Senate rejected the Vitter amendment by a substantial amount—66 people voted against it—which would strike the bill's provisions that adjust the illegal alien population to lawful permanent residents, the so-called amnesty provision.

The Senate narrowly accepted the Cornyn amendment, 50 to 48, which protects U.S. jobs for workers by making sure the H–2C visa holder can only apply for green cards if they have actually worked—they are supposed to work—if they actually worked for 4 years and their employer attests they will still have a job after they are given a green card, and the Secretary of Labor determines there are not enough U.S. workers available to fill the job position.

Then the very next vote, a companion amendment by Senator KENNEDY which was adopted with 56 votes, gutted that protection, in effect, and it no longer requires that the employer promise to continue to employ an H–2C alien.

Federal benefits was a key vote yesterday. The Senate shockingly rejected the Ensign amendment 50 to 49—close, close vote—that would have prevented aliens from collecting Social Security benefits as a result of their illegal entry into the country, their illegal work, and their illegal presentation of a Social Security number. Fraudulent presentation of a Social Security number and criminal entry into the United States, and this bill provides they can draw Social Security. We had an amendment to clarify that issue, and the Senate voted to keep the provision in the bill.

Social Security is in trouble now. Thankfully, the Senate accepted the Cornyn amendment that assessed a $750 fine to illegal aliens that will go into the State impact assistance account, and the money will be used to help the States pay for costs that are connected with immigration.

The Senate accepted an amendment by Senator INHOFE on a 63-to-34 vote, 34 Senators voting no, stating that English is a national language and strengthening the citizenship test where one is supposed to know something about the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and crew, and the history of the United States. It would strengthen that a bit. But 34 Senators voted against that amendment. It was adopted. We are moving forward.

My good friend, Senator CORNYN, who is as positive and effective a Senator as we have had join us in quite a long time, said that we made a lot of progress this week. I say we made some progress. I want to share with my colleagues why I think there are serious problems in the legislation.

Last week, I detailed 15 loopholes in the bill that is before us today. Of those 15, maybe 4, 5, 6 have been fixed in significant part, leaving 8 or 9 that have not been fixed. I will not go over those at this time, but I do want to say that those concerns I raised last week are very real. They really need to be fixed. Those loopholes need to be closed. Those concerns need to be dealt with. I am prepared to debate or negotiate with anyone about the importance of those points I made last week. I think most American people would agree with me on every single one of those issues.

Today I wish to talk about a more broad concern with the bill and its potential impact. I again emphasize that we are sensitive to the good and decent people who come here. Those of us who are unhappy with the way this bill is written are not against immigration and not against immigrants; we are not for closing our borders and not for not having anymore immigration. That is all foolish. We are not for arresting people by the tens of thousands and hauling them out of the country. That is not going to happen. But, I don't think the view of the House of Representatives, that we ought to deal with enforcement first and demonstrate that we can create a lawful and workable system first, is immoral, impractical, or radical. It makes a lot of sense to me.

Secondly, I am not aware of any Member of Congress who favors hostile or extreme measures in dealing with the issues today. We want immigration to occur. We will expect to see some increases in immigration, but we want it to be legal, under policies and terms that are appropriate for the United States of America.

The American people are with us on this issue. They expect us to create an immigration system that works and is legal. They don't want to reward those who break into our country with every single benefit we provide to those who come legally. To me, that is, indeed, amnesty.

The American people do not think big business and advocacy groups should be able to meet in secret and create some great design of a plan, foist it on the Senate, and that we can't consider it, review it, and reject it if we need to.

That is basically part of the debate we had last night. It was argued: Well, there has been a great compromise. Sessions, you and the American people, your views weren't part of it, but we know better for our country than you do. And if you amend this section, the compromise will collapse, and the bill may not get passed. You can't change this bill.

The section we were trying to change was the section that is as bogus as any part of the bill. It is the section that is captioned in big print: temporary guest worker. That is what the President has been saying he favors. He told me that personally a couple of days ago. He told me, when he flew to Alabama, that he believed in temporary workers. But it is not so that this bill creates a temporary worker program. I challenge any one last night to tell me that what I am saying is not true.

Under this bill, under that rubric of big print language, ''Nonimmigrant Visa Reform, Subsection A, Temporary Guest Workers''—what it really says is if you come into this country under this work visa you get to convert your status to a green card holder—a legal permanent resident that can then become a citizen. Somebody said last night: Why are people afraid to discuss this issue? I say to the supporters of the bill: Why are you afraid to tell the

truth about your bill? Why do you title the section one thing and then write it to actually do another?

Why are you putting in here ''temporary guest workers'' when there is nothing ''temporary'' or ''guest'' about them. Why? Are they afraid the American people will find out what is really in that provision which would have brought in, had it not been amended by Senator BINGAMAN, perhaps 130 million new people into the country permanently? What kind of temporary program is that?

How does it work? This is the way it works: You come in, get a job; you come in under this guest worker proposal, and within the first day you arrive, your employer can seek a green card for you. If you qualify—and most will—then that green card will be issued, and you are then a legal permanent resident. You are a legal permanent resident within weeks or months of entry into the country, and within 5 years of being a legal permanent resident and having a green card, you can apply for citizenship. If you know a little English and don't get arrested and convicted of a felony, you will be made a citizen by right under that provision. So it is not a temporary guest worker program. We need one in the bill. It is not there. That is what the President says he supports.

The American people don't think we ought to huddle up, have some groups come in and meet with a few Senators and have them foist on the American people an immigration bill that ignores their concerns about legality and their legitimate concerns over the depressing of the wages of American citizens. That is not a myth. The law of supply and demand has not been abrogated with regard to wages and labor.

In terms of lawfulness, decency, morality, and the national interest, the American people are head and shoulders above the Members of Congress who are asserting and pushing this flawed legislation. A huge majority of the American people have been right on this issue for decades. It is the executive branch and the Congress that have been derelict in their most solemn duties. If the American people had been listened to and not been stiff-armed by an arrogant elitist bureaucracy and political class, we wouldn't have 11 million to 20 million people in our country illegally today.

The American people have been concerned about this issue—and the polls have shown it—for 20, 30 years. So what is our national interest and what policies should we pursue? What about border workforce enforcement? Any good bill would include a good enforcement system at the border and workplace.

We should focus our policies on higher skill needs, college degrees, instead of low-wage workers. Serious consideration should be given to how we welcome new immigrants into the American world and have them reach their fullest and highest aspirations. We are not able to do that under the current system, and we certainly should fix this illegality and actually provide some mechanism for a large number of people to come out from the shadows, as they say.

We should consider seriously the impact of wages on the American workers, and we need to consider what other developed nations, such as Canada, Britain, and France are doing. How are they confronting these questions? Why don't we do that? I will tell you why we don't. It is because this bill is totally incompatible and inconsistent with the principles those advanced nations are following.

All of this must be done with the full recognition that America cannot accept everyone who might want to come here, and that is just a fact.

I recently took a trip with Chairman SPECTER of the Judiciary Committee to South America. We were provided State Department news clips. There was an article about a poll in Nicaragua that said 60 percent of the people in Nicaragua would come to the United States if they could. Sixty percent of the people of Nicaragua said they would come to the United States if they could.

We next stopped in Peru, and I asked one of the officials at the Embassy about that poll and asked him did he think it was true. He said they just had a poll in Peru earlier this year—I mean this year, both these polls were this year—earlier this year, he said, and 70 percent of the people of Peru said they would come to the United States if they could. What about the whole world? We have people who want to come from India and China and South America and Brazil and Haiti and the Dominican Republic and the Middle East and Bangladesh and Taiwan and the Philippines. These are good people. I am not putting any of them down. I am just saying for an absolute fact—an absolute fact—that we cannot accept everybody who would like to come here. Therefore, we should decide how to create a system that makes the laws enforceable and then enforce them, and we ought to seek to bring in people who provide the greatest asset to America.

So we will be confronting another issue we need to confront, and that is chain migration. Once a person comes in and they get that green card and then they become a citizen, once they get the green card, they can bring their wife and children. They may have six children. And the wife gets to come and the children get to come. Then, in addition to that, once they become a citizen, they can bring their parents and their brothers and sisters, even if it is a large number of them. They can bring, through this chain migration system, huge numbers of people who may not be what our Nation needs at the time. Maybe there is a glut in the skills their brother or sister has. Maybe those things would mitigate against them. And maybe there is some college graduate in the Dominican Republic who is anxious to come but does not qualify, cannot get in because the visas have been used up by this chain migration process, which makes no sense and needs to be altered.

Also, we need to consider the impact on the Federal Treasury. Even as a green card holder and as a citizen, you are entitled to an earned income tax credit. Most of the people legalized or coming in under this bill would be lower wage workers, and the earned income tax credit for those who qualify amounts to a tax refund to a lower wage worker on average of $2,400 per worker, per year. So they would qualify for the earned income tax credit, their parents would qualify for SSI health care, Social Security benefits as we have in this bill, welfare benefits, education, and health care. The bill calls for instate tuition for illegal immigrants. That is still in here via the DREAM Act. Those kinds of things are in this bill.

So we have had a week of some productivity, but we have much more to do in creating a bill that is fundamentally worthy of this Senate and that will deal in an effective way with where we are heading in the future.

Mr. President, I see my colleague from Washington, Senator WYDEN. I don't know how long he wants to speak. I have some more to go. If he is not going to be particularly long, I would—

Mr. WYDEN. Would my colleague yield just briefly for a question?

Mr. SESSIONS. Yes.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I was going to talk for about 15 minutes or so. I would be happy to wait for my friend from Alabama, if he would like to finish. How much longer do you intend to speak?

Mr. SESSIONS. Probably longer than that. A good bit; probably 30 or so minutes more. So I would be pleased to yield to the Senator if he is ready and pick up after that. I think I am going to be closing out the Senate when we finish up, anyway.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would be ready in just a couple of minutes to start. If my colleague would like to go on for a couple of additional minutes, and then I will speak, and then he could return.

Mr. SESSIONS. Sounds great.

Mr. WYDEN. I thank him for his courtesy.

Mr. SESSIONS. So one of the most significant issues facing America today is how many immigrants will be allowed to enter the United States and become citizens. I am not sure we have given any thought to that. As I said, when we announced at the beginning of this week that the numbers could be as high as 200 million people allowed into the country, I don't think most Senators had any idea that was so. My staff worked that up at about the same time the Heritage Foundation did their own independent analysis, and they were very close in numbers to ours. I hope that played a role in our ability

to pass a bill the next night that did bring those numbers down. As I say, we are now looking at about 73 million to 93 million more people legally coming into our country in the next 20 years.

I wish to emphasize this: Don't think those are small numbers. We are a 300 million-person country right now, and I am talking about 4 times the legal immigration rate presently existing in our country. Under the current law, we would have 19 million come in over 20 years. Under this bill, we would have 73 million to 93 million coming in by a short 20 years from now.

I asked the Judiciary Committee to hold a hearing on April 19 to examine the full impact of the legislation and what we could do about it. I asked that we examine what the estimated numerical impact is of the immigration proposal and how does the future chain migration of family members impact the total immigration numbers under the proposal. I asked that we have hearings on what will be the legislation's estimated fiscal impact on the Federal Treasury as well as State and local governments; how will the entitlement programs such as Medicaid, TANF, and food stamps be affected; what level of immigration in the future is in our best national, economic, social, and cultural interests; and what categories of immigrants in terms of skills and education should compose the overall level of annual immigration. I stated that we need to have a national discussion on this issue. The American people need to be involved.

We had one committee hearing, and it lasted about 2 to 3 hours and three or four Senators came. The individual provisions of the bill have never been examined by any committee. Let me state that again. The individual provisions of the bill on the Senate floor have never been examined by any committee. But every witness who came to that one hearing acknowledged that high-skilled immigrants are good for the economy and that low-skilled immigrants are a net drain on the economy—on average, not every single one. Many of them turn out to be productive and go on and be productive. But on average, from an economist point of view, based on the data we have, they tend to take out more in taxes than they pay in taxes.

I sent a second letter asking for further committee hearings. I wanted to examine the numerical figures in the bill, the fiscal impact, but we never had any hearings on that.

So we did our studies on the legislation, and we came out with these numbers. We did our calculations, and we believe the numbers would run from 80 million or more people coming in over 20 years to perhaps 200 million people. Two hundred million would be two-thirds of the current population of the United States of America.

So we worked hard on those numbers. I don't think they were ever seriously challenged. This is the way it ran. Under current levels of legal immigration, there would be 18.9 million people coming into the country. If we had passed this legislation as it originally was when it hit the floor, we would have had 78.7 million at a minimum coming in—4 times the current level of immigration—and it could have hit the maximum of 217 million, according to our calculations—about 11 times the current level of immigration. So those are huge numbers. I think they caused great concern.

After the amendment Senator BINGAMAN offered was passed and it took out that 20-percent-per-year escalator clause on the 325,000-person guest worker program per year—under this new program, if you hit that 325,000 one year, automatically the next year's limit was 20 percent more, automatically the next year would be 20 percent more, and automatically the next year would be 20 percent more. I think that would have sent a clear signal to the entire world that the United States was going to accept huge numbers of immigrants, and I believe we would have had applications flooding in and it would have been a very serious problem. We did pare that back to 200,000 per year without any 20 percent increase over 20 years, and that made the huge difference I just mentioned. So now about 73 million to 93 million will come in over 20 years, 4 to 5 times the current rate.

I submit that is still far too large a number. We have had no real serious national discussion about what impact that would have on working Americans, what impact it would have on our welfare and our cultural ability to assimilate and welcome foreign visitors and workers who come to our country, and I think it would cause us great difficulty. So we still need to talk about that.

I ask my colleagues and those in the media, how much have you heard this discussed? How many people in the Senate have actually discussed and debated and acknowledged how huge a change this is and whether it is the kind of change we should carry out? Has it even been discussed? Oh, but they say, we have to pass something. We just have to pass something and get it off our plate. You know, the Senate has a lot to do. We are busy. Let's just move on it. Let's just show courage. Let's just move it on and get something to the House.

Oddly, some of the people who have been making the most fun and complaining about the House of Representatives for their enforcement approach are now justifying and asking us to pass the bill on the basis of, well, it will get better after we go over to the House. They tell me to not be so worried about all of these provisions because the House Members will never agree to it and we might make the bill better in conference.

That is kind of an odd argument to make. If you are so holy and so righteous, why don't you come down here and defend these numbers they tried to slip by 3 weeks ago without a single amendment being considered by the Senate. They tried to move that through here. Finally, it blew up and Senator FRIST pulled the bill down, insisting that at least there be some amendments considered as we move this piece of legislation forward.

So, Mr. President, in a few minutes I will share a few more remarks on some of the specific concerns I have involving this philosophy of the bill in a few moments. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon is recognized.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. WYDEN are printed in today's RECORD under "Morning Business.")

Mr. WYDEN. I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MURKOWSKI). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I yielded the floor to Senator WYDEN a few moments ago, and I wish to complete some thoughts.

I documented without any real dispute that the provisions in the bill before the Senate today will increase legal immigration into our country by an extraordinary amount, by four to five times the current levels. That is a huge increase.

At the same time, we have done the research on it, and I will not go into the details, but the programs that allow most of the people to come into our country favor low-skilled workers. We think from 70 to 90, maybe 92 percent of the workers who will come in under the provisions of the bill in the Senate today will come in as low-skilled workers. That is very significant because it is quite clear from every professional, independent, pro-immigration economist who has analyzed it that low-skilled workers do not tend to pay as much in taxes as they take out. They become a net drain on the Treasury of the United States. That is an important issue. If we are going to do comprehensive reform, why haven't we discussed this issue? I ask my colleagues and those who promoted the legislation before the Senate today, has that been discussed with the American people? Have we had extensive hearings in committees on this question? The answer is no.

In fact, if you read the bill, you will discover there has been a studied and carefully carried out plan to conceal how many people will come in under the temporary guest worker programs when, in fact, what they mislabel as a

temporary program is in fact a permanent worker program that leads on a direct path to citizenship in fairly short order. I am talking about the future immigration programs in the bill here. I am not talking about the other 11 to 20 million illegal aliens who may claim amnesty under this bill.

If we are going to do a comprehensive plan, why don't we think first and foremost about what our Nation needs, what the implications are for immigration, how it has enriched us in so many ways in the past, how many wonderful, decent people come here. But we also need to ask ourselves, what are the limits of immigration? What are the aspects of it that could be better handled? We need to think these things through in a careful, legitimate way, focusing on the legitimate national interests of the United States of America, because it is not our policy and cannot be the policy of any nation to allow immigrants into their nation solely on the basis that it is good for the immigrant.

I don't want to be harsh about this. I am not being unkind. We want to have immigration. I will support an increase in legal immigration over the current levels if it is a reasonable increase focused in the right direction and promotes the interests of the United States. We will have more coming in, but we need to ask the question of how we should do it, who should be allowed to take advantage of the limited number of slots we can legitimately bestow on those who come here.

It cannot be their choice, but there seems to be talk here that reminds me of entitlement talks, rights talks, that someone in a foreign nation around the world has some sort of right to come to America, an entitlement to come to America, that we cannot deny them. Where did that come from? That is not true in any other nation in the world. It is an example of muddled thinking.

It is Mr. Barone who wrote a book called ''Hard America, Soft America.'' Sometimes we need to just have clear thinking. Some things you just need to make a decision about. One of those is the number of people who can come into our country is limited. A great nation, a wise nation, wants to make sure the people who come into the country best suit and best foster that nation's progress. How simple is that?

Let's talk about the national impact of low-skilled workers versus high-skilled workers. I asked for a series of hearings. We got one hearing. It went 2 or 3 hours. We had good professors, but only three or four Senators showed up. I have some of the testimony from that hearing and some other information relevant to that important question that I will read from in a minute. Shouldn't we be talking about those things? We are talking about a lot of issues that may be hot buttons and of concern, and I am pleased we have a fence at the border, but at the same time, the great Senate of the United States needs to think about the future.

This is what we learned. The economic experts who testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee on April 25, 2006, at the immigration economic impacts hearing agreed that low-skilled immigrants unavoidably depress the wages of American workers in low-skilled job categories. They held, it is fair to say, a common consensus. Some are pro-immigration, and they argue benefits and other things, but they all held a common consensus that high-skilled immigrants are better for the economy than low-skilled workers. Low-skilled workers are an overall net drain on the economy.

Professor Richard Freeman, the Herbert S. Ascherman professor of economics at Harvard University, testified, among other things:

> One of the concerns of when immigrants come into the country is that they may take some jobs from Americans or drive down the wages of some Americans. Obviously, if there are a large number of immigrants coming in, and if they are coming in at a bad economic time, that's very likely to happen.

He went on to talk about the impact of high-skilled workers. He noted:

> I think America makes a huge gain, and much of the gains are to us. Some of the gains are to the immigrants, of course.

You will notice he says that more than once. He talks about who actually gains from immigration. For low skilled workers who come here, it is a gain to them because they are coming to a better and freer and more prosperous country. But the real question our Nation should ask is, How does it benefit us? He says:

> There are gains to us from high-skilled workers and to the immigrants.

He goes on to say:

> Having a lot of immigrants coming in at the top, it does make it more difficult for some young Americans to advance in those fields, but we can recompense the young Americans with other policies.

He goes on to note:

> It's very important to understand that the biggest beneficiaries from immigration tend to be the immigrants, particularly if you are a low-skilled immigrant.

He adds this:

> If you are a poor immigrant, your income in the United States will be six to eight times what it is in Mexico.

Professor Dan Siciliano, director of the program in law, economics, and business at the Stanford Law School, a pretty good law school, is a pretty strong advocate in favor of immigration, but he talked about the question of the cost of low-skilled immigrants. He said:

> If you look at the fiscal/economic impact, which is the Government's coffers impact, it might be true that lower-skilled workers, just like all of us, have a negative impact on the fiscal bottom line. And so we may have a modest net negative fiscal impact for all low-wage workers in the United States, not just immigrants. This is not unique to immigrants, documented or undocumented.

What he was saying is that low-skilled American workers who are not trained, not skilled, and not educated, will draw more from the Federal Treasury than they put into it. That is one of the reasons we work so hard to train and provide skills to American workers, so they can rise and be successful and reach their highest possible aspirations. But when that does not occur, it does have a cost to the economy. Why would you want to import large numbers who don't have skills when there are large numbers of people with skills who want to come here?

Dr. Barry Chiswick, head of and research professor at the Department of Economics at the University of Illinois in Chicago, said this:

> What about the impact on low-skilled American workers? How does a large amount of new labor into the country impact American workers of low skill?

He was blunt. He told it like it was. He said:

> There is a competition in the labor market, and the large increase in low-skilled immigration that we have seen over the last 20 years has had a substantial negative effect on the employment and earnings opportunities of low-skilled American workers.

He goes on to add:

> The large increase in low-skilled immigration has had the effect of decreasing the wages and employment opportunities of low-skilled workers who are currently resident in the United States.

We have some Members on the other side who want to bring in five times as many low-skilled workers as we bring in today. Do they want to dispute the professor from Chicago?

He goes on to say:

> The last amnesty [in 1986] actually encouraged additional low-skilled immigration in anticipation of further amnesties.

I went back and saw the summary of the debate in 1986. People who opposed that amnesty predicted that we were going to be driven inevitably to future amnesties and we should stand on principle and fix the system in 1986. This professor clearly agreed that their prediction has come true.

He goes on to add:

> Over the past two decades, the real earnings of high-skilled workers have risen substantially. The real earnings of low-skilled workers have either stagnated or decreased somewhat.

That is a sad statement. It is a sad event, if it is true, because people are doing well today. The economy is booming. But as I will point out to my colleagues in further remarks, the wages for low-skilled workers are not increasing. They are not sharing in the benefits of the progress and prosperity this Nation is enjoying at this point. We have an agreement here struck between the Chamber of Commerce and some political activist groups to move this bill through, and they are not concerned sufficiently about the interests of decent American citizens who may not have the highest skills. These Americans, however, are entitled to a decent wage and their wages should be going up in this time of prosperity.

Dr. Chiswick goes on to say:

> We need to provide greater assistance to low-skilled Americans in their quest for better jobs and higher wages, and one of the

ways we can help them in this regard is by reducing the very substantial competition that they're facing from this very large and uncontrolled low-skilled immigration that is the result of both our legal immigration system and the absence of enforcement of immigration law.

I lay this on the table, like I have done before. If people want to disagree with Professor Chiswick, let's have them down here and explain that. Professor Samuelson and a lot of others agree with him, and the numbers tend to confirm that. When you have a shortage of labor, a laboring man's value goes up because he can demand a high wage. When you have a large amount of low-wage people willing to go out and take a job, it can drive down wages an American worker can expect to get when they go out and seek a job. I don't believe we are going to repeal the law of economics for labor. It has always been there, and it always will be.

Dr. Chiswick also shared with us his thoughts about the cost of low-skilled immigrants, and he notes:

Low-skilled immigrants make greater use of government benefits and transfers than they pay in taxes.

I am not condemning anybody. We should not condemn anybody. We have a nation that is generous and wants to help people who have difficulties getting by in life. We are always going to do that.

But he says:

Low-skilled immigrants make greater use of government benefits and transfers than they pay in taxes. So in terms of the public coffers, they serve as a net drain. Whereas high-skilled immigrants have the opposite effect. And the consequences of low-skilled immigration are pretty much the same whether they are in legal status or illegal status, although the net effect on the public coffers is actually more negative for legal immigrants who are low-skilled immigrants.

Did you hear that? Once they become legal and get a green card or become a citizen, they are entitled to more benefits than when they are illegal. But in fact, both of them turn out to be net drains on the coffers of the United States, according to Professor Chiswick.

He goes on to say:

And if you do the analysis separately for high-skilled and low-skilled immigrants, what you would find is that even in a period of surplus, low-skilled immigrants would be paying less in taxes than the burdens that they would be putting on government expenditures.

Mr. Siciliano, who is more pro-immigrant and sees it in a more positive light, interjected and said:

Truthfully, just like low-skilled U.S. workers.

And Professor Chiswick responded:

Just like low-skilled natives, yes.

Mr. Siciliano responds:

Yes, in no different way than low-skilled U.S. workers.

And Mr. Chiswick replied:

But low skilled natives are here. And low-skilled immigrants, do we want them in?

In unlimited numbers, I would add. What about high-skilled immigrants? What did Mr. Chiswick say about that?

Two-thirds of the immigrants coming into the United States annually come in under kinship criteria.

That is chain migration.

Only about 7 percent are skill tested. For only about 7 percent do we really ask the question what will you contribute to the American economy?

He goes on to say:

We need to alter our immigration policies to increase the focus on attracting high ability, high-skilled immigrants. What we want to do is attract those immigrants who would have the largest positive contribution to the American economy, and they will be highly skilled immigrants, immigrants with high skills in literacy, numeracy, scientific knowledge, technical training. Current immigration law pays very, very little attention to the skills that immigrants bring to the United States.

That is his statement. It is something we need to think about as we pass a bill that pretends to be comprehensive.

Professor Harry Holder, also testifying at our hearing, who was associate dean and professor of public policy at Georgetown University, another pretty good university, said this about the impact of low-skilled American workers:

There are jobs in industries like construction that I think are more appealing to native born workers. And many native born, low-income men might be interested in more of those jobs, although employers often prefer the immigrants, especially in residential construction. Now, absent the immigrants, employers might need to raise those wages and improve those conditions of work to entice native born workers into those construction, agriculture, janitorial, food preparation jobs.

I believe that when immigrants are illegal, they do more to undercut the wages of native born workers because the playing field isn't level and the employers don't have to pay them market wages.

He was then asked about future immigration policy, and he said:

I agree with Professor Chiswick. We are not ready to open the floodgates of immigration. We will continue to have controls on immigration. And we need to find cost-effective and humane ways to limit those immigrants.

So we didn't get five hearings. We didn't get a national dialog. We had one hearing for a few hours and a number of professors, pretty much those professors who consider themselves pro-immigrant, and that is what they told us.

Let me share a few more points on that subject from another individual. The Washington Times, on May 8, published a column by Alan Tomlinson. He is an official with the U.S. Business and Industry Council Educational Foundation. He went back and did some studies and dealt with this allegation that without ever increasing flows of immigrants, representatives of numerous industries have warned their sectors will literally run out of workers and the economy will collapse. He was not so impressed after he did some studies. He said:

Most statistics available show conclusively that far from easing shortages, illegal immigrants are adding to labor gluts in America.

Think about that. He says that we don't have a shortage, we have a glut.

Specifically, wages in sectors highly dependent on illegals, when adjusted for inflation, are either stagnant or have actually fallen. When labor is genuinely scarce and too many employers are chasing too few workers, businesses typically bid wages up in the competition to fill jobs. When too many workers are chasing too few jobs, employers typically are able to cut wages, confident that beggars can't be choosers.

Then he checked the Department of Labor statistics. He says this:

The Labor Department data revealed that the wage-cutting scenario is exactly what has unfolded recently throughout the economy's illegal immigrant heavy sectors.

Then he talked about restaurants. We hear there are not enough people to work in restaurants. Illegal immigrants comprise 17 percent of the food preparation workers, 20 percent of cooks, and 23 percent of dishwashers. What did he find?

According to the data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, through inflation-adjusted wages for the broad food services and drinking categories, wages fell in real terms 1.65 percent between 2000 and 2005.

If there is a crisis to get cooks and dishwashers, how are they able to cut salaries? How does the Bureau of Labor Statistics show that salaries went down? This is one of the areas where we have the most numbers of illegal immigrants.

He then goes on to talk about the hospitality industry, which includes hotels. They say we have to have a person who puts that chocolate on your bed every night and makes up your bed and comes in and puts your toiletries in a line for you, whether you want that or not. You have to have them. The Bureau of Labor Statistics data, according to him, who studied them, show that inflation-adjusted wages fell nearly 1.1 percent from 2000 to 2005. So hotels are booming, and they are building new hotels, and they say they cannot get workers.

Why are wages not going up? Perhaps if they pay a little more money to decent American citizens, they might be able to get more to work. They may have to charge $180 instead of $170 a night for a room. Is that going to destroy the American economy? I think not. Maybe the average American worker would be better able to participate in the prosperity that is going on.

He talked about the construction industry. He says that, interestingly, from 1993 to 2005, wages in that sector only increased 3 percent. That is 12 years. The wages, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in the construction industry area only increased 3 percent in 12 years. From 2000 through 2005, at the height of the housing boom, inflation-adjusted wages actually fell 1.59 percent. So we have this crisis in workers, and wages are falling.

He then talks about food manufacturing. They make up a big part of that. Let me point out that even in the construction industry, the illegal immigrants make up only 12 percent of

the workforce. So this argument that you cannot get anybody who is native-born to work in construction is bogus. The one thing that hurts me the most when I hear President Bush say it is when he says these are jobs Americans won't do. I reject that. He should never say that. These are good jobs, honorable jobs, filled by honorable American people. In the construction area, almost 90 percent are American workers, and there is nothing they won't do. They may not do something because they don't get enough pay or benefits or retirement, but the jobs themselves are noble contributions to America. They go out and build something—a wall, drywall, a roof on a house—and that is a lot better than some of these lawyers and other people who contribute very little, I submit, to the net economy.

They talked about the 14 percent of the workers in food manufacturing, including animal processing. That includes chicken plants, slaughterhouses, and beef-processing plants. You have heard that we cannot get workers there. Pew Research says that illegals make up 27 percent of workers in that category. That is the highest sector, it looks like, according to this. What happened to their wages from 2000 to 2005? They say they cannot get people to work in the chicken plants. That is what they say in Alabama—they cannot get workers and we might have a real problem without the illegal workers. If so, how did adjusted wages fall 1.4 percent during that period of time?

He goes on to note that examining more closely the pattern within the 2000 to 2005 period provides compelling evidence that illegal immigrants have been used deliberately to force down wages. In most industries that used illegal immigrants heavily, inflation-adjusted wages rose modestly during the first years of the current decade. Yet, soon after, they dropped significantly.

What about the guy who wrote the textbook on economics, Robert Samuelson? I think he would be considered a liberal. Robert Samuelson produced an op-ed on May 17, 2006, this year. He deals directly with the question of immigration. This is what he said:

> The central problem is not illegal immigration, it is undesirably high levels of poor and low-skilled immigrants, whether legal or illegal. Immigrants are not all the same. An engineer making $75,000 annually contributes more to the American economy and society than a $20,000 laborer. On average, an engineer will assimilate easily.

He quotes favorably Professor Chiswick, and I just quoted from his testimony before the hearing. This guy has written books on economics. He quotes the same quote I just gave, I believe. I will not repeat that. He quotes Mr. Chiswick's comments concerning the fact that low-skilled immigrants tend to pay less in taxes. They receive more benefits, such as income transfers, the earned-income tax credit, food stamps, public schooling, and publicly provided medical services. He quotes this from Mr. Chiswick, too: While low-skilled immigrant workers may raise the profit of their employers, they tend to have a negative impact on the well-being of the low-skilled, native-born population and on the native economy as a whole.

Mr. Samuelson adds this:

> Hardly anyone is discussing these issues candidly. It is politically inexpedient to do so. We can be a lawful society and a welcoming society simultaneously, to use the President's phrase, but we cannot be a welcoming society for a limitless number of Latin America's poor, without seriously compromising our own future and indeed the future of the many Latinos already here. Yet, that is precisely what the President and many Senators, Democrat and Republican, support by enforcing large guestworker programs and an expansion of today's legal system of visas. And in practice these proposals would result in substantial increases in low-skilled immigrants.

What are other countries doing? I will wrap up with these thoughts. What are other nations around the world doing as they consider their immigration policies?

In Australia, immigrant applications are considered under either the general migration program, which includes skilled or migrant spouses and those sponsored by family members already settled in Australia, or the humanitarian refugee program. For fiscal 2004–2005, the Australian Government set a goal of 120,000 migrants, far less than our number; 42,000 places for family members; 72,000 for skilled business migrants; and 13,000 for the humanitarian and refugee program—though actual arrivals were just over 123,000.

Under the skilled migration program in Australia, applicants are given points for different criteria. In the fiscal year 2004, the pass mark for general skilled migration was 120 points. So they have a points based system. As it turned out that year, you had to have 120 or more or you were not approved. Points were awarded for age—lower age tends to be better—skill, English language ability, specialized skills, job offers in demand fields, or completion of an Australian university degree. If a foreign student comes here and finishes at the top of their class at Georgetown or the University of Alabama, they have to leave for at least 2 years. Somebody can come in here for a low-skilled job and get a green card the first day they come in. How silly is that? But that is what Australia does. They give 5 additional points for a capital investment in Australia of at least $100,000. Australian work experience, fluency in the Australian community language, and skilled occupations are given various points.

What about Canada? They accept six major categories of immigrants: skilled and independent workers, business immigrants, provincial nominees, family class, international adoptions, and Quebec-sponsored immigrants. Refugees are also counted in immigration statistics. They do not have a country-based or worldwide quota, but they establish annual targets. In fiscal year 2004, approximately 236,000 people were accepted for permanent residence in Canada; 113,000 were skilled, 62,000 family, 10,000 business, 6,000 provincial nominees, and 32,000 refugees. There is a pretty good mix there. Far higher—over half of that number clearly are people with high skills, high education, and business capability.

The strictest preference system is used in Canada for skilled workers and is based on a point system. Under the current system, applicants must obtain at least 67 out of 100 points and have at least 1 year of work experience within the past 10 years in a management occupation or in an occupation normally requiring university or technical training, as identified by the Canadian occupational classification system. Points are awarded for education, languages, employment experience, age, employment, and adaptability. So they have standards. In our system, people come in basically under entitlements. If you meet this standard, you get to come in regardless of your skill.

What about France? Two days ago, France's lower House of Parliament approved a new immigration bill supported by one of the top Cabinet members. The Parliament approved a bill that would allow the country to selectively choose which foreigners can live and work in that country and would require that immigrants learn the French language. You know, they care about that French language. We need to care a little more about the English language.

I remember when Chirac walked out of the European Union conference because a Frenchman, in speaking to the delegation, spoke to them in English. He was so offended that a Frenchman would speak English at an international conference, he left. That is a little bit much, I think, but I don't think there is anything wrong with a nation that is proud of its language and wanting to preserve it.

So this French bill could make it easier for the country to screen out poorly educated immigrants in favor of highly skilled workers.

It would tighten restrictions under which immigrant workers can bring their families to France. That is chain migration. You get to bring your family no matter what skills they bring to the Nation. It would abolish the right of illegal immigrants to receive residency papers after living in France for 2 years. So in a way, it abolishes amnesty. It abolishes the right of illegal immigrants to receive residency papers, even after they have lived in the country for 10 years. The bill passed by 367 to 164 and will be debated in the French Senate next month.

An article I happened to catch on the airplane the other day in the Economist, a London-based newspaper, said Americans are nativists, not internationalists. Why don't we talk about some of these EU countries that are supposed to be so progressive? This is

what the Economist wrote on May 6 describing the background of France's immigration policy and the reason for their legislation:

Until the mid-seventies, immigrants to France came to work. Since the law was tightened in 1974, the inflows have changed. Today, only 7,000 permanent workers arrive each year, down from over 107,000 in the late sixties. Three-quarters of legal immigrants to France are family related. Not skill related, family related.

France has a low proportion of skilled immigrants. France's Interior Minister, Nicolas Sarkozy, argues ''that under the pretext of protecting jobs at home, France has created a system that let's in only those who have neither a job nor any useful skills.''

How about that?

The Economist article goes on to describe an immigration bill that Mr. Sarkozy has put before the French Parliament this week, which addresses that very problem.

Mr. Sarkozy's proposal, in many ways, simply follows the practice of other countries, notably Australia, Canada, Switzerland, as well as Britain and the Netherlands. In each case, the policy is based on a recognition that there is no such thing as zero immigration, and that a managed, skill-based immigration policy will not only control inflows, but will also bring benefits to those countries.

Madam President, we have focused on a lot of hot button issues, some of which are very important, but we have not given serious thought to the fundamentals of what we are doing here, and what impact it will have on our country. We are not giving any thought to what the Netherlands, what France, what Britain, what Canada, and what Australia are doing. We are not in any way following their model. In fact, we are ignoring the testimony of some of our Nation's most prestigious economists on those issues.

As a result, we have a fundamentally flawed piece of legislation on the floor of the Senate. It should never ever become law, and it is a sad day when those who are supporting this legislation are reduced to quietly going around and suggesting: Don't worry about it being so bad, we just have to do something and maybe the House of Representatives will save us.

I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RHODE ISLAND ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Mr. REED. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the Army Aviation Association's top National Guard aviation unit for 2005. Since 1969, the Army Aviation Association has presented this award to the best Army National Guard aviation unit. Indeed, it is a great honor to represent the State of this year's winner, the 1st Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment of the Rhode Island Army National Guard.

The 1st of the 126th has a long and distinguished history. Tracing its roots back to 1930 and the 68th Field Artillery Brigade, the 1st of the 126th was founded as a field artillery unit and later transitioned to medical care specialists. But in the 1960s, the unit was reorganized into an aviation unit. Since that time, it has performed with extraordinary professionalism and skill in its role as an aviation unit.

Deployed to Iraq from January to December of 2005, the 1st of the 126th served as the core of Task Force Dragonwing during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Task Force Dragonwing, based out of Balad Airbase north of Baghdad, was the lead force responsible for conducting combat support aviation operations through the entire Iraqi theater. They accumulated over 16,000 hours of combat mission flight hours during nearly 2,000 missions while transporting 66,000 passengers and 5,000 tons of cargo. During their tour, they flew 46 missions in direct action against known or suspected anti-Iraqi forces, and 22 missions were subjected to known surface-to-air fire, with 7 aircraft receiving battle damage. Throughout the professional performance of their duties, no members of the unit were killed or seriously injured.

The 1st of the 126th is comprised of 457 soldiers who man and maintain 24 UH–60 Black Hawk helicopters and 12 CH–47 Chinook helicopters. Their mission is to perform air assault and movement operations and to provide command, control, supervision, staff planning, and logistical support to all units affiliated with the battalion.

During one of my visits to Iraq, I had the great honor and opportunity to fly with them, to observe their unit firsthand. In fact, I was honored to be accompanied by GEN John Abizaid, whose comments about their skill and professionalism brought great pride to me and all Rhode Islanders. This unit was ably commanded by COL Chris Callahan and was led by soldiers, pilots, and crew members with great skill and courage and professionalism.

I was, indeed, honored and thrilled to be with them in Iraq, to see their operation, to see the contribution they made to our effort in Iraq. The 1st of the 126th has proven itself an exceptional unit and deserves to be selected by the Army Aviation Association as the top aviation unit for 2005. They have served their country with honor. We are all proud of their service, in the State of Rhode Island and throughout the Nation. Indeed, it is heartwarming to see them being recognized nationally for their great success, their great service to the Nation, and their great professionalism. I commend Colonel Callahan and all the officers and personnel of that unit for their service, for their sacrifice, for their dedication to our country.

NEEDLESS SUBSIDIES TO OIL COMPANIES

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, a couple of weeks ago, I stood in this spot for almost 5 hours because I wanted to prosecute an important cause, the cause of cutting needless subsidies to oil companies when the price of oil is over $70 a barrel. Today the price of oil is still about $70 a barrel, but there is a prospect of some good news. Late last night, the House of Representatives did something that seemed unimaginable in the Senate a couple of weeks ago. They actually had a vote on whether profitable oil companies should get taxpayer-funded royalty giveaways at a time when our citizens are paying record prices at the gas pump.

When I spoke on the floor several weeks ago, all I was trying to do was get an up-or-down vote on exactly what the House of Representatives voted for last night. In fact, I spoke in this spot for more than 4 hours before any Senator of either political party raised any concern about the proposal I was advancing. But despite that extended effort, I was unable to get an up-or-down vote on my proposal to stop ladling out tens of billions of dollars of unnecessary subsidies to the oil industry.

Last night, the House of Representatives not only voted, but they voted overwhelmingly, on a bipartisan basis, to put a stop to this extraordinary waste of taxpayer money.

I remind the Senate and those who may be following this debate that the Government Accountability Office has said that a minimum of $20 billion will be spent on this program. There is litigation involving this program underway. If the litigation is successful, and we are not able to roll back this subsidy, this program could cost taxpayers $80 billion.

Fortunately, the House voted last night to prohibit funding for new offshore oil and natural gas production leases if companies do not pay royalties based on fair market prices. The House vote aims to get oil and gas companies to renegotiate Federal contracts signed in 1998 and 1999 that included royalty relief for companies at a time when crude oil prices were considerably lower than they are now. If the companies wish to continue to get new leases in the future, they would have to renegotiate the old leases and pay royalties based on current market conditions. This is very much along the lines of what I sought, after an extended discussion, to have the Senate vote on just a few weeks ago.

Some have argued that this approach would be essentially like blackmailing the companies by denying new leases

unless they renegotiated the old ones. These opponents have argued that, instead, Congress ought to keep in place these giveaway contracts at a cost of billions of dollars to our citizens.

I also point out, as we did several weeks ago on this floor, that this was a bipartisan ripoff. Mistakes were made during the Clinton administration in 1998 and 1999. Secretary Norton sweetened the pot early on, during the President's term, administratively. Then in the summer of 2005, in the conference between the House and the Senate, these subsidies were made still sweeter. So the sugar just kept coming at a time when the program was already way too sweet for the taste of taxpayers.

No one has a constitutional right to get new leases to drill on Federal lands at giveaway prices. Congress can set new terms and conditions for new leases at any time. In fact, the Congress did just that less than a year ago in passing the Energy bill. The House of Representatives did the same thing in their vote last night. I still believe the Senate ought to have an opportunity to debate and to vote on the oil royalty issue as well, and I will tell the Senate today I am going to do everything in my power to get this issue back on the floor of the Senate as soon as possible. This is a ripoff of our taxpayers. It is an outrage, at a time when middle class folks show up at a gas station in Georgia and Oregon and elsewhere around the country, pay huge prices, and then on top of it their taxpayer dollars are being used to subsidize the companies with these giveaway contracts.

This is too important an issue for the Senate to duck. Too much taxpayer money is at stake for the Senate to duck. I do not see how the Senate can explain away not voting on this after the discussion we have had thus far and after the House of Representatives has now voted, in a bipartisan way, to do what was the subject of extended debate on the Senate floor.

The oil companies are supposed to pay royalties to the Federal Government when they extract oil from Federal lands. But in order to stimulate production of oil in our country, the Federal Government, over the last decade, has been discounting these royalty fees. These discounts now amount to billions of dollars. The royalty relief that is given to the oil companies is now the granddaddy of all the oil subsidies.

There has been a lot of debate on the floor of this body over the last few weeks about tax breaks for the oil companies. The President, in my view, to his credit, has indicated that he understands that these tax breaks are no longer needed. I was very pleased to see that. I was pleased to hear the President's comment because when the chief executives from the major oil companies came to the Energy Committee last November, I literally went down the row and asked them if they continued to need all of these tax breaks.

The oil executives said they don't need the tax breaks. But the Congress decided to keep ladling them out. So on top of the oil companies' record profits, on top of record prices, on top of record tax breaks, what we have seen is record amounts of royalty relief granted to the oil companies as well.

With prices in the stratosphere, I do not see how anyone can justify this multibillion-dollar subsidy. The point of my amendment several weeks ago was to get rid of these special oil company discounts, the special breaks that amount to billions of dollars, unless the price of oil comes down or unless the Bush administration determines that royalty relief is necessary to avoid supply disruption.

There is, in my view, a growing bipartisan chorus saying that royalty relief is not needed. For example, as another showing of bipartisanship in this cause, a distinguished Member of the other body who chairs the Resources Committee, Congressman RICHARD POMBO, said in a newspaper interview that there is no need for this particular incentive. He said there is not any need for what the Congress has been ladling out and has said it is not necessary at a time of these prices.

In addition, Mr. Michael Coney, a lawyer for the Shell Oil Company, not exactly a place where you would look for somebody to gratuitously bash the industry—he basically said the same thing. He said in this kind of climate you can't make a case for a multibillion-dollar subsidy.

The architect of the program, the author of the program, a very respected, very esteemed former colleague of many of us here, Senator Bennett Johnston of Louisiana, has said what has taken place with respect to the royalty relief program is not at all what he had in mind when he wrote the law.

Last night, the House of Representatives took a landmark step towards reforming this program to reflect current market conditions. I pay a special congratulations to two long-term friends from the other body, Congressman ED MARKEY and Congressman MAURICE HINCHEY. They both spent an enormous amount of time on this issue. They focused on building bipartisan support for their effort. And what Congressman MARKEY and what Congressman HINCHEY were able to do last night was a real breakthrough in terms of protecting the interests of taxpayers. I congratulate those two for building a bipartisan coalition on behalf of this cause.

What I proposed in the Senate was a similar approach to getting the royalty program back on track. I said we ought to roll back these royalty relief subsidies. Let's make sure we are sensitive to the prospect of conditions that can't be anticipated now. If the President says there is going to be a supply disruption or problems are taking place, then we would have a chance to look at it again. Previously, there had been a particular provision in the royalty relief program that said when the oil prices shot up, when they went above a certain level—then it was considered above $34 a barrel—the companies would have to, once again, start paying these royalties. But the problem the Senate and now the House has been looking at stems from the fact that some in the Clinton administration weren't watching the store. They weren't watchdogging this program. They weren't watchdogging the interests of taxpayers as they should have. So they did not put in this clause, the clause that protects taxpayers by setting the price level when you cut off the subsidies, and they didn't include the clause that protects the taxpayers in a number of the leases.

As a result, what has happened is taxpayer money has been wasted and there has been a litigation derby, with scores and scores of lawsuits, with companies still asserting the right to get more cash out of the taxpayer till. The Government Accountability Office has estimated that at minimum the Federal Government is going to be out $20 billion. This is the biggest subsidy of them all in the energy area.

I recall when I was on the Senate floor earlier our colleague from Florida, Senator NELSON, raised an important concern with respect to a oil subsidy program that he was troubled by. It costs the taxpayers $1 billion. Senator NELSON of Florida was spot on, in terms of trying to protect taxpayers and deal with another area where taxpayers' interests have not been well served. But Senator NELSON was talking about something that was relatively small potatoes compared to the money that is involved with royalties.

Suffice it to say, with the subsidies going out the door now and the prospect that the litigation is successful, there is a very real threat that the cost of the subsidy will go still higher, and there are some independent experts in this field who have said that the cost of this program could come in at $80 billion.

Under the Energy bill signed into law last summer, the oil companies were given new subsidies in the form of reduced royalty fees for the oil and gas they extract from Federal land, including offshore drilling in the Gulf of Mexico. This particular new subsidy in the summer of 2005 was signed into law when the companies were already reporting extraordinary profits. We were already seeing the consumer getting pounded at the gas pump, and it would have been an ideal time, in that summer of 2005, for the Congress to do what members of both political parties have been talking about, and that is roll back these unnecessary expenses, these unnecessary costs to taxpayers. It should have been done in that conference in the summer of 2005.

It was wrong that Senators and Members of the other body agreed, in the summer of 2005, to expand a program which has lost any sensible philosophical foundation, a program that

began in a time when oil was around $16 a barrel, and now is one that has been reconfigured into one that gives out subsidies when the price of oil is $70 a barrel.

Back when that energy conference got together in the summer of 2005, those Members of the Senate and the other body should have said: This is the time to draw the line. This royalty relief program does not pass the smell test. It makes absolutely no sense to be dispensing billions and billions of dollars of royalty relief to the oil companies on top of everything else they already receive.

What I hope now, with the promising action that was taken in the House of Representatives late last night, is I hope it is possible for some common sense, some practical action on behalf of taxpayers, to win bipartisan support in the Senate. That is what caused me to come to this floor several weeks ago and stay in this spot for almost 5 hours.

I am about done now because I think we have made the point, and I don't think we need to spend 5 hours on it today. But I will tell you that a program like this, which was useful back when prices were low, makes no sense, no sense at all anymore.

You can argue for government subsidies at a time when, for example, oil prices are low, and when we are talking about the need to stimulate production, when the American economy needs a shot in the arm. But you certainly don't need billions of dollars of royalty relief for companies at a time when you have record profits, record costs, and record tax breaks.

I am very hopeful that when the Senate comes back next week, we will begin a bipartisan effort to put in place legislation very much along the lines of what passed the House of Representatives late last night. There will be an opportunity to support the kind of commonsense reform I have been talking about, which passed the House last night, when the Interior appropriations bill comes to the floor.

I also appreciate particularly the efforts of Senator KYL of Arizona who has worked with me on this cause. He was a very active colleague during the debate, and since then has worked with me to try to find a way to advance this cause in the Senate.

We now have a new opportunity to protect the interests of taxpayers and to modernize our energy policy.

Talk about not keeping up with the times. How can you argue in favor of a program that began when oil was $16 a barrel? That is what we are dealing with. We are subsidizing the price of this commodity at a time when it hovers around $70 a barrel using a program that began decades ago when the price of oil was $16 a barrel. It makes no sense.

I am going to be back on this floor at the first possible opportunity to see if it is possible, on a bipartisan basis, to accomplish what I and Senator KYL were not able to do on a bipartisan basis a couple of weeks ago. I hope in the Senate there will be a new interest in saving our taxpayers' money and promoting fiscal responsibility by reining in further royalty relief for oil companies. We ought to stipulate that if the price goes down, or America faces some kind of supply disruption, we could revisit it. But until then, we ought to roll back this oil company royalty relief and save our citizens' hard-earned taxpayer dollars for more worthy causes.

BUDGET SCOREKEEPING REPORT

Mr. GREGG. Madam President, I hereby submit to the Senate the budget scorekeeping report prepared by the Congressional Budget Office under section 308(b) and in aid of section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended. This report meets the requirements for Senate scorekeeping of section 5 of S. Con. Res. 32, the first concurrent resolution on the Budget for 1986.

This report shows the effects of congressional action on the 2006 budget through May 17, 2006. The estimates of budget authority, outlays, and revenues are consistent with the technical and economic assumptions of the 2006 concurrent resolution on the budget, H. Con. Res. 95. Pursuant to section 402 of that resolution, provisions designated as emergency requirements are exempt from enforcement of the budget resolution. As a result, the attached report excludes these amounts.

The estimates show that current level spending is under the budget resolution by $11.785 billion in budget authority and by $4.226 billion in outlays in 2006. Current level for revenues is $6.531 billion above the budget resolution in 2006.

Since my last report dated April 6, 2006, Congress has cleared and the President has signed the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005, Public Law 109–222, which reduced 2006 revenues.

I ask unanimous consent that the accompanying letter and material be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, May 18, 2006.

Hon. JUDD GREGG,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The enclosed tables show the effects of Congressional action on the 2006 budget and are current through May 17, 2006. This report is submitted under section 308(b) and in aid of section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended.

The estimates of budget authority, outlays, and revenues are consistent with the technical and economic assumptions for fiscal year 2006 that underlie H. Con. Res. 95, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2006. Pursuant to section 402 of that resolution, provisions designated as emergency requirements are exempt from enforcement of the budget resolution. As a result, the enclosed current level report excludes these amounts (see footnote 2 on Table 2).

Since my last letter dated April 5, 2006, Congress has cleared and the President has signed the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005 (P.L. 109–222), which reduces 2006 revenues by an estimated $10.8 billion.

Sincerely,

DONALD B. MARRON,
Acting Director.

Enclosure.

TABLE 1.—SENATE CURRENT-LEVEL REPORT FOR SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006, AS OF MAY 17, 2006

[In billions of dollars]

	Budget Resolution [1]	Current Level [2]	Current Level Over/Under (−) Resolution
On-Budget			
Budget Authority	2,094.4	2,082.6	−11.8
Outlays	2,099.0	2,094.8	−4.2
Revenues	1,589.9	1,596.4	6.5
Off-Budget			
Social Security Outlays [3]	416.0	416.0	0
Social Security Revenues	604.8	604.8	*

[1] H. Con. Res. 95, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2006, assumed $50.0 billion in budget authority and $62.4 billion in outlays in fiscal year 2006 from emergency supplemental appropriations. Such emergency amounts are exempt from the enforcement ofthe budget resolution. Since current-level totals exclude the emergency requirements enacted in the previous session and the emergency requirements in Public Law 109–176 and Public Law 109–208 (see footnote 2 on Table 2), the budget authority and outlay totals specified in the budget resolution have also been reduced (by the amounts assumed for emergency supplemental appropriations) for purposes of comparison.

[2] Current level is the estimated effect on revenue and spending of all legislation that the Congress has enacted or sent to the President for his approval. In addition, full-year funding estimates under current law are included for entitlement and mandatory programs requiring annual appropriations, even if the appropriations have not been made.

[3] Excludes administrative expenses of the Social Security Administration, which are also off-budget, but are appropriated annually.

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

Note: * = Less than $50 million.

TABLE 2.—SUPPORTING DETAIL FOR THE SENATE CURRENT-LEVEL REPORT FOR ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006, AS OF MAY 17, 2006

[In millions of dollars]

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Enacted in Previous Sessions:			
Revenues	*	*	1,607,180
Permanents and other spending legislation [1]	1,296,134	1,248,957	*
Appropriation legislation	1,333,823	1,323,802	*
Offsetting receipts	−479,868	−479,868	*
Total, enacted in previous sessions	2,150,089	2,092,891	1,607,180
Enacted This Session:			
Katrina Emergency Assistance Act of 2005 (P.L. 109–176)	250	250	0
An act to make available funds included in the Deficit Reduction Act for the Low-income Energy Assistance Program for 2006 (P.L. 109–204)	1,000	750	0
Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005 (P.L. 109–222)	0	0	−10,757
Total, enacted this session	1,250	1,000	−10,757
Entitlements and mandatories:			
Difference between enacted levels and budget resolution estimates for appropriated entitlements and other mandatory programs	−68,740	879	*
Total Current Level [1 2 3 4]	2,082,599	2,094,770	1,596,423
Total Budget Resolution	2,144,384	2,161,420	1,589,892
Adjustment to budget resolution for emergency requirements [4]	−50,000	−62,424	*
Adjusted Budget Resolution	2,094,384	2,098,996	*
Current Level Over Adjusted Budget Resolution	*	*	6,531 *
Current Level Under Adjusted Budget Resolution	11,785	4,226	*

Notes: * = not applicable; P.L. = Public Law.

[1] P.L. 109–171 was enacted early in this session of Congress, but is shown under ''enacted in previous sessions'' as requested by the Budget Committee. Included in current level for P.L. 109–171 are $980 million in budget authority and −$4,847 million in outlays.

[2] Pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 95, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2006, provisions designated as emergency requirements are exempt from enforcement of the budget resolution. As a result, the current-level totals exclude the following amounts:

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Emergency requirements enacted in previous session	74,981	112,423	−7,111
Katrina Emergency Assistance Act of 2006 (P.L. 109–176)	−250	0	0
National Flood Insurance Enhanced Borrowing Authority Act of 2006 (P.L. 109–208)	2,275	2,275	0
Total, enacted emergency requirements	77,006	114,698	−7,111

[3] Excludes administrative expenses of the Social Security Administration, which are off-budget.

[4] H. Con. Res. 95, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2006, assumed $50,000 million in budget authority and $62,424 million in outlays in fiscal year 2006 from emergency supplemental appropriations. Such emergency amounts are exempt from the enforcement of the budget resolution. Since current-level totals exclude the emergency requirements enacted in the previous session and the emergency requirements in Public Law 109–176 and Public Law 109–208 (see footnote 2 above), the budget authority and outlay totals specified in the budget resolution have also been reduced (by the amounts assumed for emergency supplemental appropriations) for purposes of comparison.

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK 2006

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, many of our Nation's law enforcement officers have come to Washington, DC, to commemorate National Police Week. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize all Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials for their outstanding service and their vital contributions to the safety of our communities. I would also like to honor the memory of those who gave their lives in the line of duty. These officers, and their families, have paid the ultimate sacrifice for the safety of others.

The first National Police Week was celebrated in 1962 when President John F. Kennedy signed an Executive order designating May 15 as Peace Officers Memorial Day and the week in which that date falls as ''Police Week.'' The weeklong tribute to our Nation's local, State and Federal police officers honors those who died in the line of duty and those who continue to serve and protect us every day at great personal risk. According to the National Law Enforcement Memorial Fund, 1,635 law enforcement officers have been killed in the line of duty in the last 10 years. In 2005 alone, 155 officers lost their lives, including 5 from Michigan. The names of these officers have been permanently engraved on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial along side more than 17,000 others.

Sadly, more police officers have lost their lives to guns than to any other cause over the last 10 years. In 2005, 59 officers were shot to death while in the line of duty. This year's Police Week activities occur shortly after the horrific shooting of Detective Vicky Armel and Officer Michael Garbarino at a police station in nearby Fairfax County, VA. Last Monday afternoon, Detective Armel and Officer Garbarino were ambushed in the parking lot of the police station by an 18-year-old reportedly armed with an AK–47 military-style assault rifle, a high-powered hunting rifle, and five handguns. During the course of the shootout with Detective Armel, Officer Garbarino, and other officers, the gunman fired more than 70 times. Tragically, Detective Armel died later that day and Officer Garbarino passed away early Wednesday morning.

It is not enough to simply mention those, like Detective Armel and Officer Garbarino, who have given their lives protecting our communities. In order to truly honor their service and sacrifice, we should take up and pass commonsense gun safety legislation to help protect law enforcement officials from the threat posed by military style firearms.

The sale of assault rifles like the AK–47 used in last week's shooting were prohibited under the 1994 assault weapons ban. Unfortunately, the President and the Republican congressional leadership allowed this legislation to expire on September 13, 2004, allowing 19 previously banned types of assault weapons and other firearms with military style features to once again be legally sold. Recognizing the especially lethal nature of these military style firearms, I have cosponsored legislation to restore and strengthen the assault weapons ban.

I am also a cosponsor of legislation to prohibit the sale of the Five-Seven armor-piercing handgun and its ammunition in the United States. A number of national law enforcement organizations have publicly called for a ban on these firearms because of the threat they pose to police officers, even those wearing body armor. According to the manufacturer's Web site, the Five-Seven weighs less than 2 pounds fully loaded and measures only 8.2 inches in length, making it easily concealable. A statement which previously appeared on the Web site boasted ''Enemy personnel, even wearing body armor can be effectively engaged up to 200 meters. Kevlar helmets and vests as well as the CRISAT protection will be penetrated.'' These military style pistols clearly have no sporting purpose and pose a great threat to the lives of our law enforcement officers.

We can and should do more to support and protect those who are working to ensure the safety of our communities. The names of law enforcement officers from Michigan who were added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial this year are:

Detective Lavern Steven Brann of Battle Creek, Died May 9, 2005

Officer Owen David Fisher of Flint, Died July 16, 2005

Commander Dale Francis Bernock of Dearborn, Died October 3, 2005

Officer Scot Andrew Beyerstedt of Mattawan, Died July 26, 2005

Sergeant Michael Allen Scarbrough of Wayne County, Died February 9, 2005

Deputy Sheriff Paul Lee Mickel of Wayne County, Died November 18, 1973

Chief Benjamin Lewis Carpenter of Newaygo, Died July 23, 1963
Night Watchman William A. Daniels of Cassopolis, Died January 26, 1903

OIL INDUSTRY MERGER ANTITRUST ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2006

Mr. DEWINE. Madam President, I join Senator KOHL as sponsor of the Oil Industry Merger Antitrust Enforcement Act. This bill will make it significantly more difficult for oil companies to merge, and should help put an end to the record energy prices that continue to burden America's consumers and businesses.

As we all know, these high fuel costs are affecting every family, and they show no sign of coming back down. We must continue our efforts to do something about it. As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights, I have been working for years to combat the problem of higher energy prices. Along with Senator KOHL, I have championed legislation to make it clear that that the Department of Justice has the legal authority to prosecute OPEC for its price fixing of crude oil prices. As we all know, the biggest part of our gas prices is the price of crude oil, and the only way we can restore competition in the market for crude oil is to fight against OPEC's blatantly illegal and anticompetitive conspiracy to fix prices of this crucial commodity.

I have also asked the Federal Trade Commission to monitor gasoline prices to make sure that consumers are not subject to price gouging or illegal price manipulation, and in response to that request the FTC has instituted an ongoing project to monitor gasoline prices in 360 markets across the Nation, including 12 in my home State of Ohio.

Further, the Judiciary Committee has held two hearings addressing the causes of higher fuel prices in recent months, and last month I joined with Chairman SPECTER and Senators KOHL, LEAHY, FEINSTEIN, and DURBIN, to sponsor legislation which prevents oil companies from unfairly manipulating the supply of oil in order to artificially raise prices, and also calls for investigations into how effective enforcement of oil mergers has been, whether past mergers need to be revisited, and whether the enforcement agencies need new standards for reviewing oil industry mergers. That legislation also creates a Joint Federal and State Task force to investigate information sharing in the oil industry that may lead to artificially high prices for gasoline, electricity, and heating oil. Perhaps most important, it provides a ''NOPEC'' provision like the one that Senator KOHL and I have sponsored in the past, which enables Justice to prosecute the illegal OPEC cartel.

While all these efforts are steps in the right direction, we continue to see increasing fuel costs, and one likely reason is the ongoing consolidation in the oil industry. And, as our energy needs increase and as oil gets harder and more expensive to find and produce, it seems likely that this consolidation will continue. Therefore, we need to continue our efforts to maintain competition in this industry, and by making it more difficult for oil companies to merge, this legislation provides a different and useful approach for keeping these companies independent and maintaining the competition that still exists.

Specifically, this bill changes the burden of proof in cases alleging illegal mergers, so that oil companies that want to merge must prove that their merger will not harm consumers. In addition, this bill requires the antitrust agencies to specifically consider the unique conditions of the petroleum market when evaluating these mergers, in order to assure that when reviewing proposed mergers the agencies are focusing on the potential dangers of oil industry mergers. These changes, taken together, will make sure that only pro-competitive mergers are allowed, and will help protect consumers and businesses from higher energy prices.

We still have many challenges to face in our ongoing efforts to combat high energy prices, but this bill will make a difference and I strongly encourage my colleagues to join in support of its passage.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF CLARK, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, today I rise in order to pay tribute to the 125th anniversary of the founding of the city of Clark, SD. As the county seat of Clark County, this vibrant, progressive community has been a center of commercial and civic activity since its inception.

The site which Clark is built on was chosen by GEN S.J. Conklin, who would later become known as the Father of Clark County. The prospects of the town increased greatly when the railroad was complete in early 1882. With the arrival of the trains came a flurry of economic activity. The first businesses opened in Clark were the Clark House operated by Mattie Greenslet and a general store operated by COL W.H. Lamb. Later there would be a land office and the Big Store, known as the largest department store west of Minneapolis.

Now Clark is home to seven churches, a thriving business community, excellent hunting and fishing, and the high school's Clark Comets, among various other attractions. Each year, Clark hosts both Potato Day and the Halloween Spooktacular. Additionally, there are over two dozen civic organizations doing good work in the community.

I am pleased to announce that Clark will be celebrating its 125th anniversary with a community celebration on June 10 to 11. There are numerous events scheduled, including a parade, street dance, ecumenical church service, community potluck, and baseball games. This celebration is a fitting way to recognize Clark's long and productive history.

Even 125 years after its founding, Clark continues to be a vital community and a great asset to South Dakota. I am proud to publicly honor Clark on this memorable occasion. The citizens of Clark are continuing to live up their motto: Clark is indeed ''a nice place to visit . . . a great place to call home.''•

THE PASSING OF ANN WEBSTER SMITH

• Mr. CHAFEE. Madam President, I take this opportunity to recognize Anne Webster Smith, a world-renowned preservationist, who died in Washington, DC on April 20, 2006.

Like Rhode Island's grand dame of historic preservation, Antionette Downing, Anne Webster Smith exhibited a tireless and infectious dedication to the preservation of our cultural heritage. Just last year, Ms. Smith was awarded the Piero Gazzola Prize, given once every 3 years by the International Council on Monuments and Sites, for her lifelong efforts to protect the world's historic and cultural sites. This tribute, seconded by scores of ICOMOS leaders from throughout the world, is a statement that leadership is as much about cultivation, persistence and persuasion as it is bold initiative.

In addition to her 30 years of service to ICOMOS, Ms. Smith served as New York's Deputy Commissioner for Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, and as a professional staff member at the USDOT and Advisory Council for Historic Preservation. She was most active in those critical years when she and her colleagues created the modern institutional foundation for preservation in the U.S.

In her service to ICOMOS, Ms. Smith was dedicated to recognizing the world's greatest cultural and natural sites through the United Nations World Heritage Program. At the same time, as an American she had greater ambitions for her own country. In a letter she sent me just last January, she lamented: ''I have long been concerned by the fact that the United States, the first nation to ratify the Convention after its passage in 1972, has been so slow to recognize the importance of implementing the Convention. In my view the Convention has the potential for increasing community pride, for expanding educational awareness and interest in our Nation's heritage and history, for developing concern about the importance of distinguished architecture and planning, especially in urban areas, and for serving as an important tool for the expansion of development

of cultural tourism.'' Increasing numbers of Americans agree with Ms. Smith's vision.

Clearly, Ann Webster Smith was respected and loved by the entire cultural heritage and preservation community for a lifetime of leadership and friendship. Her work will live on because she inspired so many throughout the U.S. and the world to work as hard as they can to recognize, celebrate and protect our cultural heritage.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:33 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 5386. An act making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 5386. An act making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. COLLINS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with amendments:

S. 457. A bill to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to issue guidance for, and provide oversight of, the management of micropurchases made with Governmentwide commercial purchase cards, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. HAGEL:

S. 2857. A bill to amend the International Air Transportation Competition Act of 1979 relating to air transportation to and from Love Field, Texas; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2858. A bill to reduce temporarily the duty on acrylic or modacrylic synthetic staple fibers, not carded, combed, or otherwise processed for spinning; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2859. A bill to reduce temporarily the duty on acrylic or modacrylic synthetic filament tow; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2860. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on acrylic or modacrylic synthetic staple fibers, not carded, combed, or otherwise processed for shipping; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2861. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Chloral; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2862. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Imidacloprid Technical (Imidacloprid); to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2863. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Triadimefon; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2864. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on ACM; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2865. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Permethrin; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2866. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Thidiazuron; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2867. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Flutolanil; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2868. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Resmethrin; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2869. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Clothianidin; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2870. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Mesotrione Technical; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2871. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on MKH 6561 Isocyanate; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2872. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Endosulfan; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2873. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on mixtures of methyl 4-iodo-2-[3-(4-methoxy-6-methyl-1,3 ,5-triazin-2-yl)ureido sulfonyl]benzoate, sodium salt; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2874. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Ethyl 4,5-dihydro-5,5-diphenyl-1,2-oxazole-3-carboxylate (Isoxadifen-ethyl); to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2875. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on (5-cyclopropyl-4-isoxazolyl)[2-(methylsulfonyl)-4-(trifluoromethyl phenyl] methoanone (Isoxaflutole); to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2876. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Methyl 2-[(4,6-dimethoxypyrimidin-2-ylcarbamoyl)sulfamoyl]-a-(methanesulfonamido)-p-toluate (Mesosulfuron-methyl) (CAS No. 208465-21-8) whether or not mixed with application adjuvants; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2877. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on mixtures of Foramsulfuron and Iodosulfuron-methyl-sodium; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2878. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on formulations of Prosulfuron; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2879. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Spirodiclofen; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2880. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Propamocarb HCL (Previcur); to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2881. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on chloracetic acid, ethyl ester; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2882. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on chloroacetic acid, sodium salt; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2883. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Phenmedipham; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BUNNING:

S. 2884. A bill to facilitate and expedite direct refunds to coal producers and exporters of the excise tax unconstitutionally imposed on coal exported from the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2885. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Desmedipham; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2886. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on Methidathion Technical; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2887. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on difenoconazole; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2888. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on Lambda-Cyhalothrin; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2889. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on cyprodinil; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2890. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on Wakil XL; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2891. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on Azoxystrobin Technical; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2892. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on mucochloric acid; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2893. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on Trinexapac-ethyl; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2894. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on triasulfuron; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2895. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on Imidacloprid pesticides; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2896. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on crotonic acid; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2897. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on 3,6,9-Trioxaundecanedioic acid; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2898. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on 1,3-Benzenedicarboxamide, N, N′-Bis (2,2,6,6- tetramethyl-4-piperidinyl)-); to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2899. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on reaction products of phosphorus trichloride with 1,1′-biphenyl and 2,4-bis(1,1-dimethylethyl)phenol); to the Committee on Finance .

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2900. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on preparations based on ethanediamide, N-(2-ethoxyphenyl)-N′-(4-isodecylphenyl)-); to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2901. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on 1-Acetyl-4-(3-dodecyl-2,5-dioxo-1-pyrrolidinyl)-2,2,6,6-tetramethyl piperidine; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2902. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on 3-Dodecyl-1-(2,2,6,6-tetramethyl-4-piperidinyl)-2,5-pyrrolidinedione); to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2903. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on Tetraacetylethylenediamine; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2904. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on sodium esters of parahydroxybenzoic acid; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2905. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on sodium petroleum sulfonate; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2906. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on Diclofop methyl; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2907. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on asulam sodium salt; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2908. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on ethofumesate; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2909. A bill to extend temporarily the suspension of duty on Nemacur VL; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2910. A bill to modify the provisions relating to formulations of Triasulfuron and Dicamba; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 2911. A bill to modify the provisions relating to formulations of Ethanediamide, N-(2-ethoxyphenyl)-N′-(2-ethylphenyl)-); to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DEWINE (for himself, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. FEINGOLD):

S. 2912. A bill to establish the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force, to establish the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. BAUCUS):

S. 2913. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the employment tax treatment and reporting of wages paid by professional employer organizations; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DEWINE:

S. 2914. A bill to recognize and honor the soldiers of the United States and Republic of Korea who served, were wounded, or were killed from 1953 until the present in the defense of the Republic of Korea, to require the placement of a commemorative plaque at the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BIDEN:

S. 2915. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve screening for colorectal cancer for TRICARE beneficiaries over the age of 50; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself, Mr. REID, Mr. KERRY, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. BINGAMAN, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 2916. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to expand access to contraceptive services for women and men under the Medicaid program, help low income women and couples prevent unintended pregnancies and reduce abortion, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. OBAMA, and Mrs. CLINTON):

S. 2917. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure net neutrality; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. DODD (for himself and Mr. LOTT):

S. 2918. A bill to provide access to newspapers for blind or other persons with disabilities; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 146

At the request of Mr. INOUYE, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 146, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to deem certain service in the organized military forces of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines and the Philippine Scouts to have been active service for purposes of benefits under programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

S. 811

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 811, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the bicentennial of the birth of Abraham Lincoln.

S. 843

At the request of Mr. SANTORUM, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. BENNETT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 843, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to combat autism through research, screening, intervention and education.

S. 1046

At the request of Mr. KYL, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1046, a bill to amend title 28, United States Code, with respect to the jurisdiction of Federal courts over certain cases and controversies involving the Pledge of Allegiance.

S. 1319

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1319, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve the operation of employee stock ownership plans, and for other purposes.

S. 2278

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) were added as cosponsors of S. 2278, 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.

S. 2430

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. 2430, a bill to amend the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 1990 to provide for implementation of recommendations of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service contained in the Great Lakes Fishery Resources Restoration Study.

S. 2475

At the request of Mr. SALAZAR, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2475, a bill to establish the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Museum of the American Latino Community, to develop a plan of action for the establishment and maintenance of a National Museum of the American Latino Community in Washington, DC, and for other purposes.

S. 2503

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2503, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an extension of the period of limitation to file claims for refunds on account of disability determinations by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

S. 2548

At the request of Mr. STEVENS, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2548, a bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to ensure that State and local emergency preparedness operational plans address the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals following a major disaster or emergency.

S. 2563

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. ALLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2563, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require prompt payment to pharmacies under part D, to restrict pharmacy co-branding on prescription drug cards issued under such part, and to provide guidelines for Medication Therapy Management Services programs offered by prescription drug plans and MA-PD plans under such part.

S. 2658

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2658, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to enhance the national defense through empowerment of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau and the enhancement of the functions of the National Guard Bureau, and for other purposes.

S. 2694

At the request of Mr. CRAIG, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2694, a bill to amend title 38, United

States Code, to remove certain limitation on attorney representation of claimants for veterans benefits in administrative proceedings before the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 2703

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2703, a bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

S. 2803

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2803, a bill to amend the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 to improve the safety of mines and mining.

S. 2810

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2810, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to eliminate months in 2006 from the calculation of any late enrollment penalty under the Medicare part D prescription drug program and to provide for additional funding for State health insurance counseling program and area agencies on aging, and for other purposes.

S. 2811

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2811, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend the annual, coordinated election period under the Medicare part D prescription drug program through all of 2006 and to provide for a refund of excess premiums paid during 2006, and for other purposes.

S. 2854

At the request of Mr. KOHL, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SPECTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2854, a bill to prevent anti-competitive mergers and acquisitions in the oil and gas industry.

S. RES. 484

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 484, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate condemning the military junta in Burma for its recent campaign of terror against ethnic minorities and calling on the United Nations Security Council to adopt immediately a binding non-punitive resolution on Burma.

AMENDMENT NO. 4029

At the request of Mr. ALLEN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 4029 proposed to S. 2611, a bill to provide for comprehensive immigration reform and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BUNNING:

S. 2884. A bill to facilitate and expedit direct refunds to coal producers and exporters of the excise tax unconstitutionally imposed on coal exported from the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I rise to introduce legislation that will ensure fair tax treatment for domestic coal producers and coal exporters to help them receive the coal excise tax refunds due to them from an unconstitutional tax they paid.

For years the Federal Government collected the coal excise tax on coal exports from coal producers and coal exporters. In 1998, the Federal Courts declared the coal excise tax unconstitutional when applied to exported coal.

Although those that export coal are entitled to the refunds of the unconstitutional coal excise tax on exported coal, they face serious and significant obstacles to obtaining refunds of the tax with the Internal Revenue Service and the courts.

This legislation will end unnecessary litigation on this issue and simplify the IRS process that U.S. coal producers and exporters use to obtain refunds of the coal excise tax they paid. It also will ensure that the producer or exporter that actually exported the coal, and thus is entitled to the refund, receives that refund.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this legislation.

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. BAUCUS):

S. 2913. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the employment tax treatment and reporting of wages paid by professional employer organizations; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today, Senator BAUCUS and I are introducing legislation that will update and clarify the tax rules for business clients and that use professional employer organizations, PEOs. This legislation will improve the efficiency of small businesses by eliminating any uncertainty about the ability of qualifying PEOs to assume liability for paying wages and collecting and remitting Federal employment taxes.

Business owners are overwhelmed with the challenges of meeting Federal and State employment and tax responsibilities. Many businesses, particularly small to mid-sized businesses are turning to professional employer organizations for assistance with these employment obligations. A PEO works with its business clients to provide comprehensive employment services. The PEO assumes responsibility for the management of human resources, employee benefits, payroll, and workers' compensation, allowing their business clients to focus on their core competencies to maintain and grow their bottom line. In short, this legislation is about improving the efficiency of America's small businesses.

Businesses today need help with the increasingly complex employment related matters. The most important of these matters is the payment of wages and the collection and remitting of employment taxes. Increasingly, businesses are turning to PEOs to assume these responsibilities. Our legislation will eliminate any ambiguity about a PEO's ability to assume employment tax responsibility while providing important safeguards for the PEO's small business clients.

Tbe Small Business Efficiency Act will permit PEOs that are certified by the IRS, CPEO, to collect and remit Federal employment taxes of their business clients' employees. The certification process is voluntary and was designed with significant input from all stakeholders, including the Department of the Treasury and the IRS. To be certified by the IRS, the CPEO would have to meet financial and other standards and maintain ongoing certification by the IRS. The CPEO would be required to assume full and sole responsibility for the collection of Federal employment taxes.

In addition to the many benefits for business clients, the government benefits from improved employment regulatory compliance and tax administration The IRS has stated that CPEOs would facilitate tax administration by reducing the number of returns it processes and by reducing errors in calculating and paying employment taxes. This is a win-win situation. The PEO arrangement not only reduces the governmental burden of collecting employment tax and unemployment compensation obligations, it also assures consistent compliance with complex tax laws and timely and expedited payment of taxes. This is clearly an improvement for PEOs, the business clients of PEOs, and the Federal Government.

The Small Business Efficiency Act will substantially simplify employment tax obligations for businesses that use PEOs. The legislation will provide clarity for PEOs, their business clients, and the IRS regarding the rights of a PEO to assist business client with employment tax responsibilities while significantly improving tax administration. I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill and a section-by-section description of the bill be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and I look forward to working with my colleagues to address this issue in a timely manner.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2913

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Small Business Efficiency Act of 2006''.

SEC. 2. NO INFERENCE.

Nothing contained in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed to create any inference with respect to the determination of who is an employee or employer—

(1) for Federal tax purposes (other than the purposes set forth in the amendments made by section 3), or

(2) for purposes of any other provision of law.

SEC. 3. CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) EMPLOYMENT TAXES.—Chapter 25 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to general provisions relating to employment taxes) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 3511. CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS.

''(a) GENERAL RULES.—For purposes of the taxes, and other obligations, imposed by this subtitle—

''(1) a certified professional employer organization shall be treated as the employer (and no other person shall be treated as the employer) of any work site employee performing services for any customer of such organization, but only with respect to remuneration remitted by such organization to such work site employee, and

''(2) the exemptions and exclusions which would (but for paragraph (1)) apply shall apply with respect to such taxes imposed on such remuneration.

''(b) SUCCESSOR EMPLOYER STATUS.—For purposes of sections 3121(a) and 3306(b)(1)—

''(1) a certified professional employer organization entering into a service contract with a customer with respect to a work site employee shall be treated as a successor employer and the customer shall be treated as a predecessor employer during the term of such service contract, and

''(2) a customer whose service contract with a certified professional employer organization is terminated with respect to a work site employee shall be treated as a successor employer and the certified professional employer organization shall be treated as a predecessor employer.

''(c) LIABILITY WITH RESPECT TO WORK SITE EMPLOYEES.—

''(1) GENERAL RULES.—Solely for purposes of its liability for the taxes, and other obligations, imposed by this subtitle—

''(A) the certified professional employer organization shall be treated as the employer of any individual (other than a work site employee or a person described in subsection (e)) who is performing services covered by a contract meeting the requirements of section 7705(e)(2), but only with respect to remuneration remitted by such organization to such individual, and

''(B) the exemptions and exclusions which would (but for subparagraph (A)) apply shall apply with respect to such taxes imposed on such remuneration.

''(d) SPECIAL RULE FOR RELATED PARTY.—Subsection (a) shall not apply in the case of a customer which bears a relationship to a certified professional employer organization described in section 267(b) or 707(b). For purposes of the preceding sentence, such sections shall be applied by substituting '10 percent' for '50 percent'.

''(e) SPECIAL RULE FOR CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS.—For purposes of the taxes imposed under this subtitle, an individual with net earnings from self-employment derived from the customer's trade or business (including a partner in a partnership that is a customer) is not a work site employee with respect to remuneration paid by a certified professional employer organization.

''(f) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary or appropriate to carry out the purposes of this section.''.

(b) CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYER ORGANIZATION DEFINED.—Chapter 79 of such Code (relating to definitions) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 7705. CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this title, the term 'certified professional employer organization' means a person who applies to be treated as a certified professional employer organization for purposes of section 3511 and who has been certified by the Secretary as meeting the requirements of subsection (b).

''(b) CERTIFICATION.—A person meets the requirements of this subsection if such person—

''(1) demonstrates that such person (and any owner, officer, and such other persons as may be specified in regulations) meets such requirements as the Secretary shall establish with respect to tax status, background, experience, business location, and annual financial audits,

''(2) represents that it will satisfy the bond and independent financial review requirements of subsections (c) on an ongoing basis,

''(3) represents that it will satisfy such reporting obligations as may be imposed by the Secretary,

''(4) computes its taxable income using an accrual method of accounting unless the Secretary approves another method,

''(5) agrees to verify the continuing accuracy of representations and information which was previously provided on such periodic basis as the Secretary may prescribe, and

''(6) agrees to notify the Secretary in writing of any change that materially affects the continuing accuracy of any representation or information which was previously made or provided.

''(c) REQUIREMENTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An organization meets the requirements of this paragraph if such organization—

''(A) meets the bond requirements of paragraph (2), and

''(B) meets the independent financial review requirements of paragraph (3).

''(2) BOND.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A certified professional employer organization meets the requirements of this paragraph if the organization has posted a bond for the payment of taxes under subtitle C (in a form acceptable to the Secretary) in an amount at least equal to the amount specified in subparagraph (B).

''(B) AMOUNT OF BOND.—For the period April 1 of any calendar year through March 31 of the following calendar year, the amount of the bond required is equal to the greater of—

''(i) 5 percent of the organization's liability under section 3511 for taxes imposed by subtitle C during the preceding calendar year (but not to exceed $1,000,000), or

''(ii) $50,000.

''(3) INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL REVIEW REQUIREMENTS.—A certified professional employer organization meets the requirements of this paragraph if such organization—

''(A) has, as of the most recent audit date, caused to be prepared and provided to the Secretary (in such manner as the Secretary may prescribe) an opinion of an independent certified public accountant as to whether the certified professional employer organization's financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and

''(B) provides, not later than the last day of the second month beginning after the end of each calendar quarter, to the Secretary from an independent certified public accountant an assertion regarding Federal employment tax payments and an examination level attestation on such assertion.

Such assertion shall state that the organization has withheld and made deposits of all taxes imposed by chapters 21, 22, and 24 of the Internal Revenue Code in accordance with regulations imposed by the Secretary for such calendar quarter and such examination level attestation shall state that such assertion is fairly stated, in all material respects.

''(4) CONTROLLED GROUP RULES.—For purposes of the requirements of paragraphs (2) and (3), all professional employer organizations that are members of a controlled group within the meaning of sections 414(b) and (c) shall be treated as a single organization.

''(5) FAILURE TO FILE ASSERTION AND ATTESTATION.—If the certified professional employer organization fails to file the assertion and attestation required by paragraph (3) with respect to any calendar quarter, then the requirements of paragraph (3) with respect to such failure shall be treated as not satisfied for the period beginning on the due date for such attestation.

''(6) AUDIT DATE.—For purposes of paragraph (3)(A), the audit date shall be six months after the completion of the organization's fiscal year.

''(d) SUSPENSION AND REVOCATION AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may suspend or revoke a certification of any person under subsection (b) for purposes of section 3511 if the Secretary determines that such person is not satisfying the representations or requirements of subsections (b) or (c), or fails to satisfy applicable accounting, reporting, payment, or deposit requirements.

''(e) WORK SITE EMPLOYEE.—For purposes of this title—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The term 'work site employee' means, with respect to a certified professional employer organization, an individual who—

''(A) performs services for a customer pursuant to a contract which is between such customer and the certified professional employer organization and which meets the requirements of paragraph (2), and

''(B) performs services at a work site meeting the requirements of paragraph (3).

''(2) SERVICE CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS.—A contract meets the requirements of this paragraph with respect to an individual performing services for a customer if such contract is in writing and provides that the certified professional employer organization shall—

''(A) assume responsibility for payment of wages to the individual, without regard to the receipt or adequacy of payment from the customer for such services,

''(B) assume responsibility for reporting, withholding, and paying any applicable taxes under subtitle C, with respect to the individual's wages, without regard to the receipt or adequacy of payment from the customer for such services,

''(C) assume responsibility for any employee benefits which the service contract may require the certified professional employer organization to provide, without regard to the receipt or adequacy of payment from the customer for such services,

''(D) assume responsibility for hiring, firing, and recruiting workers in addition to the customer's responsibility for hiring, firing and recruiting workers,

''(E) maintain employee records relating to the individual, and

''(F) agree to be treated as a certified professional employer organization for purposes of section 3511 with respect to such individual.

''(3) WORK SITE COVERAGE REQUIREMENT.—The requirements of this paragraph are met

with respect to an individual if at least 85 percent of the individuals performing services for the customer at the work site where such individual performs services are subject to 1 or more contracts with the certified professional employer organization which meet the requirements of paragraph (2) (but not taking into account those individuals who are excluded employees within the meaning of section 414(q)(5)).

''(f) DETERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT STATUS.—Except to the extent necessary for purposes of section 3511, nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the determination of who is an employee or employer for purposes of this title.

''(g) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary or appropriate to carry out the purposes of this section.''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 45B of such Code (relating to credit for portion of employer social security taxes paid with respect to employees with cash tips) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(e) CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS.—For purposes of this section, in the case of a certified professional employer organization which is treated under section 3511 as the employer of a work site employee who is a tipped employee—

''(1) the credit determined under this section shall not apply to such organization but to the customer of such organization with respect to which the work site employee performs services, and

''(2) the customer shall take into account any remuneration and taxes remitted by the certified professional employer organization.''.

(2) Section 3302 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(h) TREATMENT OF CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS.—If a certified professional employer organization (as defined in section 7705), or a client of such organization, makes a payment to the State's unemployment fund with respect to a work site employee, such organization shall be eligible for the credits available under this section with respect to such payment.''.

(3) Section 3303(a) of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (3) and inserting ''; and'' and by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph:

''(4) a certified professional employer organization (as defined in section 7705) is permitted to collect and remit, in accordance with paragraphs (1), (2), and (3), contributions during the taxable year to the State unemployment fund with respect to a work site employee.'', and

(B) in the last sentence—

(i) by striking ''paragraphs (1), (2), and (3)'' and inserting ''paragraphs (1), (2), (3), and (4)'', and

(ii) by striking ''paragraph (1), (2), or (3)'' and inserting ''paragraph (1), (2), (3), or (4)''.

(4) Section 6053(c) of such Code (relating to reporting of tips) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(8) CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS.—For purposes of any report required by this section, in the case of a certified professional employer organization that is treated under section 3511 as the employer of a work site employee, the customer with respect to whom a work site employee performs services shall be the employer for purposes of reporting under this section and the certified professional employer organization shall furnish to the customer any information necessary to complete such reporting no later than such time as the Secretary shall prescribe.''.

(d) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The table of sections for chapter 25 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''Sec. 3511. Certified professional employer organizations.''.

(2) The table of sections for chapter 79 of such Code is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7704 the following new item:

''Sec. 7705. Certified professional employer organizations.''.

(e) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND OBLIGATIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall develop such reporting and recordkeeping rules, regulations, and procedures as the Secretary determines necessary or appropriate to ensure compliance with the amendments made by this Act with respect to entities applying for certification as certified professional employer organizations or entities that have been so certified. Such rules shall be designed in a manner which streamlines, to the extent possible, the application of requirements of such amendments, the exchange of information between a certified professional employer organization and its customers, and the reporting and recordkeeping obligations of the certified professional employer organization.

(f) USER FEES.—Subsection (b) of section 7528 of such Code (relating to Internal Revenue Service user fees) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4) CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS.—The fee charged under the program in connection with the certification by the Secretary of a professional employer organization under section 7705 shall not exceed $500.''.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the January 1st of the first calendar year beginning more than 12 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) CERTIFICATION PROGRAM.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall establish the certification program described in section 7705(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 not later than 6 months before the effective date determined under paragraph (1).

THE SMALL BUSINESS EFFICIENCY ACT

SECTION-BY-SECTION DESCRIPTION

Section 1. Short Title: The Small Business Efficiency Act.

Section 2. No Inference Language: The legislation is narrowly drafted to provide expressly that except for the payment of employment taxes as provided in the bill, there is no inference regarding the determination of who is a common law employer under Federal tax laws or who is an employer under other provisions of the law.

Section 3. Certified Organizations: Creates a voluntary certification program for Professional Employer Organizations (CPEOs) by establishing basic requirements which must be met in order to be certified by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Section 3(a) describes the responsibility of the CPEO with respect to the covered workers performing services at its business client's worksite, with the CPEO being treated as the employer of those covered workers for employment tax purposes. This section provides that after certification, a CPEO assume the responsibility and liability for payment of wages and collection of Federal employment taxes for covered workers. This section also provides that a CPEO and its clients will be treated as ''successor'' employers for employment tax purposes with no additional taxes owed simply because a client engages or disengages a CPEO. Finally, the section imposes rules that prevent abuse.

Section 3(b) describes certification requirements which a PEO must demonstrate to the IRS by written application. As established by the Secretary of the Treasury, these could include requirements with respect to tax status, background, experience, business location, and annual financial audits, as well as verification of the continuing accuracy of representations and information on a periodic basis. In addition, this section requires CPEOs to obtain financial reviews from independent CPAs and to post a bond for the payment of employment taxes. A worksite employee is a worker who performs services at the CPEO's business client worksite if the worker and at least 85% of the individuals working at the worksite are covered by a written service contract that provides the CPEO will (1) assume responsibility for payment, reporting and withholding of wages, employment taxes and employee benefits, without regard to the adequacy of payment by the client business. The service contract would also be required to expressly provide that the CPEO assumes shared responsibility with the business client for firing the worker or hiring or recruiting any new worker and for maintaining employee records.

Section 3(c) provides conforming amendments with respect to certain credits and reporting rules.

Section 3(d) makes certain clerical amendments.

Section 3(e) creates regulatory authority to develop appropriate reporting and recordkeeping rules.

Section 3(f) authorizes the creation of a CPEO certification user fee not to exceed $500.

Section 3(g) provides that the provisions of the Act will take effect on January 1 of the first calendar year beginning more than 12 months after the date of enactment. This section further requires the Secretary of the Treasury to establish the certification program not later than 6 months following the effective date.

By Mr. BIDEN:

S. 2915. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve screening for colorectal cancer for TRICARE beneficiaries over the age of 50; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, today I am pleased to introduce a simple bill that would give military dependents and retirees the same choices for colon cancer screening that every Medicare beneficiary and every Federal employee enjoys. This legislation requires Tricare to abandon its overly restrictive and outdated policy of limiting coverage of screening colonoscopy to a small group of high-risk individuals. By contrast, for several years both Medicare and the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program have paid for screening colonoscopy to detect cancer in average-risk people, and my bill simply applies this same standard to the Tricare program.

Why is this bill so important? Colon cancer is highly curable when detected and treated early but extremely lethal when it reaches an advanced stage. Early detection and prompt treatment are the keys to surviving colon cancer. Among those whose colon cancer has been cured by modern diagnostic and treatment methods are President Reagan, Supreme Court Justice Ginsburg, and our colleague Senator BURNS, to name just a few.

Why is access to colonoscopy so critical? At present, gastroenterologists overwhelmingly recommend colonoscopy as the preferred method to use for screening of colon cancer in average risk individuals over 50. Colonoscopy is more sensitive than other methods of screening in detecting colonic neoplasia, pre-cancerous changes or full-blown cancers, at an early stage; colonoscopy is more reliable in finding colonic neoplasia in the upper ⅔ of the colon; and colonoscopy permits biopsy and removal of abnormal tissue as soon as it is discovered, in a single procedure. In fact, medical specialists refer to colonoscopy as the ''gold standard'' for colon cancer screening.

Since, 2001, the Medicare Program has permitted the use of colonoscopy to screen for colon cancer in ''average risk'' individuals, and the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program has used the same criteria since 2003. But the Tricare medical program for military beneficiaries clings to an outmoded policy that authorizes screening colonoscopy to detect colon cancer only for only a very narrowly defined group of ''high risk'' people, not the much broader group of ''average risk'' individuals covered by the Medicare and FEHBP programs. By failing to keep up with modern medical practice, as well as with other federal health programs, Tricare seems to be inappropriately restricting access to a potentially lifesaving tool for early cancer detection. The resulting unnecessary delay in detection of colon cancer puts our military community at needless risk.

To remedy this situation, my bill requires the Tricare program to use the same criteria as the Medicare program in paying for screening colonoscopy. My bill does not mandate that screening colonoscopy be used for colon cancer detection in Tricare beneficiaries; that decision is left to Tricare patients and their doctors. Rather, this legislation simply affords Tricare participants the same options that Federal employees and Medicare beneficiaries have enjoyed for some time.

Frankly, I see no logical reason why those who have served our country in uniform for over 20 years, and the family members of those currently on active duty, should not have access to the same high-quality medical choices offered to our senior citizens and to our Federal workers. The policy on colon cancer screening that has worked well for 42 million Medicare beneficiaries and 9 million FEHBP participants, a policy that is endorsed by most medical specialists, seems totally appropriate for the Tricare population. It is time to bring the Tricare program's colon cancer screening criteria into the 21st century.

Mr. President, I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this commonsense legislation

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By Ms. SNOWE (for herself, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. OBAMA, and Mrs. CLINTON):

S. 2917. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure net neutrality; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation that will preserve the open, unrestricted nature of the Internet. I want to thank my colleagues, Senator DORGAN and Senator INOUYE, with whom I have worked closely to draft this bill. I also want to acknowledge Senator WYDEN, who has introduced similar net neutrality legislation, for his leadership on this issue.

Having risen from its humble beginnings as an obscure tool for a few techsavvy enthusiasts, the Internet now stands as the epicenter of commerce today. An April 2006 Pew Internet study cites that 73 percent of adults in the U.S. now use the Internet, 45 percent of whom use it for making major financial decisions. Last year alone, over $1.7 trillion in transactions took place on the Internet, and today 725,000 small businesses use e-commerce giant eBay as a way to reach customers. Because anyone, anywhere, can communicate and transact business with virtually any corner of the globe with an Internet connection, the benefits of the Internet on small businesses—and on rural places like my home State of Maine—cannot be overstated.

The Internet became a robust engine of economic development by enabling anyone with a good idea to connect to consumers and compete on a level playing field for consumers' business. Anyone can send an e-mail or set up a Web site at little or no cost, and the marketplace has picked winners and losers, rather than an arbitrary gatekeeper.

When users log onto the Internet, they take a lot of things for granted. They assume that they will be able to access whatever Web site they want, when they want to—and if they have a broadband connection, they expect this to happen at a high speed, regardless of what Web site they choose. They also assume that they can use any feature they like, anytime they choose—watching online videos, searching for information, making purchases, and sending e-mails and instant messages. They assume that they can attach devices to make their online experience better—things such as Web cameras, game controllers, or extra hard drives. What they are assuming is called ''net neutrality,'' the principle at the core of the Internet's DNA. The idea is that the Internet should be open and free, restricted by no one.

Unfortunately, all this may change very soon if Congress does not take action. In August 2005, the Federal Communications Commission issued an order removing virtually all regulation of Internet facilities that connect homes and businesses to the World Wide Web. Among the regulations lifted were the long-standing non-discrimination rules that required the owners of Internet facilities networks—in most cases cable and telephone companies—to allow delivery of all Internet content to the end user at the same speed, refraining from blocking any Web sites. These long-standing rules have enabled small businesses in Maine and across the country to have the same access to customers as giant corporations. Yet without the protections of the legislation we introduce today, those small businesses may be reduced to second-class citizen status on the Web.

Telephone and cable companies supply broadband Internet service to 98 percent of Internet subscribers in this country. Recently, executives from several of the largest of these firms publicly indicated their intention to charge fees to Web site operators before giving them access to their highspeed lines, and relegate those who do not pay up to the slower transmission lines. A Web site owned by a company who is a competitor could even be blocked entirely.

Anyone who has sat frustrated at a computer screen waiting for a file to download knows what this means for the those Web site owners not willing to pay up: their sites and applications will run at a slower pace, thus turning away consumers. These Internet companies, e-mail services, and Web site owners will be relegated to the Information ''Dirt Road''—the Information Superhighway will be reserved for those companies who are willing to pay the toll. Worst of all, consumers and businesses who rely on these Internet services will be completely powerless, since it is beyond their control as to which Web site owners are willing to pay the fees.

The legislation we introduce today keeps the rules where they always have been, until last year. First, the bill bars network operators from blocking, degrading or impairing Internet traffic. Second, the bill ensures that network operators are not allowed to create a two-tiered Internet—an Internet that treats those who can afford to do business with large nationwide broadband providers more favorably than those who do not. Virtually everyone has called for more widespread deployment of broadband facilities: this bill ensures that those high-speed networks are available for all users of the Internet.

This legislation already enjoys support from a broad spectrum of groups who care about Internet freedom, such as the Consumer's Union, the Parent's Television Council, the Gun Owners of America, the American Library Association, and the Christian Coalition. Altogether over 140 organizations have backed our efforts to prevent discrimination the Internet.

If we allow companies to set up tollbooths along the Information Superhighway, we will fundamentally alter every Internet user's experience and stifle the entrepreneurship that flourishes on the world's last remaining

frontier. Network operators should not have the power to decide which Web pages load faster, which content their customers can access, and whose data has the highest priority. Network operators already enjoy near-monopolistic privileges in many markets across the country. Should this market power now be extended to messaging services, streaming video, or online shopping, just to name a few?

Consumers should decide which businesses succeed and which fail, not network providers. What has made the Internet such a remarkable success is the ability of consumers everywhere to use the connection they pay for to experience a world of their own choosing on their own terms. Earlier this month, the New York Times endorsed the legislation in an editorial when it called for ''a strong net neutrality bill that would prohibit broadband providers from creating a two-tiered Internet. Senators who care about the Internet and Internet users should get behind it.'' I hope my colleagues join me in supporting the Internet Freedom Preservation Act.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, today my colleague Senator SNOWE and I are introducing the Internet Freedom Preservation Act.

Internet freedom, known as net neutrality, is one of the most important issues facing us as the telecommunications landscape continues to change, and frankly, how this issue is resolved could determine whether our Nation continues to be a world leader in the area of innovation and technology.

Consumers, businesses, and the very marketplace of ideas have benefited from the historically open nature of the Internet.

From the largest of corporations to the person working alone in a garage, all have had the ability to offer their content, services, and applications over the Internet and to reach consumers, because of this open structure of the Internet and the existence of net neutrality nondiscrimination rules.

I think it is important to point the wide variety of groups that have called for the preservation of strong net neutrality protections: groups as diverse as Consumers Union, AARP, Microsoft, Amazon, Gun Owners of America, and the National Religious Broadcasters, and over 150 organizations or companies so far have weighed in on this important issue.

The Internet, and the broadband network operators that bring the Internet to businesses and consumers, have enabled even the most rural town in my State of North Dakota to be connected to the rest of the world, and this connection has brought economic opportunities, and advances in health and education that could otherwise not have been possible.

Now, however, the open nature of the Internet is at risk. It is at risk because of actions by the Federal Communications Commission, and because of the lack of competition in the broadband market.

Non-discrimination rules that existed for years on broadband providers have been removed, leaving only the marketplace to act as a check. The problem is, however, that the broadband marketplace is highly concentrated—98 percent of consumers get their broadband from either cable modem or DSL, and up to 50 percent of consumers can only get their broadband from one broadband provider.

Thus, the situation is not a marketplace of players on an equal footing. Broadband network operators have substantial market power and the incentive to use it. There have been public statements by some of their CEOs that have made clear that they intend to use that leverage to exact payments from content providers and to operate as gatekeepers.

These broadband network operators have become more than just the pipe that carries content, services, and applications to a consumer; they now are in the business of these content, services and applications as well. Thus, they have the leverage, and the incentive to favor their own services over competition.

Until now the Internet has been driven by consumers and innovators, which have in turn, encouraged broadband deployment.

Consumers pay for their Internet connection, and expect that they can go anywhere they lawfully want to on the Internet.

But without maintaining the longstanding nondiscrimination rules that have been in place for decades, the Internet could go from being driven by consumers and innovators to bring dictated by network operators.

What will be the impact on the next great application or service over the Internet if the very first thing the next start-up has to do is work out an agreement with the broadband provider?

What will be the impact on consumers if their choices are artificially limited by their broadband providers as to what VOIP or video service they can get?

I agree that broadband network operators are investing millions of dollars in building the next generation of infrastructure, and I commend them for that. Under our bill they will still be able to be compensated for their investments, as they are now, by charging for their broadband connections.

But they should not be able to put up additional tolls on the Internet, or erect barricades to competition that will change the nature of the Internet as we know it.

Our bill will preserve the freedom and the openness of the Internet that we have come to take for granted, but that is now at risk.

I ask my colleagues to support this legislation that I introduce today with Senator SNOWE.

Mr. INOUYE. Mr. President, I rise to today in support of the legislation introduced by my colleagues Senators SNOWE and DORGAN to preserve a founding principle of communications law that is critical to the promotion of innovation and opportunity for all Americans. The preservation of the open, non-discriminatory architecture of the Internet is vital to the American economy and society. Over a relatively short timeframe, the Internet has become a robust engine for market innovation, economic growth, social discourse, and the free flow of ideas precisely because it has allowed consumer choice and control over the use of lawful content, applications and services. In turn, anyone with a good idea has been able to connect to consumers and compete on a level playing field for consumers' business. The marketplace has picked winners and losers, and not a central gatekeeper. This bedrock concept of connecting innovators and consumers without interference, known as ''net neutrality,'' has been a hallmark feature of the Internet and is a principle reason why America leads the world in online innovation.

Regrettably, without this legislation that heritage may be at risk as traditional rules that have required communications operators to follow principles of non-discrimination no longer apply. In August 2005, the FCC refused to adopt meaningful and enforceable consumer safeguards at the time it classified DSL and cable modem as an information service. As a result, the bill that I have cosponsored with Senators SNOWE and DORGAN is necessary to ensure that consumers and content companies have the ability to use the Internet without interference or gatekeeping by the network operators.

This bill responds to recent FCC decisions by preserving the openness of the Internet and thereby encourages the continued development of innovative Internet technologies, services, and content that has fueled the American economy. Specifically, under the bill, consumers will have the ability to access the content of their choosing, and Internet businesses will have the ability to compete head-to-head with network providers on the basis of the merits of their offerings.

As the father of the Internet, Vint Cerf, said to our Committee, the Internet is ''innovation without permission.'' The proposed legislation will ensure that the Internet indeed remains a platform that spawns innovation and economic development for the benefit of all Americans.

By Mr. DODD (for himself and Mr. LOTT):

S. 2918. A bill to provide access to newspapers for blind or other persons with disabilities; to the Committee on rules and Administration.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, today I am introducing, along with the distinguished Chairman of the Rules Committee, legislation to ensure that the blind and those with disabilities continue to have free access to electronic editions of periodicals and newspapers. This service is an extension of the existing authorization for the Library of

Congress to provide Braille books, recordings, sound reproduction equipment, musical scores, and other materials to the blind and physically disabled individuals.

Currently, the National Federation of the Blind provides these services through its NFB–NEWSLINE program which has been funded by the Library of Congress through its Books for the Blind program. The NFB–NEWSLINE program is a telephone-based electronic audio newspaper service serving our Nation's 1.3 million blind Americans by providing 23 million minutes of on-demand service in response to 2,600 calls per day at an average cost of 2.7 cents per minute.

Congress established the Books for the Blind program within the Library of Congress in 1931. The program is administered by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, NLS, which continues to be the primary source of Braille and audio books and magazines for blind adults today. However, until development of the NFB–NEWSLINE program, it was not economically feasible for NLS to provide timely access to newspapers for the blind. Under current production methods, it would require several weeks for NLS to prepare and deliver a single copy of a daily newspaper.

The NFB–NEWSLINE program, however, is designed for real time rapid distribution of the electronic text of newspapers. Under this program, the blind can access daily newspapers on the day of publication through telephone access to the digital text. The funding for this program has been provided by a public-private partnership between NFB–NEWSLINE, state sponsors, including public libraries, rehabilitation agencies, and several affiliates of NFB, and the Library of Congress. Newspaper and magazine content is contributed by many participating news organization and publishers.

The bill Senator LOTT and I are introducing today will ensure the continued Federal share of this partnership so that NFB–NEWSLINE can continue to serve as the multi-state provider of this service. Currently, NFB–NEWSLINE provides some level of service to all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico by providing local dialing numbers for the blind and disabled to use to access newspapers and periodicals. The annual telecommunications costs for this service is approximately $750,000 which serves approximately 40 percent of the eligible readers.

This bill will enable NFB–NEWSLINE to continue to serve existing readers with improved services while at the same time expanding services to more readers. The bill authorizes $750,000 for this service in fiscal year 2007 and such sums as are necessary in fiscal years 2008–2011. This is a very efficient program that for a very small Federal investment will allow the blind and disabled to more fully participate in their communities through access to the daily news. With the current state of technology, it is simply unacceptable that the blind and disabled do not have real time access to daily newspapers and periodicals.

I commend NFB–NEWSLINE for developing this public-private partnership to serve the needs of the blind and disabled individuals and I pleased to introduce this legislation to ensure the continuation of this program.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 4083. Mr. FEINGOLD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2611, to provide for comprehensive immigration reform and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 4084. Mr. CHAMBLISS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2611, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 4083. Mr. FEINGOLD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2611, to provide for comprehensive immigration reform and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 167, strike lines 17 through 20.

SA 4084. Mr. CHAMBLISS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2611, to provide for comprehensive immigration reform and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 397, strike line 21 and all that follows through page 409, line 19, and insert the following:

(7) WORK DAY.—The term ''work day'' means any day in which the individual is employed 8 or more hours in agriculture.

CHAPTER 1—PILOT PROGRAM FOR EARNED STATUS ADJUSTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

SEC. 613. AGRICULTURAL WORKERS.

(a) BLUE CARD PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may confer blue card status upon an alien who qualifies under this subsection if the Secretary determines that the alien—

(A) has performed agricultural employment in the United States for at least 150 work days per year during the 24-month period ending on December 31, 2005;

(B) applied for such status during the 18-month application period beginning on the first day of the seventh month that begins after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(C) is otherwise admissible to the United States under section 212 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182), except as otherwise provided under subsection (e)(2).

(2) AUTHORIZED TRAVEL.—An alien in blue card status has the right to travel abroad (including commutation from a residence abroad) in the same manner as an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence.

(3) AUTHORIZED EMPLOYMENT.—An alien in blue card status shall be provided an ''employment authorized'' endorsement or other appropriate work permit, in the same manner as an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence.

(4) TERMINATION OF BLUE CARD STATUS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may terminate blue card status granted under this subsection only upon a determination under this subtitle that the alien is deportable.

(B) GROUNDS FOR TERMINATION OF BLUE CARD STATUS.—Before any alien becomes eligible for adjustment of status under subsection (c), the Secretary may deny adjustment to permanent resident status and provide for termination of the blue card status granted such alien under paragraph (1) if—

(i) the Secretary finds, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the adjustment to blue card status was the result of fraud or willful misrepresentation (as described in section 212(a)(6)(C)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(6)(C)(i)); or

(ii) the alien—

(I) commits an act that makes the alien inadmissible to the United States as an immigrant, except as provided under subsection (e)(2);

(II) is convicted of a felony or 3 or more misdemeanors committed in the United States; or

(III) is convicted of an offense, an element of which involves bodily injury, threat of serious bodily injury, or harm to property in excess of $500.

(5) RECORD OF EMPLOYMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Each employer of a worker granted status under this subsection shall annually—

(i) provide a written record of employment to the alien; and

(ii) provide a copy of such record to the Secretary.

(B) SUNSET.—The obligation under subparagraph (A) shall terminate on the date that is 6 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(6) REQUIRED FEATURES OF BLUE CARD.—The Secretary shall provide each alien granted blue card status and the spouse and children of each such alien residing in the United States with a card that contains—

(A) an encrypted, machine-readable, electronic identification strip that is unique to the alien to whom the card is issued;

(B) biometric identifiers, including fingerprints and a digital photograph; and

(C) physical security features designed to prevent tampering, counterfeiting, or duplication of the card for fraudulent purposes.

(7) FINE.—An alien granted blue card status shall pay a fine to the Secretary in an amount equal to $1,000.

(8) MAXIMUM NUMBER.—The Secretary may issue not more than 1,500,000 blue cards during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) RIGHTS OF ALIENS GRANTED BLUE CARD STATUS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided under this subsection, an alien in blue card status shall be considered to be an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence for purposes of any law other than any provision of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.).

(2) DELAYED ELIGIBILITY FOR CERTAIN FEDERAL PUBLIC BENEFITS.—An alien in blue card status shall not be eligible, by reason of such status, for any form of assistance or benefit described in section 403(a) of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1613(a)) until 5 years after the date on which the Secretary confers blue card status upon that alien.

(3) TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR ALIENS ADMITTED UNDER THIS SECTION.—

(A) PROHIBITION.—No alien granted blue card status may be terminated from employment by any employer during the period of blue card status except for just cause.

(B) TREATMENT OF COMPLAINTS.—

(i) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROCESS.—The Secretary shall establish a process for the receipt, initial review, and disposition of complaints by aliens granted blue card status who allege that they have been terminated without just cause. No proceeding shall be conducted under this subparagraph with respect to a termination unless the Secretary determines that the complaint was filed not later than 6 months after the date of the termination.

(ii) INITIATION OF ARBITRATION.—If the Secretary finds that a complaint has been filed in accordance with clause (i) and there is reasonable cause to believe that the complainant was terminated without just cause, the Secretary shall initiate binding arbitration proceedings by requesting the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service to appoint a mutually agreeable arbitrator from the roster of arbitrators maintained by such Service for the geographical area in which the employer is located. The procedures and rules of such Service shall be applicable to the selection of such arbitrator and to such arbitration proceedings. The Secretary shall pay the fee and expenses of the arbitrator, subject to the availability of appropriations for such purpose.

(iii) ARBITRATION PROCEEDINGS.—The arbitrator shall conduct the proceeding in accordance with the policies and procedures promulgated by the American Arbitration Association applicable to private arbitration of employment disputes. The arbitrator shall make findings respecting whether the termination was for just cause. The arbitrator may not find that the termination was for just cause unless the employer so demonstrates by a preponderance of the evidence. If the arbitrator finds that the termination was not for just cause, the arbitrator shall make a specific finding of the number of days or hours of work lost by the employee as a result of the termination. The arbitrator shall have no authority to order any other remedy, including, but not limited to, reinstatement, back pay, or front pay to the affected employee. Within 30 days from the conclusion of the arbitration proceeding, the arbitrator shall transmit the findings in the form of a written opinion to the parties to the arbitration and the Secretary. Such findings shall be final and conclusive, and no official or court of the United States shall have the power or jurisdiction to review any such findings.

(iv) EFFECT OF ARBITRATION FINDINGS.—If the Secretary receives a finding of an arbitrator that an employer has terminated an alien granted blue card status without just cause, the Secretary shall credit the alien for the number of days or hours of work lost for purposes of the requirement of subsection (c)(1).

(v) TREATMENT OF ATTORNEY'S FEES.—The parties shall bear the cost of their own attorney's fees involved in the litigation of the complaint.

(vi) NONEXCLUSIVE REMEDY.—The complaint process provided for in this subparagraph is in addition to any other rights an employee may have in accordance with applicable law.

(vii) EFFECT ON OTHER ACTIONS OR PROCEEDINGS.—Any finding of fact or law, judgment, conclusion, or final order made by an arbitrator in the proceeding before the Secretary shall not be conclusive or binding in any separate or subsequent action or proceeding between the employee and the employee's current or prior employer brought before an arbitrator, administrative agency, court, or judge of any State or the United States, regardless of whether the prior action was between the same or related parties or involved the same facts, except that the arbitrator's specific finding of the number of days or hours of work lost by the employee as a result of the employment termination may be referred to the Secretary pursuant to clause (iv).

(C) CIVIL PENALTIES.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary finds, after notice and opportunity for a hearing, that an employer of an alien granted blue card status has failed to provide the record of employment required under subsection (a)(5) or has provided a false statement of material fact in such a record, the employer shall be subject to a civil money penalty in an amount not to exceed $1,000 per violation.

(ii) LIMITATION.—The penalty applicable under clause (i) for failure to provide records shall not apply unless the alien has provided the employer with evidence of employment authorization granted under this section.

(c) ADJUSTMENT TO PERMANENT RESIDENCE.—

(1) AGRICULTURAL WORKERS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall adjust the status of an alien granted blue card status to that of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence if the Secretary determines that the following requirements are satisfied:

(i) QUALIFYING EMPLOYMENT.—The alien has performed at least—

(I) 5 years of agricultural employment in the United States, for at least 100 work days or 575 hours, but in no case less than 575 hours per year, during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(II) 3 years of agricultural employment in the United States, for at least 150 work days or 863 hours, but in no case less than 863 hours per year, during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(ii) PROOF.—An alien may demonstrate compliance with the requirement under clause (i) by submitting—

(I) the record of employment described in subsection (a)(5); or

(II) such documentation as may be submitted under subsection (d)(3).

(iii) EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES.—In determining whether an alien has met the requirement under clause (i)(I), the Secretary may credit the alien with not more than 12 additional months to meet the requirement under clause (i) if the alien was unable to work in agricultural employment due to—

(I) pregnancy, injury, or disease, if the alien can establish such pregnancy, disabling injury, or disease through medical records;

(II) illness, disease, or other special needs of a minor child, if the alien can establish such illness, disease, or special needs through medical records; or

(III) severe weather conditions that prevented the alien from engaging in agricultural employment for a significant period of time.

(iv) APPLICATION PERIOD.—The alien applies for adjustment of status not later than 7 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(v) FINE.—The alien pays a fine to the Secretary in an amount equal to $1,000.

(vi) ENGLISH LANGUAGE.—The alien has demonstrated an understanding of the English language, as required under section 312(a)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1423(a)(1)).

FLOOR PRIVILEGES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Meagan Moroney, who is interning with me this week, be granted privilege of the floor for the remainder of this session today.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations on today's Executive Calendar: Calendar No. 631, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 641 through 662, and all nominations on the Secretary's desk. I further ask unanimous consent that the nominations be confirmed en bloc, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then return to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

George McDade Staples, of Kentucky, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Director General of the Foreign Service.

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW COMMISSION

Horace A. Thompson, of Mississippi, to be a member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission for a term expiring April 27, 2011.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Kent D. Talbert, of VIRGINIA, to be General Counsel, Department of Education.

JAMES MADISON MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP FOUNDATION

J.C.A. Stagg, of Virginia, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation for a term expiring November 17, 2011.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Vince J. Juaristi, of Virginia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring February 8, 2009.

Jerry Gayle Bridges, or Virginia, to be Chief Financial Officer, Corporation for National and Community Service.

AIR FORCE

The following named Air National Guard of the United States Officer for appointment as Director, Air National Guard and for appointment to the grade indicated in the United States Air Force under title 10, U.S.C., sections 10506 and 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Craig R. McKinley, 8368

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. William M. Fraser III, 9314

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be general

Lt. Gen. Kevin P. Chilton, 6603

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the

grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Norman R. Seip, 6765

The following named officer for appointment as the Surgeon General of the Air Force and appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., sections 8036 and 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. James G. Roudebush, 9187

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 64:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, 1173

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Lawrence A. Stutzriem, 7077

The following Air National Guard of the United States Officer for appointment in the reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title, 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Linda K. McTague, 8129

The following named Officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Robert J. Elder, Jr., 7484

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. David A. Deptula, 6792

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Victor E. Renuart, Jr., 0278

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Elder Granger, 1583

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. David F. Melcher, 8170

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Stephen M. Speakes, 9036

The following named officer for appointment in the reserve of The Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Ronald D. Silverman, 3658

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Michael A. Ryan, 0558

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Stephen V. Reeves, 2272

The following named United States Army Reserve officer for appointment as Chief, Army Reserve and appointment to the grade indicated under the provisions of title 10, U.S.C., sections 3038 AND 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Jack C. Stultz, Jr., 5861

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Alan T. Baker, 5911

The following named officer for appointment as Chief of Chaplains, United States Navy, and appointment to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S. C., section 5142:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (lh) Robert F. Burt, 9653

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Gregory J. Smith, 2462

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Captain Townsend G. Alexander, 8946
Captain David H. Buss, 3577
Captain Kendall L. Card, 8333
Captain John N. Christenson, 4645
Captain Michael J. Connor, 7632
Captain John Elnitsky, Ii, 1510
Captain Kenneth E. Floyd, 5264
Captain Philip H. Greene, 9852
Captain Bruce E. Grooms, 0608
Captain James C. Grunewald, 3365
Captain Edward S. Hebner, 8910
Captain Michelle J. Howard, 6763
Captain Arnold O. Lotring, Jr., 7794
Captain James P. McManamon, 5156
Captain Joseph P. Mulloy, 0400
Captain Charles E. Smith, 4827
Captain Scott H. Swift, 9644
Captain David M. Thomas, 1168
Captain Kurt W. Tidd, 5355
Captain Michael P. Tillotson, 7164
Captain Mark A Vance, 1181
Captain Garry R. White, 1944
Captain Edward G. Winters, iii, 5375

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN1383 AIR FORCE nominations (1955) beginning Rosalind L. Abdulkhalik, and ending Jesse B. Zypallis, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 7, 2006.

PN1471 AIR FORCE nominations (6) beginning Steven L. Alger, and ending Rachlle Paulkagiri, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 24, 2006.

IN THE ARMY

PN1470 ARMY nomination of Chantel Newsome, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 24, 2006.

PN1497 ARMY nomination of Kenneth A. Kraft, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 27, 2006.

PN1498 ARMY nominations (4) beginning Mark A. Burdt, and ending Robert L. Porter, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 27, 2006.

PN1499 ARMY nominations (6) beginning Betty J. Williams, and ending Henry R. Lemley, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 27, 2006.

PN1500 ARMY nomination of Thomas F. Nugent, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 27, 2006.

PN1501 ARMY nomination of Michael F. Lorich, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 27, 2006.

PN1502 ARMY nomination of Brian O. Sargent, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 27, 2006.

PN1503 ARMY nominations (4) beginning Brian K. Hill, and ending Charles W. Wallace, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 27, 2006.

IN THE NAVY

PN1467 NAVY nominations (5) beginning Robert J. Tate, and ending Edward A. Sylvester, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 24, 2006.

PN1468 NAVY nominations (4) beginning William L. Yarde, and ending Bruce R. Deschere, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 24, 2006.

PN1469 NAVY nominations (53) beginning Gregory G. Allgaier, and ending Timothy J. Yanik, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of April 24, 2006.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now return to legislative session.

CELEBRATING PROGROWTH TAX POLICY

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, we will be closing in a few moments, but I did want to comment on an event this week that in many ways celebrates the progrowth tax policy that President Bush initiated over 5 years ago, and which, with the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts, tax relief, and the relief of regulatory burden, has resulted in quite remarkable growth in our economy over the last 18 months.

This week in the Rose Garden the President signed into law the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005. The bill represents a real victory for the American people, for each and every American family, and for the continued strength and vibrancy and resilience of an economy that leads the world.

The Republican majority has worked hard to resist efforts to raise taxes, and that is exactly what this bill accomplished. It was 6 years ago, back in

2000, that the President inherited an economy that was in recession. It was emerging from a bursting Internet bubble, and the answer to our economic malaise at the time was tax relief, was tax cuts. There was a lot of opposition on the floor of the Senate, but we got them through; sometimes by just a few votes, but we got them through. Now, because of the President's firm, fiscally bold vision and strong fiscal and tax leadership, our economy is doing very well. America's families now feel better off because, indeed, they are better off.

We now have cut taxes for nearly 100 billion hard-working citizens. New home sales were up nearly 14 percent just last month, and minority home ownership is at its highest level ever. Consumer confidence is the highest since May of 2002. The economy has created 5.3 million jobs. Unemployment is down to 4.7 percent, lower than the average of the 1990s, lower than the average of the 1980s, and lower than the average of the 1970s. The tax cuts on capital gains and dividends are benefiting Americans across the income spectrum.

It is interesting that if you look at the income tax returns each year that are reporting capital gains and dividends, almost half of them come from households with reported adjusted gross income of less than $50,000. Tax relief, capital gains, and dividends go across the economic spectrum.

Overall, the economy has enjoyed 18 consecutive quarters of economic growth. Meanwhile, all of this spurred growth has filled the tax coffers just as anticipated, just as we said it would. As we argued back then, and as history has demonstrated, cutting taxes actually results in increased tax revenues.

In January, the Congressional Budget Office found that the tax cuts on capital gains and dividends resulted in the Government collecting an additional $26 billion in revenue in 2004 and 2005. This year, tax revenues will be 29 percent higher than they were in 2003 as a result of tax cuts. In fact, the Treasury Department reported last week that this year's tax revenues were the second highest in American history, giving the country a significant surplus for the month.

Last November, we called for extending the alternative minimum tax relief. In February I insisted that Congress keep rates low on capital gains and dividends. Last week, as part of the Tax Increase Prevention Act, we delivered because we always remember that tax dollars are the people's money, not the government's money.

We believe open markets and abundant opportunity unleashes our greatest resource: the energy of the American people and the ingenuity of the American people. Keeping taxes low helps Americans find and keep jobs, it boosts the family budget, and makes America a great place to do business. It allows the entrepreneur to take a chance on that great idea, to reinvest, to hire more workers, to create jobs. As Republicans, we believe in encouraging that creative and optimistic spirit. It is what has built this country. It is what makes America great.

We will continue to champion economic growth and fiscal responsibility. We will continue to keep America moving forward.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MAY 22, 2006

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until 1 p.m. on Monday, May 22. I further ask that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved, and the Senate resume consideration of S. 2611, the comprehensive immigration reform bill, as under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, the Senate has made a lot of progress on the immigration bill. After spending almost 2 weeks on the bill a month ago, we brought the bill back this week, and not knowing exactly what to expect, I set out with a pretty high watermark, a pretty high goal, and that is to consider a number of amendments in an open and free debate and have those amendments voted upon. We have accomplished exactly what I had set out to do.

We are going to have another busy week. We have a recess, Memorial Day recess, after next week, so we have Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday to conduct a lot of business. Senators are using the day today—some of them have come to the floor to speak and to debate and talk about the various issues. Others are using it to study amendments for next week. Our next voting will be with two rollcall votes on Monday, at least two votes, maybe others, beginning at 5:30.

The chairman will be here Monday working through the afternoon, working with Senators on their proposed amendments. It is important that we have the language on amendments people might be offering.

We have a lot of other work to do. The supplemental bill is currently in conference. Our colleagues are working very hard, in the House and Senate, so that we can complete that supplemental bill before the Memorial Day recess. The nomination of Brett Kavanaugh also is pending. Brett Kavanaugh has been nominated to the circuit court, and we need to bring him to the floor before we depart for that Memorial Day recess.

A lot of other issues are underway. The pensions conference report is being worked on aggressively, day in, day out, and I look forward to having that completed so when it is available we will be able to take it to the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, MAY 22, 2006, AT 1 P.M.

Mr. FRIST. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 1:13 p.m., adjourned until Monday, May 22, 2006, at 1 p.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate: May 19, 2006:

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW COMMISSION

HORACE A. THOMPSON, OF MISSISSIPPI, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING APRIL 27, 2011.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

KENT D. TALBERT, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

JAMES MADISON MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP FOUNDATION

J. C. A. STAGG, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE JAMES MADISON MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING NOVEMBER 17, 2011.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

VINCE J. JUARISTI, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING FEBRUARY 8, 2009.

JERRY GAYLE BRIDGES, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE.

THE ABOVE NOMINATIONS WERE APPROVED SUBJECT TO THE NOMINEES' COMMITMENT TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS TO APPEAR AND TESTIFY BEFORE ANY DULY CONSTITUTED COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

GEORGE MCDADE STAPLES, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS DIRECTOR, AIR NATIONAL GUARD AND FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 10506 AND 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. CRAIG R. MCKINLEY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. WILLIAM M. FRASER III

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

LT. GEN. KEVIN P. CHILTON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. NORMAN R. SEIP

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS THE SURGEON GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE AND APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 8036 AND 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JAMES G. ROUDEBUSH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. DANA T. ATKINS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. LAWRENCE A. STUTZRIEM

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. LINDA K. MCTAGUE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. ROBERT J. ELDER, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. DAVID A. DEPTULA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. VICTOR E. RENUART, JR.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. ELDER GRANGER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. DAVID F. MELCHER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. STEPHEN M. SPEAKES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. RONALD D. SILVERMAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. MICHAEL A. RYAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. STEPHEN V. REEVES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF, ARMY RESERVE AND APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 3038 AND 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JACK C. STULTZ, JR.

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. ALAN T. BAKER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF CHAPLAINS, UNITED STATES NAVY, AND APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 5142:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) ROBERT F. BURT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. GREGORY J. SMITH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPTAIN TOWNSEND G. ALEXANDER
CAPTAIN DAVID H. BUSS
CAPTAIN KENDALL L. CARD
CAPTAIN JOHN N. CHRISTENSON
CAPTAIN MICHAEL J. CONNOR
CAPTAIN JOHN ELNITSKY II
CAPTAIN KENNETH E. FLOYD
CAPTAIN PHILIP H. GREENE
CAPTAIN BRUCE E. GROOMS
CAPTAIN JAMES C. GRUNEWALD
CAPTAIN EDWARD S. HEBNER
CAPTAIN MICHELLE J. HOWARD
CAPTAIN ARNOLD O. LOTRING, JR
CAPTAIN JAMES P. MCMANAMON
CAPTAIN JOSEPH P. MULLOY
CAPTAIN CHARLES E. SMITH
CAPTAIN SCOTT H. SWIFT
CAPTAIN DAVID M. THOMAS
CAPTAIN KURT W. TIDD
CAPTAIN MICHAEL P. TILLOTSON
CAPTAIN MARK A. VANCE
CAPTAIN GARRY R. WHITE
CAPTAIN EDWARD G. WINTERS III

IN THE AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ROSALIND L. ABDULKHALIK AND ENDING WITH JESSE B. ZYDALLIS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON MARCH 7, 2006.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH STEVEN L. ALGER AND ENDING WITH RACHELLE PAULKAGIRI, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 24, 2006.

IN THE ARMY

ARMY NOMINATION OF CHANTEL NEWSOME TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF KENNETH A. KRAFT TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MARK A. BURDT AND ENDING WITH ROBERT L. PORTER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 27, 2006.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH BETTY J. WILLIAMS AND ENDING WITH HENRY R. LEMLEY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 27, 2006.

ARMY NOMINATION OF THOMAS F. NUGENT TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF MICHAEL F. LORICH TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF BRIAN O. SARGENT TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH BRIAN K. HILL AND ENDING WITH CHARLES W. WALLACE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 27, 2006.

IN THE NAVY

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ROBERT J. TATE AND ENDING WITH EDWARD A. SYLVESTER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 24, 2006.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH WILLIAM L. YARDE AND ENDING WITH BRUCE R. DESCHERE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 24, 2006.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH GREGORY G. ALLGAIER AND ENDING WITH TIMOTHY J. YANIK, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON APRIL 24, 2006.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING NICHOLAS GIGLIO FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Nicholas Giglio, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 98, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Nicholas has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Nicholas has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Nicholas Giglio for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE HOYTS

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to two of my most accomplished and most inspiring constituents. Dick Hoyt, of Holland, Massachusetts, and his son Rick, are a world famous pair, known around the world for their frequent appearances at road races, marathons, and triathlons. They are not, however, average athletes.

In 1962 Rick Hoyt was born with his umbilical cord wrapped around his neck. Doctors told Rick's parents, Dick and Judy, that their son would be unable to live on his own and that he should be institutionalized. They refused.

Instead, the Hoyts did all that they could to enroll Rick in public school with other children his age. Their first major breakthrough came when a group of engineers from Tufts University built, in 1972, an interactive computer that enabled Rick to communicate. His first words took his family by surprise. They learned that he had been following the Stanley Cup finals along with the rest of his family when he said, "Go Bruins."

From that moment forward, Rick was unstoppable. He was admitted to public school in 1975, and 2 years after that, asked his father to enter their first race together: a five mile benefit run for another local athlete who had been paralyzed in an accident. Dick says that he remembers Rick telling him that night that he did not feel handicapped when they were competing together.

They completed their first marathon, in 1981 in Boston. Four years later, they competed in a triathlon, for which Dick had to not only learn how to swim, but then do so in the race with a small boat tied to his waist with which he pulled Rick.

While continuing to race, Rick also furthered his education. In 1993, Rick graduated from Boston University with a degree in Special Education.

Today the Hoyts have completed 206 triathlons, 20 Duathlons, 64 marathons, and over 500 other races. They have biked across New England and America. Their best time for a marathon, running together with Dick pushing Rick, is 2 hours and 40 minutes, only 35 minutes short of the world record holder who, of course, was not pushing another person while running. This past year they competed in their twenty-fifth Boston Marathon. I personally have run the SIDS Road Race in Springfield, Massachusetts, with the Hoyts many times including this past fall.

Truly, the Hoyt's story is one of a deep love and commitment between father and son, and is one that speaks to all of us. They have won awards from organizations around the world, and regularly receive letters from others whose lives they have touched. Dick Hoyt and his son Rick are truly two of the most remarkable people I have the honor of calling friends, and I am proud to be able to pay tribute to them here on the Floor of the House of Representatives.

SUPPORTING THE NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2006

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Improvement Act of 2006, introduced by my friend from Wisconsin, Mr. KIND. I was one of the coauthors of the original Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act in 2000, and I am very pleased to see this new legislation make its way through the process again. This has been a highly successful program, and its reauthorization will help to continue this record of success.

The hundreds of species of birds that migrate through our Nation every year are facing urgent threats. Warblers, plovers, and kites were once common, but many species are now listed as endangered or are dwindling rapidly and will soon approach that point. The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act has greatly helped the effort to protect these creatures here and in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Like the other multinational species conservation programs including the Great Apes Conservation Act—whose reauthorization is still pending—the Migratory Bird program has done an excellent job of matching public funds with private donations. In fact, this program has brought in more than $60 million in private sector funds to protect and restore habitat, to study species declines, to provide technical assistance, and to encourage public-private and international partnerships.

Mr. KIND's legislation will enable the Interior Department to continue providing this much-needed funding to conservation efforts both in the United States and throughout the Americas. He has done an excellent job shepherding this bill through the House, and I am hopeful that the Act will soon be reauthorized.

HONORING TOYOTA MOTOR'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY IN GEORGETOWN, KENTUCKY

HON. BEN CHANDLER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. CHANDLER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to congratulate Georgetown, Kentucky, and Toyota for their successful 20-year partnership that has resulted in significant opportunities for Georgetown residents and substantial growth for Toyota.

The benefits to Kentucky cannot be overstated. Toyota is among the top employers in the Commonwealth, with 7,000 jobs in Georgetown alone. That total does not include the many spin-off benefits in terms of economic development from the many suppliers and partners that have started operations in the vicinity of Georgetown. Kentucky benefits from the thousands of secure, well-paying jobs our citizens can be proud to go to every day. Supporting economic development is one of my most important jobs in Congress. It strengthens families and communities, and it makes possible all the promise America has to offer—education, reliable health care, a better home, and safe, stable communities. We are fortunate to have Toyota help provide that environment.

Toyota, also, has thrived during this 20-year period, thanks to its hard-working, dedicated team in Kentucky. Its Georgetown operation now produces a half million cars a year, far more than what was projected when it opened. During that time, Toyota has become one of the top manufacturers of cars, in terms of number and quality, and we in Kentucky are proud that those cars are American-made.

Toyota has given back to Kentucky in so many ways. It is deeply involved in our civic life. Toyota provides jobs for Kentucky residents, but it also supports our schools and youth programs for the next generation. Toyota generates significant tax revenue for Kentucky and our cities and counties, but it also participates in our community activities, sharing its resources and the time and talents of its employees.

And Toyota foresees even more opportunity in Kentucky. I am pleased that it has selected

Georgetown as the first site in the United States to produce hybrid vehicles. Toyota perhaps sees this as a wise investment in a potentially rewarding market. I and many in Kentucky see it as an entry into a cutting-edge technology that will continue our leading role in the U.S. auto industry, and we hope eventually provide an alternative for Americans saddled with ever-increasing gas prices.

This is a happy occasion for Toyota, for Kentucky, and for me personally. I hope to see many more such occasions over the coming years as Toyota and Kentucky continue to expand their relationship.

RECOGNIZING THE LIBERTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute the efforts of the Liberty School District, the Council of Parent Teacher Associations, the Parent Teacher Student Associations, students, faculty and staff in their ongoing efforts to support a national project known as Book Relief. Book Relief is an unprecedented, publishing industry-wide effort that will distribute at least five million new books to schools and libraries displaced and destroyed by the 2005 hurricanes. These books will help to replenish school libraries as they rebuild.

In New Orleans, 118 of 126 schools sustained damage; in Mississippi, 300 schools were damaged, 24 of them severely damaged or destroyed. Nearly 190,000 Louisiana students were displaced. As organizations start to rebuild the Gulf Coast, Book Relief will be there to supply them with new books as they reopen.

For every fifty cents raised by Liberty schools, one book will be contributed to the cause. Each school in the district has been actively participating in not only Book Relief, but also Hurricane Katrina relief. Liberty Schools have raised a collective $33,600 to go toward relief efforts. This accomplishment is nothing short of outstanding.

Liberty, Missouri has a rich history of great accomplishments in their school system. Today, I am proud to celebrate and recognize the continued dedication to community, both at home and in the Gulf Coast, of the Liberty School District and its network of staff, students and parents. Their work is truly a shining example of the great works happening in public education today.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 376) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2008 through 2011:

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the Republican Budget Resolution.

Today, this Congress has the opportunity to send a clear message of hope for a better future to American families by investing in critical programs that enhance our children's ability to go to college, protect our public health against diseases and epidemics, and protect our public safety from gang violence and terrorist attacks.

Regrettably, the Republican leadership has chosen to squander this opportunity in order to make way for additional tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans.

The negative impact of this unnecessary and misguided budget is that programs essential to the safety, health and well-being of American families are cut and even eliminated.

Please permit me to cite examples that illustrate my point.

First, this Republican Budget Resolution sacrifices services vital to women and families by eliminating the funding for the National Resource Center on Workplace Responses. This Center was included in last year's reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). It provides critical support to help employees who are victims of domestic violence maintain job security as they empower themselves to end the violence in their lives. It also provides employers with valuable information and expertise needed to make their workplace safe from abusers who often stalk their victims at the workplace.

Second, this Budget Resolution eliminates the funding for the National Institutes of Health's crucial National Children's Study. This study is examining the effects of environmental influences on the health and development of our nation's children. When completed, this national study could answer critical questions that will enable us to more effectively protect our children's health and future well-being.

By eliminating this important program, the Republican budget once again chooses giving tax breaks to the wealthiest individuals in America at the expense of our children.

Third, this budget resolution jeopardizes the future of millions of America's children by recommending the elimination of 42 education programs designed to provide our Nation's disadvantaged and middle-income children with the opportunities for a better and more fulfilling life.

Some of the programs the Republican budget proposes to eliminate are the Even Start program, which promotes family literacy in low-income areas; the School Drop-out Prevention Program, which helps at-risk children stay in school; and the Education Technology Block Grant, which integrates technology into the classroom to help students and teachers succeed in today's 21st Century workforce.

Once again, in order to pay for the $70 billion tax cut primarily for the wealthy, this Republican budget strips away the safety net needed to protect the future of our children who must be prepared to compete in our ever-growing and highly technical global economy.

I urge my colleagues to put the future of our children and our country first and vote against this misguided Republican Budget Resolution.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 16, 2006

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to say thank you to the 850,000 police officers who go to work in our communities each day, and to pay tribute to the more than 17,000 who have made the ultimate sacrifice, and whose names are inscribed on th National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial.

As a former officer with the Michigan State Police and Escanaba City Police Department, as well as founder and co-chair of the Law Enforcement Caucus, I am proud to be a cosponsor of this resolution, and I want to thank Congressman HEFLEY for introducing it again this year.

Everyday, our Nation's police officers face danger and uncertainty in order to keep us safe. There are 56,000 assaults against law enforcement officers each year; and last year, 155 peace officers were killed in the line of duty, including five from my own state of Michigan. They leave behind husbands, wives, parents, and children, who supported them and believed in their work, and who now need and deserve our support.

I want to take a moment to thank organizations like Concerns of Police Survivors and Thin Blue Line that work to help give a voice and a helping hand to the families of officers who are killed. These compassionate organizations help to remind us that the law enforcement community goes beyond those who wear the uniform to include the families who share the risks that come with a career in police work. The ceremonies of this past weekend are for them, to commemorate their commitment and their sacrice, and to let them know that their Nation shares their loss and that their loved ones did not die in vain.

I also think that we need to go beyond the usual gestures to offer the families of fallen officers real, material support. We need to fully fund critical law enforcement programs like the Byrne Grant program, which was named for a fallen officer and which has helped to provide vital funding for organizations like Thin Blue Line. This program has been under attack by the administration in recent years, and I call on my colleagues to show the familes and officers gathered here this week that we mean to support them with our resources as well as our words.

In addition, I am especially proud to have introduced a piece of legislation that will provide health insurance coverage to the survivors of public safety officers who are killed in the line of duty. This bill, H.R. 4424, has been endorsed by leading national law enforcement organizations, and will help to relieve the financial strain on police survivors in the wake of the most traumatic possible loss. I think this legislation is an example of the kind of practical support that we can provide to law enforcement officers and their families, and I hope to see it move forward in the coming year.

After September 11, this Congress seemed to recognize the heroic nature of the work that our law enforcement officers do, and the importance of supporting them fully. However, I

am concerned that we have begun to lose sight of our priorities in recent years. Funding for essential programs like COPS has been declining, and even highly successful programs like the Byrne Grant are being threatened with elimination. I believe that we need to go back to the model that helped to radically reduce crime across this country in the Clinton years: funding to put cops on the streets, support for succesful local programs, and federal commitment to initiatives, like communications interoperability, that help to make our first responders more effective.

This week should serve as a chance for us to renew our commitment to the men and women of the law enforcement community. Today, we have the chance to honor them with our words, through the excellent resolution that Mr. HEFLEY has introduced. For the rest of the year, let's make sure that we are honoring and supporting them through our priorities and our actions. It is the least we can do for the officers and families who do so much for us every day.

THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF JACKSON MEMORIAL TEMPLE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Jackson Memorial Temple Church of God in Christ as it celebrates 65 years of fellowship and worship in my hometown of Flint Michigan. Jackson Memorial will commemorate this event with two days of festivities on August 12 and 13.

Founded in December 1941 by Reverend Leo J. Jackson as the Pilgrim Temple Church of God in Christ, the first services were held on the same day Pearl Harbor was bombed. After Reverend Jackson passed away the church was re-named in his memory. Bishop H. J. Williams is the current pastor and along with First Lady, Mother Iola Williams, he provides the leadership, inspiration and example of a life in Christ to the congregation and community.

Dedicating their lives to Jesus Christ, the congregation is pledged to the following beliefs: That there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. In the Blessed Hope, which is the Rapture of the Church of God, which is in Christ, at His return. That the only means of being cleansed from sin is through repentance and faith in the precious blood of Jesus Christ. That regeneration by the Holy Ghost is absolutely essential for personal salvation. That the redemptive work of Christ on the cross provides healing for the human body, in answer to believing in prayer. That the baptism in the Holy Ghost according to Acts 2:4 is iven to believers who ask for it. In the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a holy and separated life in this present world.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Jackson Memorial Temple Church of God in Christ as it celebrates their 65th anniversary. I commend them for 65 years of joyful service to the community and pray they will continue to provide spiritual guidance to the residents of Flint for many years to come.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 376) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2008 through 2011:

Mrs. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, this chamber is in the final stages of the annual budget process—a process that provides an important opportunity to discuss the things we value as a Nation.

Before we cast our votes, each of us should consider the following:

1. Does the Republican budget value fiscal discipline and honest budgeting? And, did the Republican leadership make the tough choices needed to balance the budget and pay down the debt?

No. The Republican budget continues the majority party's borrow-and-spend policies. As a result, it not only fails to balance the Federal government's checkbook, but will actually run a deficit of $348 billion for 2007—further increasing the mounting debt being, passed onto our children and grandchildren.

2. Does the Republican budget value our shared economic future? And, did the Republican majority make wise investments in education, workforce development and alternative fuels that will favorably position us in the highly competitive global marketplace?

No. The Republican budget cuts education funding by $2.2 billion, reduces support for renewable energy and energy-efficiency initiatives, and impedes access to health care for women and children.

3. Does the Republican budget value enhanced security at home and a strong defense? And, did the Republican majority provide for the men and women who protect us, both while they are on the front lines and after they have fulfilled their duties and return home?

No. The Republican budget cuts funding for veterans' health care by $6 billion, and will reduce our ability to maintain current homeland security efforts due to a lack of consistent and reliable funding.

4. Is the Republican budget based on sound, fair tax policies to recognize the priorities of everyday Americans?

No. The Republican budget has one purpose: to provide tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans. In fact, this budget provides $228 billion in new tax cuts—90 percent of which will go to the wealthiest ten percent of taxpayers.

This budget fails to meet sound fiscal principles, and it sets us on an irresponsible path for years to come—with mounting annual deficits, and an increasing national debt. In fact, the Republican majority went to great lengths to mask the fact that their spending plan does not include some of our Nation's largest financial commitments—commitments that we must meet.

Their plan almost completely ignores the cost of ongoing military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, which according to the Congressional Budget Office will be at least $298 over 10 years. Except for a one year fix, it does nothing to address the Alternative Minimum Tax, which will increase taxes for middle class families by an estimated $844 billion over the next ten years.

Even with these cuts, omissions, and gimmicks, the majority's budget will add another $2.3 trillion to our national debt by 2011—or nearly $1 million of debt per minute. Under President Bush, and his Republican Congress, our Nation has incurred more debt than it did under the 42 presidents before him.

But there is a better way.

As a member of the House Budget Committee, I assisted Ranking Member SPRATT in the creation of a fiscal year 2007 budget that makes the necessary tough, fiscally disciplined choice. This Democratic alternative meets the basic budgetary principles of meeting our obligations, working within the resources we have, and making smart investments that will ensure the Nation's current and future fiscal well-being.

The Democratic budget will put our nation back on the right track by closing tax loopholes that provide incentives to companies to ship jobs overseas, by cracking down on tax cheats that avoid paying nearly $350 billion a year in taxes, by rescinding the tax breaks and subsidies for the oil and gas industry, and by rolling back Medicare overpayments to HMOs. We would then reinvest these savings in the priorities that matter to most Americans: national and homeland security, energy independence, education, and health care. And, it will do so while balancing the Federal Government's budget within 6 years, and begin to pay down the debt by 2013.

Our plan would secure our homeland through investments in our military and defense networks. Our plan would ensure that we are prepared here at home, while also pursuing smart foreign policies that encourage stability in nations throughout the world. And, our plan would meet our obligations to the men and women who have fought to protect our Nation.

Second, our plan would help secure our economic future by educating our children for the twenty-first century economy, promoting the development and innovation of small businesses, upholding environmental protections, and advancing the production of alternative sources of energy to end our dependence on foreign oil.

And, third, our plan would expand access to affordable health care for all Americans and improve retirement security with particular attention to the dramatic and costly needs of the baby boomers who will begin to reach retirement in 2007.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that we have a responsibility to meet our obligations and balance the budget. I am also well aware that the Federal Government's budgets have consequences. If the majority's budget passes, it will hurt State and local budgets by forcing them to cover the shortfalls—likely through increased local taxes. If the majority's budget

passes, small businesses will be on their own as they fight to compete in the global marketplace in the face of rising health care and energy costs. If the majority's budget passes, senior citizens will risk losing the benefits they have been promised.

Unless we change course, the negative consequences of the Republican budget will be felt by every American.

My colleagues, Americans are seeking to meet their obligations to their families, their communities and to the Nation. We must honor their commitment and we should not, and I cannot walk away from our obligations to them. Vote "no" on this irresponsible Republican budget, and support the Democratic alternative.

REMEMBERING A.M. 'ABE' ROSENTHAL

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, last week the Nation lost a giant in the field of journalism when A.M. "Abe" Rosenthal passed away at age 84.

He was a Pulitzer Prize-winning foreign correspondent and executive editor of the New York Times. After his days directing the newsroom were over, he penned the op-ed column, "On My Mind," for the Times and later the New York Daily News, a forum from which he championed the cause of freedom and human rights.

As Nicholas Kristof, who won a Pulitzer Prize last month as a Times op-ed columnist, said at Mr. Rosenthal's funeral, Abe Rosenthal used his column to make matters like human rights violations in China and Sudan "recognizable as issues."

"Abe fought to cure our blind spots, and it worked," Mr. Kristof said. "He did indeed teach us to see."

Mr. Speaker, I insert for the RECORD an obituary from The Washington Post and an op-ed column by Mr. Rosenthal's son Andrew, a New York Times deputy editorial page editor, remembering Abe Rosenthal.

[From the New York Times, May 17, 2006]

I NEVER WROTE FOR MY FATHER

(By Andrew Rosenthal)

Funerals have a way of reframing memories. After the burial of my father, A. M. Rosenthal, who ran The Times for nearly 20 years and wrote a column for 13 more, I recalled the day I met President George H. W. Bush, not long after I became a White House correspondent.

I was allowed to sit in on an interview that two of my colleagues, Maureen Dowd and Thomas L. Friedman, were doing for a magazine article. The White House told me not to ask questions, but after a while, Mr. Bush said to me, "You've been quiet." I said the interview was supposed to be strictly about the magazine article, but as long as he'd asked, what did he think about the latest development on Lithuania?

He was angry and would not answer. He said he was "not gonna be sandbagged in the Oval Office."

On the way out, Marlin Fitzwater, Mr. Bush's spokesman, helpfully noted that my introduction to Mr. Bush had gone badly. He explained that Mr. Bush was unhappy with my father for writing in his column that Mr. Bush had appeased the Communists on China and (oh, great!) on Lithuania. "The president doesn't differentiate between you and your father," he said.

I sputtered that the White House owed me for five years' psychotherapy. I'd only just begun convincing myself I was my own man in my father's field, and now I learned that The Leader of the Free World could not tell us apart?

It was naïve, of course, to think I could hide that little coincidence of a last name. Dad was not just seen as the embodiment of The Times; he saw himself that way. During the tumultuous year 1968, my father said I could not wear an Army fatigue jacket because anti-Vietnam protesters wore them. "When you go out," he said, not for the first or last time, "you're representing The Times." I was 12 years old at the time.

Still, I tried to walk around as if I were not really Abe's son, first at The Associated Press, where I was a national and foreign correspondent for nine years, and then at The Times. (I even left the middle initial, M., out of my byline because my father's initials were so famous.)

I started to get the point that hiding in plain sight was not working when I noticed that I hadn't received any checks from WQXR, the Times radio station, for a weekly radio spot. It turns out that WQXR was sending the $70 checks to A. M. Rosenthal, instead of Andrew Rosenthal.

I called my father, outraged. He had been happily cashing the checks. He said he hadn't known why WQXR was paying him, but "when someone gives me a check, baby, I cash it."

I should have found the whole thing funny, but I didn't. Then about a year later, I got a check for a reprint of my father's classic 1958 essay, "There Is No News From Auschwitz." I sent him a copy of the check stub with a note: "When someone gives me a check, baby, I cash it."

Dad thought it was hilarious. And I've long since realized that I overreacted on the "Abe's kid" front. But since my father died, I've realized something else.

When I read his obituary to my children, their amazement at his accomplishments was matched by my amazement at how much I had forgotten, even discounted. Then colleagues began sharing their experiences of my father.

They said what I knew, that he could be stubborn, unreasonable and prone to anger. But what they held on was how sure he was in his vision for the paper, how filled with exuberance and a certainty about journalism that he freely bestowed. I received dozens of stories about how he'd shaped a reporter's career, how he'd traveled around the world to get a correspondent out of trouble, how he'd stood up equally to K.G.B. generals and to U.S. officials, how he'd helped young people become better journalists, how he'd changed The Times and the newspaper business.

Jose Lopez, a photographer and photo editor, said the first time they met, Abe Rosenthal told him, "Always be the hawk; never be the blackbird that sits on the wire."

David Sanger said when he'd been a news clerk laboring to become a reporter, he'd come to his desk one day to find Champagne and a note: "For an explanation, see the executive editor." Abe had promoted David, and wanted to celebrate with him.

"I wouldn't argue that he was always the easiest boss," David wrote. But, he said, my father "knew how to infuse you with his sheer joy of reporting and experiencing the world."

Alan Cowell recalled how Abe Rosenthal flew to South Africa in 1986 to argue the authorities out of expelling him. John Burns, whose courage is endless, said Abe "set the trajectory of my life." Maureen Dowd reminded me that her mother had kept letters from my father framed in her home until the day she died.

In an era when journalism is commoditized, digitized and endlessly televised, I feel the loss of that passion, drive, emotion and energy. I also feel regret—not for sometimes pushing my father away as I tried to be independent. I know I was right to wait until he'd retired as executive editor before joining The Times.

But I missed something big.

I never got to work for Abe.

[From washingtonpost.com, May 11, 2006]

NEW YORK TIMES EDITOR A.M. 'ABE' ROSENTHAL

(By J.Y. Smith)

A.M. "Abe" Rosenthal, 84, a Pulitzer Prize-winning foreign correspondent who became chief editor of the New York Times and played a key role in modernizing the Gray Lady of American journalism for the new century, died May 10 at Mount Sinai medical center in Manhattan. He had a major stroke two weeks ago.

Mr. Rosenthal's career at the Times spanned 55 years, from 1944, when he began as a cub reporter, to 1999, when he retired as the writer of "On My Mind," a column on the op-ed page. When he left the Times, he took his column to the New York Daily News and continued there until 2004.

In 2002, President Bush conferred on him the Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, along with Katharine Graham, the late chairwoman of The Washington Post Co.

A passionate, driven man, Mr. Rosenthal was ruthless in his pursuit of perfection as he saw it and was never entirely satisfied with his own work or that of others. He was a brilliant and visceral judge of the news. He had boundless curiosity about the world. He often viewed it with a sense of outrage—at tyranny, at all forms of injustice and exploitation, at stupidity, incompetence and "unfairness."

His first big break came in 1946, when he got a two-week assignment to cover the United Nations. He stayed on the beat for eight years. His first foreign assignment was India, where he was posted in 1954. He later worked in Poland and Japan, but India retained a special fascination for him. He once traveled 1,500 rugged miles to have a dateline that read "At the Khyber Pass."

In 1958, he moved to Poland and the next year was expelled by the government for delving too deeply into its affairs. In 1960, he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for international reporting for his dispatches from Poland. A story he wrote after visiting the site of the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau in southern Poland has become a classic of journalism.

"The most terrible thing of all, somehow, was that at Brzezinka (the Polish name for Birkenau) the sun was bright and warm, the rows of graceful poplars were lovely to look upon and on the grass near the gates children played," he wrote.

"And so there is no news to report from Auschwitz. There is merely the compulsion to write something about it, a compulsion that grows out of a restless feeling that to have visited Auschwitz and then turned away without having said or written anything would be a most grievous act of discourtesy to those who died there."

In 1963, Mr. Rosenthal was summoned to New York from Tokyo to become metropolitan editor. By 1969, he had become managing editor, and in 1977 he was named executive editor. For 17 years, until 1987, when he became an op-ed columnist, he was responsible for the news operation at the Times.

(The editorial page at the Times and at some other papers, including The Washington Post, is run by an entirely separate hierarchy that reports directly to the publisher. It is a distinction that remains extremely important to papers where the division is maintained.)

As a manager, Mr. Rosenthal was said to be abrasive and self-centered. A diminutive, bespectacled figure, he had a volcanic temper. Many found him intimidating. He advanced the careers of many journalists and derailed the careers of others. He was a constant source of friction and controversy in the Times newsroom. Admirers and critics spoke of him with equal fervor.

Arthur Gelb, a friend of Mr. Rosenthal's who also was the Times's managing editor, once offered this explanation of the Rosenthal character: ''In every field, in every art, if you talk to an artist who has a very keen mind, you will find they are very restless. Anyone who is truly creative has a restlessness and natural impatience with others.''

There was never any question about Mr. Rosenthal's impact on the Times. He insisted on good writing and sent his reporters on stories that often were ignored by other publications—and might have been missed by the Times except for his guidance.

He expanded coverage in every direction. The religion page, for example, became a venue for discussion of broad theological and philosophical questions rather than a summary of sermons.

Reader-friendly stories and features were added and given prominent display. New emphasis was placed on covering sports and the city itself. The daily paper went from two sections to four. The business report became a separate section. SportsMonday, Weekend and Science Times sections were published on different days of the week. Coverage of topics such as food and the arts was expanded.

At a time when many newspapers in New York and elsewhere in the country were losing readers, the Times's circulation increased and its financial health improved dramatically, due to its expanding national and regional editions.

Notable stories that Mr. Rosenthal assigned included the case of Kitty Genovese, who was fatally stabbed in her quiet Queens neighborhood. What had started as a brief crime report became a lengthy examination of why 38 people heard her screams for help without helping her or even calling police.

Mr. Rosenthal wrote a book about the incident, ''Thirty-Eight Witnesses,'' in which he raised this question: ''What was the apathy of the people of Austin Street compared, let's say, with the apathy of non-Nazi Germans toward Jews?''

Another memorable story Mr. Rosenthal ordered was about Daniel Burros, 28, the blond and blue-eyed leader of the Ku Klux Klan in New York and the No. 2 man in the American Nazi Party, headed by George Lincoln Rockwell.

After the Times wrote about Burros, Mr. Rosenthal got a tip from a friend that Burros was Jewish and had celebrated his bar mitzvah. When a reporter confronted Burros about his past, he said he would kill himself if it was publicized. The next day, the Times carried the story on the front page, and the next night, Burros committed suicide.

The Times was widely criticized, but Mr. Rosenthal expressed no regrets.

''He was who he was, he did what he did, and I no more would feel guilty of saying that a certain person robbed a bank,'' Mr. Rosenthal told an interviewer. ''Was I happy that he killed himself? Of course not. I did not feel that we had done anything but the appropriate thing. It was he who was misappropriating his life, both in what he was doing and how he chose to end it. There were other ways he could have ended it—he could have quit!''

In 1971, Mr. Rosenthal played an important role in the Times's publication of the Pentagon Papers, a landmark event in the history of journalism. The papers detailed 25 years of U.S. involvement and deception in Vietnam. The archive of several thousand pages was classified as secret, and the management of the Times expected the government to object to the project.

Mr. Rosenthal, by then the managing editor, put his credibility and career on the line by marshaling the arguments to go ahead anyway. He was supported by then-publisher Arthur Ochs Sulzberger.

On the second day of a planned multipart series, the Justice Department went to court to block publication. There followed two weeks of frantic litigation in courts in New York and Washington and an expedited appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, in which the Times was joined by The Washington Post. In the end, a divided court affirmed the First Amendment right of the newspapers to bring the information to their readers.

Mr. Rosenthal regarded his greatest contribution to the Times as his effort to keep the news report ''straight.'' By that he meant free of bias and editorializing on the part of reporters.

''I used to tell new reporters: The Times is far more flexible in writing styles than you might think, so don't button up your vest and go all stiff on us,'' he wrote in his farewell column for the Times. ''But when it comes to the foundation—fairness—don't fool around with it, or we will come down on you.''

Mr. Rosenthal gave up the executive editorship of the Times at the end of 1986 and was succeeded by Max Frankel. His first column on the op-ed page appeared Jan. 6, 1987. His last column for the paper was published Nov. 5, 1999.

As a columnist, Mr. Rosenthal's subjects ranged from the evils of the drug trade—''helping make criminals and destroying young minds''—to all forms of political, ethnic and religious repression, from China and Tibet to Africa, Europe and the Americas. He had a special interest in the security of Israel and made regular visits to the country.

Abraham Michael Rosenthal was born in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, the fifth child and only son of Harry and Sara Rosenthal. His father was born Harry Shipiatski in Byelorussia (today's Belarus) but took the name Rosenthal from an uncle in London on his way to Canada in 1903.

He was a trapper and fur trader before moving the family to New York in the early 1930s and settling in the Bronx, where he became a house painter. He died of injuries suffered in a fall from a scaffold when his son was 12.

As a teenager, Mr. Rosenthal lost his four sisters to various illnesses. He contracted osteomyelitis, a bone disease, and used a cane or crutches. He regained his mobility after being taken in by the Mayo Clinic as a charity patient.

He attended what was then called City College of New York. Although tuition was free, he used to say, it was more than he could afford. He worked on the school newspaper and was a stringer for the New York Herald Tribune. When the Times stringer at the college was drafted for World War II service in 1943, he took his job. He became a full-time reporter in 1944.

He became a U.S. citizen in 1951. He kept a plaque marking the occasion on his office wall.

His marriage to Ann Marie Burke Rosenthal ended in divorce.

Survivors include his wife of 18 years, the writer Shirley Lord Rosenthal, who lives in Manhattan; three sons from his first marriage, Jonathan Rosenthal of Clifton, Daniel Rosenthal of Milford, N.J., and Andrew Rosenthal, a New York Times deputy editorial page editor who lives in Montclair, N.J.; a sister; and four grandchildren.

UTB'S GRAVITATIONAL WAVE DISCOVERY

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with the House a monumental discovery made by scientists in my district that will make it easier for space scientists to map black holes in space. This breathaking discovery on gravitational waves was made by researchers at the University of Texas at Brownsville, and allows scientists—for the first time—to study the warping of space and time produced by colliding black holes.

Now, I'm no rocket scientist—but UTB's gravitational wave studies universal breakthrough will give researchers and other space scientists greater insight into one of the most cataclysmic astrophysical events predicted by Einstein's theory of general relativity, the merger of two black holes. Given that most of us are not scientists, let me just say that this remarkable discovery will guide astrophysicists as they learn more about the origin and history of the supermassive black holes which reside at the core of most galaxies, including our own Milky Way.

Black hole merger models are always challenging to build due to their unique and unknown nature. Black holes in space are regions where gravity is so intense that nothing, including light itself, can evade their pull. Because their mergers generate a remarkably strong burst of gravitational waves when they approach and collide, lasting for years at a time, they affect both space and time by producing ripples in the curved geometry of the universe.

This shift in the concept Einstein defined as ''spacetime'' has proven to be a difficult task for computer simulations to execute or follow. Yet UTB scientists M. Campanelli, C.O. Lousto and Y. Zlochower devised a novel technique for properly representing black holes during such collisions, which is why UTB's breakthrough is an epic contribution in the study of our universe.

This extraordinary discovery will enable scientists to verify Einstein's famed theory of general relativity—and specifically his theory of spacetime curvature. Results from this discovery will prepare the NASA/European Space Agency's 2015 gravitational wave mission, which aims to detect the gravitational waves produced from supermassive black hole collisions, also considered the most potent source of energy in the universe.

Physicists at UTB's Center for Gravitational Wave Astronomy have made exceptional progress in their field through this development, which is a reflection of their extensive dedication and sheer creativity. Through such efforts, they are establishing south Texas as a force in space science issues and as a leader in innovation.

Several groups have attempted to reach a solution to the computational complications involved in gravitational wave detection, leaving most researchers predicting that this elusive discovery would be incremental, through an arduous series of small improvements. UTB scientists, however, have contradicted this belief with their out-of-the-box thinking and relentless perseverance.

Despite a lack of equipment and economic resources, UTB scientists utilized the least sophisticated computer systems and relied on their stellar ingenuity to achieve a revolutionary breakthrough, the sort that comes along between every 10–50 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in applauding a group of intellectuals whose vision and brilliance are truly ahead of their time. These south Texans have inspired us today and changed the way our world will see the future.

THANK YOU HERRERA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the Fifth Grade students of Herrera Elementary which is in my Congressional District for coming to visit us last week on their class field trip.

They came to Washington on their Fifth Grade class trip to learn about our Government and the history of our country. During their 5-day visit, they managed to visit Mt. Vernon and learn about George Washington and what it was like during the colonial era.

They toured several museums in the Smithsonian. The Museum of American History, the Air and Space Museum and the National Museum of the American Indian were all favorites of the students.

On their last full day in Washington, I met with the students of Herrera Elementary during their lunch break. No one knew that one of their most memorable experiences was yet to come.

On our way to the Capitol steps to take a picture, an ABC news crew approached us to ask us if we knew the words to the national anthem. The students and I sang the national anthem on the Capitol steps and the students made it onto ABC's Nightline.

The Students of Herrera Elementary did a great job when they sang the national anthem. They knew all the words and did not miss a note. This was also impressive because the news story on the national anthem stemmed from the controversy over a Spanish version of the national anthem.

Almost all the students from Herrera Elementary are Hispanic and all of them sang the national anthem perfectly in English. They proved that patriotism lives in people of all ages and all nationalities.

Again, I thank Principal Hector Rodriguez and the teachers and parents of Herrera Elementary for making the 5th Grade class trip possible. I especially thank the 5th Grade students for visiting our office and making their visit memorable by singing the national anthem on the steps of the Capitol.

THE BREAST CANCER AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH ACT

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to stand with the National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC) and the three million women living with breast cancer in the country today and urge all my colleagues to push for passage of the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act (H.R. 2231) by the end of this year.

The bill authorizes $30 million a year for five years to establish multi-institutional, multidisciplinary centers. The centers would include institutions with different areas of expertise working together to look at different aspects of the issue. Furthermore, this bill would create a new mechanism for environmental health research, and provide a unique process by which up to eight research centers are developed to study environmental factors and their impact on breast cancer. Modeled after the DOD Breast Cancer Research Program, which has been so successful, it would include consumer advocates in the peer review and programmatic review process.

This federal commitment is critical for the overall, national strategy and the long-term research investments needed to discover the environmental causes of breast cancer, so that we can prevent it, treat it more effectively, and cure it. It is generally believed that the environment plays some role in the development of breast cancer, but the extent of that role is not understood. More research needs to be done to determine the impact of the environment on breast cancer, which has been understudied in the past.

Fewer than 30 percent of breast cancers are explained by known risk factors; however, there is little consensus in the scientific community on how the environment impacts breast cancer. Studies have explored the effect of isolated environmental factors such as diet, pesticides, and electromagnetic fields, but in most cases there is no conclusive evidence. Furthermore, there are many other factors that are suspected to play a role but have not been fully studied. These could provide valuable in understanding the causes of breast cancer and could lead to prevention strategies.

We need to enact this bill this year, and I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this bill and bring it to the House Floor for a vote.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I introduced the following amendment to H.R. 5293 on May 17, 2006 and made the following statement afterward.

Page 22, after line 12, insert the following (and make such technical and conforming changes as may be appropriate):

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(f) In addition to sums authorized by subsections (a) and (b) to be appropriated, there are authorized to be appropriated to pay expenses for fuel used to carry out parts B and C—

''(1) for fiscal year 2007, $26,800,000 multiplied by the average price of a barrel of oil for 2006 as reported by the Energy Information Administration, divided by the average price of a barrel of oil as reported by the Energy Information Administration for 2005;

''(2) for fiscal year 2008, the amount authorized for 2007 for fuel multiplied by the average price of a barrel of oil for 2007 as reported by the Energy Information Administration, divided by the average price of a barrel of oil as reported by the Energy Information Administration for 2006;

''(3) for fiscal year 2009, the amount authorized for 2008 for fuel multiplied by the average price of a barrel of oil for 2008 as reported by the Energy Information Administration, divided by the average price of a barrel of oil as reported by the Energy Information Administration for 2007;

''(4) for fiscal year 2010, the amount authorized for 2009 for fuel multiplied by the average price of a barrel of oil for 2009 as reported by the Energy Information Administration, divided by the average price of a barrel of oil as reported by the Energy Information Administration for 2008.; and

''(5) for fiscal year 2011, the amount authorized for 2010 for fuel multiplied by the average price of a barrel of oil for 2010 as reported by the Energy Information Administration, divided by the average price of a barrel of oil as reported by the Energy Information Administration for 2009.''.

On May 17, 2006, I introduced an amendment in the House Education and the Workforce Committee, of which I am a member, to H.R. 5293, the Senior Independence Act. The bill reauthorizes the Older Americans Act. My amendment would help provide relief for Administrations on Aging and thousands of volunteers nationwide from being squeezed by the rising cost of gas. It provides a non-binding formula for calculating annual increses in fuel costs for the thre Older Americans Act programs that are the most heavily dependent on transportation. These programs include the in-home nutrition services, the congregate nurtition services, and the supportive services that provide rides to doctor's appointments, trips to the grocery store and to senior centers, among other services. Sadly, he amendment was defeated along party lines by a vote of 23–21.

It is plain to see why these programs have been so successful and so important to seniors. As Americans age, the mobility decreases. Consistent with the intent of the Older Americans Act, these services help seniors maintain independence, dignity and health. In FY2003, the Supportive Services gave almost 36 million rides and provided 20 million hours of personal care, homemaker and chore services. In that same year, 248 million means were served. Fifty-seven percent were provided in the home with the remainder in group settings. Each meal required transportation.

According to the Energy Information Administration, the price of gas the week ending on Christmas of the year 2000 was one dollar, sixty cents. The price for the week of May 15, 2006 was three dollars, fifteen cents. In other words, since the Older Americans Act was last reauthorized, gas prices have doubled.

We know that when the elements of our lives on which we rely go up in the price, the effect is highly regressive. Those with lower incomes pay a higher percentage of their income for the essentials of life than their

high-income counterparts. The effect is particularly pronounced when we consider people with fixed incomes like seniors. Almost a third of America's aged are low-income.

High gas prices also affect the programs like the meal and transportation services.

First, programs have to cut back services. For example, in testimony before the Senate Special Committee on Aging last June, Donna Harvey, the executive Director of the Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging in Iowa told of having to eliminate transportation services ''for all 'non-essential' trips such as family visits, general shopping, trips to the workplace, and other social activities'' because of rising fuel costs.

Second, as with so many other provisions in the Older Americans Act, the meal and supportive services programs are heavily dependent on volunteers. Many of the drivers are called the ''young-old''—those who are independently mobile but are still on a senior's fixed income. A significant portion of these volunteers get reimbursed based on rates that precede the gas price hikes because the Administrations on Aging can't afford to keep pace. It is easy to see why we are losing drivers. They are taking the brunt of the gas price increases and are forced to curtail their generosity.

Finally, as those seniors living at the financial margins who cannot afford the inflated cost of gas lose their independence, they rely more heavily on services like those provided by the Administrations on Aging through the Older Americans Act.

At the same time that prices have gone up, funding has gone down. Supportive services has not even been flat funded since FY02, going down six million dollars. The same is true for congregate meals—their funding has decreased by five million dollars since FY02. And funding for home delivered meals has increased by only five million dollars, failing to come close to keeping pace with inflation.

We must do what we can to make sure our mothers, fathers, siblings and grandparents are not losing the services they need to help them lead independent, dignified, healthy lives because of gas prices. My amendment holds harmless from rising gasoline prices the congregate and in-home nutrition services as well as the supportive services. It does this by authorizing a yearly adjustment to the fuel component of their budgets. If the price of crude oil rises year after year, then the agencies' fuel budgets will rise a proportionate amount. If oil prices fall, fuel budgets fall in step as well. I urge my colleagues to vote for it.

HONORING TOP COPS AWARDEES DETECTIVE BRIAN FENNELLY & DETECTIVE ROBERT ZIELINSKI

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to congratulate and honor two outstanding police officers, detectives Brian Fennelly and Robert Zielinski for the recognition they received last week by the National Association of Police Officers (NAPO).

On May 12, 2006 Detectives Fennelly and Zielinski, officers with the Morton Grove Police Department, were awarded NAPO's ''Top Cops'' award for their heroic service in the line of duty. On January 21, 2005, with the assistance of Chicago Police Sergeant Richard J. Plotke (also awarded a Top Cops honor) the officers tracked down two suspects who had forcefully entered a home in Morton Grove and held hostage, robbed and brutalized the woman residing at that property.

While attempting to serve a warrant at the suspects' apartment, all three officers came under heavy gunfire. Despite the violent onslaught, and injuries sustained during the suspects' violent attack, the three officers relied on their skills and training to successfully disarm and render the assailants harmless.

By successfully tracking down those dangerous criminals, putting themselves in the line of fire and ultimately disarming the assailants, Detectives Brian Fennelly and Robert Zielinski (and Sergeant Plotke) prevented the serious threat posed to their fellow law enforcement professionals and to the entire community. Their heroic demonstration of bravery, team work and public service certainly makes them Top Cops in my book and in the eyes of their peers.

On behalf of the entire 9th Congressional District and along with Morton Grove's Police Chief, Paul Tasch, Jr. and Mayor, Richard Krier, I want to commend and thank our Top Cops Detective Brian Fennelly and Detective Robert Zielinski for their heroic service to our community. I urge all members of the House to recognize their outstanding service and the service of all public safety and law enforcement personnel throughout the country.

HONORING REVEREND PERRY SANDERS

HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Reverend Perry Sanders, a devoted and faithful servant to his God, his church, and his community in Lafayette, Louisiana.

On May 14th, Reverend Sanders gave his last sermon at the First Baptist Church in Lafayette. The day marked the culmination of his 47 years of service to the congregation. Born in South Carolina, Reverend Sanders came to First Baptist in 1959. Following graduation from college and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Reverend Sanders pastored at several churches in Louisiana before coming to the First Baptist Church in Lafayette. As a young preacher, he made it clear from the beginning that a segregated South would not stop him from preaching to ''anybody and everybody'' who came to listen. As a result, Lafayette became home to the first Southern white Baptist church to be racially integrated.

During his tenure at First Baptist, Sanders led the church to establish a media ministry that would set the pace for Southern Baptists. The power of the cassette tape was harnessed in the early seventies and his messages have encouraged many in even the most remote parts of the earth. First Baptist was selected as one of the ''Great Churches'' in a broadcast series in the mid eighties.

Reverend Perry Sanders led First Baptist through remarkable growth, especially considering its location in the Acadian culture with its strong Catholic traditions. From a congregation of a few hundred and a budget of about $70,000 per year, First Baptist has grown and now averages more than one thousand worshippers each weekend and owns buildings on six city blocks. Additionally, several hundred thousand dollars a year is given to missions outside the Lafayette community.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation would benefit greatly if we all dedicated our lives to the service Reverend Perry Sanders has exemplified throughout his career. It is with this in mind that I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring him today.

IN MEMORY OF CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER ERIC W. TOTTEN

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Chief Warrant Officer Eric W. Totten, an American hero who lost his life in defense of liberty and freedom. He made the ultimate sacrifice so that others might know freedom, and I am humbled by his bravery and selflessness.

Chief Warrant Officer Eric Totten was killed on May 5, 2006 when his CH–47 Chinook helicopter crashed in Kunar Province, Afghanistan while conducting combat operations. Chief Warrant Officer is survived by his stepmother, Tommie Totten.

Chief Warrant Officer Totten was assigned to Company B, the 3rd Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, and 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, New York. During his service to our Nation, he exemplified the skill, commitment, and passion of a true patriot for freedom's reign. Chief Warrant Officer Totten died accomplishing the task he loved the most—serving his country.

Chief Warrant Officer Totten leaves behind a legacy marked by courage, integrity, and character. May God bless all those he loved, and may I convey to them my sincerest condolences and the gratitude of the American people.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 376) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2008 through 2011:

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Chairman, this budget resolution that we are now debating is being sold as a deficit-reduction measure, but that is false advertising. This budget resolution does contain spending cuts—ones that hit lower-income families particularly hard. But those spending cuts pale beside the companion tax reconciliation measure that the President just signed into law. Together, those budget actions add to the deficit; they don't reduce it.

Nothing illustrates that more clearly than the provision in this budget resolution that would increase the federal debt limit for the fifth time under President Bush.

This President and this Congress have squandered the fiscal discipline of the 1990s and created a legacy of deficits and debt that will erode the standard of living of our children and our grandchildren. This is a record-setting Administration, but they are the wrong records. We have seen the federal budget deficit set a record in dollar terms, we have seen the national debt rise to a record level, and we have seen our trade deficit and our indebtedness to the rest of the world rise to a record level.

The President likes to talk about how fast the economy is growing and how successful his policies have been in stimulating an economic recovery from the 2001 recession. But the American people are saying ''what economic recovery?'' and, ''when am I going to see any benefits from this President's economic policies?'' Mr. Speaker, we should listen to the American people and we should adopt economic policies that promote the economic well-being of all Americans—not just those at the very top of the economic ladder.

The President's FY 2007 budget and the House budget resolution do not do that. Instead they perpetuate economic policies that have produced a legacy of deficits and debt that leave us unprepared to deal with the budget challenges posed by the retirement of the baby-boom generation and that weakens the future standard of living of our children and grandchildren.

Economic policy over the past 5 years has not served the interest of the typical American family. The resilience of the American economy has allowed it to recover from the 2001 recession, but we are still experiencing the labor market effects of the most protracted jobs slump in decades. Job creation has lagged far behind what is typical in a strong economic recovery, there is still evidence of hidden unemployment, and the benefits of productivity growth have been showing up in the bottom lines of companies rather than in the paychecks of workers. Finally, there is a growing gap between the ''haves'' and the ''have-nots'' in this country as income and earnings disparities have widened.

Yes, workers have become more productive—they produce more and more in each hour that they work. But they haven't been getting rewarded for that productivity. Average hourly earnings have not kept up with inflation for the past 2 years and they barely kept even the year before that. Median family income has failed to keep up with inflation every year under President Bush.

Those who are already well-to-do are doing very well in the Bush economy. But the typical American family is struggling to make ends meet in the face of high costs for energy, health care, and a college education for their children.

This budget resolution does not address any of these problems. In fact, it makes things worse. An analysis by the Democratic staff of the Joint Economic Committee shows that budget cuts in programs that provide payments for individuals are concentrated among lower-income families, while the tax cuts that have already been enacted go overwhelmingly to those at the top of the distribution. More than a third of the costs of spending cuts for families go to those in the bottom 20 percent of the distribution (families that together have only 3 percent of aggregate income). Meanwhile those at the top get nearly three-quarters of the benefits from the tax cuts. This analysis relates to the budget resolution originally brought to the floor a month ago, but the essential character of the plan has not changed.

With policies that have turned a $5.6 trillion 10-year budget surplus into a deficit over those same 10 years of at least $2.7 trillion, this Administration and this Congress have turned the United States into a Nation of debtors, relying on the rest of the world to finance our budget deficits and the rest of our excessive spending. Last year we had a current account deficit of $805 billion. That is the amount of money we had to borrow from the rest of the world to finance our trade deficit and international payment imbalance.

Foreign governments are holding large quantities of our public debt, putting us at risk of a major international financial crisis if they should decide that the benefits of holding dollars are no longer worth the risk.

Mr. Chairman, future prosperity depends on increasing our national savings and making wise investments; it depends on being ready for the retirement of the baby-boom generation and the pressure we know that will put on the budget. But how is the other side preparing us for that future—with more deficits and more debt. They want to make the tax cuts that have gotten us into this mess permanent, and they have no realistic plan for controlling spending or bringing revenues into line with the amount we need to spend to defend the country and take care of the needs of our citizens. We need a better plan.

CELEBRATING THE FIRST JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in solidarity with Jewish Americans from Maine to Hawaii to celebrate the designation of this May as the first ever Jewish American Heritage Month.

On Thursday April 20th, President Bush proclaimed that May would be Jewish American Heritage Month. I was a proud cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 315 when it unanimously passed the House of Representatives on December 15th, 2005, urging the President to do just that. Now for the first time there will be a national month recognizing the 352–year history of Jewish contributions to American culture.

As a first generation Jewish American, I have witnessed firsthand Jewish immigrants who have come to this Nation in order to create a better life for themselves, their families, and future generations. Since the first Jews settled here over 300 years ago, Jewish Americans have made endless contributions to our country through technology, the economy, entertainment, academia, politics, art, medicine, military service, and more. Like other important immigrant communities, the Jewish experience in the United States represents the ideal of freedom and the promise and opportunity of America.

Through educational programming, Jewish American History Month will help raise the awareness of a people, their history and contributions. It will help combat anti-Semitism, a phenomenon that is on the rise and that unfortunately still exists in our Nation. At no time in recent history has the need for this observance been greater. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) most recent Hate Crimes Statistics, 67.8 percent of criminal incidents motivated by religions bias stemmed from anti-Jewish prejudice.

The 1essons from the Holocaust have taught Jewish Americans that we must never turn a blind eye to terror or discrimination. It is necessary to combat hate wherever it exists. As a Jew I cannot sit idle while genocidal atrocities continue to unfold in Darfur, Sudan. I was proud to witness American Jewish organizations found the Save Darfur Coalition in June 2004 to mobilize a coordinated interfaith response to the ongoing humanitarian disaster. I hope every American will lend their support to this critical effort.

I look forward to the celebrations that will take place each May for years to come and I encourage everyone to help make this inaugural year's observance memorable by developing educational and celebratory programs in your communities.

And I wish you a happy Jewish American Heritage Month.

SUPPORT FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, as a strong supporter of the efforts being undertaken by the National Security agency to monitor and track terrorists, I commend to the attention of my colleagues the excellent piece by Mort Kondracke in today's Roll Call.

Mr. Kondracke rightly notes that the NSA's interception of international terrorist communications is both legitimate and vital to the Global War on Terror.

[From the Roll Call, May 18, 2006]

IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICT MENACES U.S. ABILITY TO FIGHT TERRORISM

(By Morton M. Kondracke)

Enough already! It's harmful enough that ideological conflict and partisan politics are preventing this country from solving its long-term challenges on health care, fiscal policy and energy. Now, it's threatening our national survival.

I do not exaggerate. Bush-hatred has reached such intensity that CIA officers and other bureaucrats are leaking major secrets about anti-terrorism policy and communications intelligence that undermine our ability to fight Islamic extremism.

Would newspapers in the midst of World War II have printed the fact that the U.S. had broken German and Japanese codes, enabling the enemy to secure its communications? Or revealed how and where Nazi spies were being interrogated? Nowadays, newspapers win Pulitzer Prizes for such disclosures.

In Congress and in much of the media, the immediate reaction to news that the National Security Agency was intercepting international terrorist communications was

not to say, ''Good work—and how can we help?'' Rather, it was to scream about a ''domestic spying'' scandal, as though Richard Nixon were back in the White House and tapping the telephone of Democratic National Committee Chairman Howard Dean.

And the reaction has been much the same to USA Today's story last week that the NSA ''has been secretly collecting the phone call records of tens of millions of Americans'' in a program that ''reaches into the homes and businesses across the nation by amassing information about the calls of ordinary Arericans.''

Sen. Patrick Leahy (D–Vt.), ranking member on the Senate Judiciary Committee, reacted by asserting that ''these are tens of millions of Americans who are not suspected of anything but we're just going to collect their phone information for the heck of it. Where does it stop?''

Similarly, Newsweek's cover this week blares ''Spying On Your Calls''—no question mark used—and implies that the Bush White House could be tapping everyone's telephones.

In fact, what seems to be happening, though the details are secret, is that most long-distance phone companies have given the NSA their billing records identifying what numbers are calling what other nmbers, when and for how long. Names are not included. And the NSA—not for the heck of it but to protect us from attack—is using the records to track terrorist networks and calling patterns. If a known terrorist in Pakistan calls a number in Los Angeles, I want the government to know what numbers that person calls. Don't you?

Certainly, the government will find out the names of people in a terrorist calling chain. If it wants to tap a domestic phone, it needs a warrant and, unless officials are lying through their teeth, it is asking for them.

The NSA call logs also apparently are being mined to establish patterns of terrorist-related communication—the use of pay phones, duration of calls, times of communication, etc.

But all this scarcely constitutes ''reaching into homes and businesses across the nation.'' If the government is snooping into the business of anyone except terrorists (or drug dealers, Mafiosi and child pornographers, whose names and numbers also can be easily obtained with a subpoena), it is wasting its time and our money.

The phone companies that are cooperating with the government ought to be congratulated for participating in the war on terrorism—as they would have been in WWII. Instead, they are being hauled before the Senate Judiciary Committee as though they were criminals. And trial lawyers are circling like vultures to make them pay zillions for alleged privacy violations.

As for myself, I'm sticking with AT&T as a long-distance carrier because (according to news reports), it did cooperate. If I had Qwest, which reportedly refused, I'd cancel.

Is there a potential for abuse in the NSA spying program? There is. For instance, it would be all too easy for officials to ask the NSA to trace the phone records of the winners of those odious Pulitzers—James Risen of The New York Times and Dana Priest of The Washington Post—in an effort to uncover their sources in the name of ''protecting secrets'' and ''fighting terrorism.''

The Senate Intelligence Committee, when it quizzes former NSA Director Michael Hayden in his CIA confirmation hearings Friday, should establish that the terrorist surveillance programs have not been abused, although there is no evidence of it.

To the extent he can do so without giving away secrets, Hayden also should tell the committee and the country why these programs are so essential and what the legal basis for them is.

If the administration believes, as officials often have said, that the 1978 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act is obsolete in the age of super-computers and terrorism, it ought to work with Congress to rewrite the law. Skirting it won't work anymore.

But the fundamental problem infecting much of Congress, the media and the political class especially those, left of center—is that they are consumed with loathing for President Bush and all his works and are prepared to do anything to undermine him, even if it makes the country less safe.

Yes, Republicans tried to destroy former President Bill Clinton over sex and politics. But now Democrats what to destroy Bush so badly that they are willing to undercut national security.

Everyone in Congress (and the CIA) should see the movie ''United 93'' as a reminder of what we are up against, Muslim fanatics will not only try to destroy the Capitol, but also explode a nuclear bomb, if they can.

And, people also should heed the warning delivered by Princeton University professor Bernard Lewis, one of the nation's foremost scholars of Islam, before the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life here last month.

Lewis, now 90, cast the struggle with Islamic extremism in WWII terms—it is 1938, he said, and ''we seem to be more in the mode of Chamberlain at Munich rather than of Churchill.''

Osama bin Laden and other would-be Hitlers, he said, consider the United States ''an effete, degenerate, pampered enemy incapable of real resistance.'' It's part of the pattern that we fight among ourselves as much as against our enemies. This is more than serious. It's dire.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 376) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2008 through 2011:

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Chairman, it's time for Congress to start making tough choices. Projected growth in mandatory spending threatens to crowd out all other spending and choke our economy unless we act now. Over the next 75 years, Medicare's unfunded liabilities amount to a staggering $30 trillion—more than 5 times as much as Social Security's. We're on a fiscal path that we simply cannot sustain, presenting our children and grandchildren with a legacy of enormous debt or stifling tax increases.

There are difficult decisions that have to be made, but we must be responsible, tighten our belts, and live within our means. I applaud the RSC for its work on this budget alternative, and urge its passage.

HONORING THE 16TH ANNUAL DC BLACK PRIDE CELEBRATION

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, Memorial Day Weekend, May 26–29, is the 16th Annual DC Black Pride celebration in Washington, DC.

DC Black Pride is an exciting 4-day event complete with dynamic workshops, receptions, cultural arts activities, small and large nightclub events that culminates in the world's largest Black Pride Festival at Metro Center, on the site of Washington, DC's former Convention Center. Many consider DC's Festival one of the world's preeminent Black Pride celebrations. The Festival consistently draws more than 30,000 people to the Nation's Capital. Attendees come from every major urban area in the United States as well as from Canada, Great Britain, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the Caribbean and South Africa. The Black Pride Festival features activities for the entire family including performances by national recording artists, 200 exhibition booths, book signings from noted writers, participation from national and local health organizations, and arts and crafts.

Black Lesbian and Gay Pride Day, Inc (BLGPD), the celebration's organizing body, chose the theme ''Fire 2006'' to encourage the Black Lesbian Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) people to ''get fired up'' about their health and wellness, to strengthen the Black LGBT Community, and to encourage Black LGBT people to live their lives with pride.

Black Lesbian and Gay Pride Day, Inc, a nonprofit organization with a volunteer Board of Directors coordinates this annual event. BLGPD's 2006 Board consists of Clarence J. Fluker, President; James Hawkins, Vice President; Janisha Gabriel, Secretary; Lisa Washington, Treasurer; the following Members at Large: Ramon Gardenhire, Shanika Whitehurst, Sterling Washington, Ray Daniels, Donovan Anderson, Courtney Snowden; and these Members Emeritus: Earl Fowlkes, Eric E. Richardson, and Cheryl Dunn who lead BLGPD in its mission to build knowledge of and to create greater pride in the Black Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered community's diversity while raising funds to ameliorate and prevent health problems, especially HIV/AIDS, in this community.

I ask the House to join me in welcoming all attending the 16th Annual DC Black Pride celebration in Washington, DC, and I take this opportunity to remind the celebrants that United States Citizens who reside in Washington, DC are taxed without full voting representation in Congress.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under

consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 376) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2008 through 2011:

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to the Republican budget resolution. The Republican's 2007 budget—and the signing of tax cuts for millionaires today—reflects priorities that are not in line with what our country stands for or the values in which most Americans believe. In keeping with an unfortunate tradition, the Republicans have once again put tax cuts for the wealthy ahead of national security, investing in our economic competitiveness, and meeting the needs of seniors, families, and students. This budget puts K Street ahead of the needs of Main Street.

The Republicans claim that this budget will decrease the massive Bush-era deficit. However, even with all the cruel cuts they make to medical research, health care, and nutrition assistance, their tax cuts add another $1.1 trillion to the deficit. Is that responsible?

The Republicans claim to have our country's best interests in mind. Yet, they slash funding for education and job training by $4.6 billion. Is that in our best interest?

The Republicans allege that their fiscal policies spark economic growth and prosperity. In reality, income is dropping, poverty has increased over the last several years, and 7.1 million Americans remain unemployed. Is that growth and prosperity?

What is responsible is funding vocational education to train our future workers, as the Democratic alternative to this budget would do. It is in our country's best interest to fund port security and homeland security. The Democratic budget recognizes that by providing $6.5 billion more than Republican budget does for homeland and port security. What would spur economic growth is funding initiatives like the Community Development Block Grants program, not cutting it by $736 million as the Republicans do. That money would help revitalize our dilapidated neighborhoods.

As I have said time and time again, budgets reflect what we value and what is important to us as a country. I value senior citizens—and that is why I cannot support a Republican budget that cuts their housing assistance by 26 percent. I believe it is important to prepare for our future so I cannot support a plan that cuts 42 education programs. I support our troops and refuse to support any budget that would cut veterans' health care by $8.6 billion even as new veterans, many severely wounded, are returning home every day. But that's what the Republican budget does.

I urge my colleagues to vote with our common American values and dreams in mind and support the Democratic and Congressional Black Caucus budgets and oppose the Republican budget that sells out the needs of the majority of Americans to make room for tax cuts for millionaires and K Street interests.

A TRIBUTE TO THE EAST NEW YORK FAMILY ACADEMY GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the East New York Family Academy Girls' Varsity Basketball Team. They are champions of the 2006 Girls Varsity Division VIII–B of the Public School Athletic League of New York City. Under the direction of Head Coach Earl S. Mitchell, Assistant Coach Eddie Barron, and Managers Rayon Clarke, Shakeema Mattocks and Bukky Odubanjo; the 2006 ''Lady Eagles'' excelled to an undefeated regular season record of 18 wins and no losses, while losing only one out of five games during the playoff season. Additionally, the East New York Family Academy Lady Eagles currently holds a record of two consecutive undefeated regular season.

I want to especially recognize the work of Athletic Director, John Cortese; and Principal Sheila Richards, who have worked hard to infuse excellence, respect and accountability not only in athletic programs, but in academic departments as well. At East New York Family Academy, it is truly a family affair. Coaches Mitchell and Barron have received a tremendous amount of inspiration from Tony Yard, the Head Coach of the Boys' Varsity Basketball Team and former member of the Panamanian Olympic Team, and from Donald Vanteerpool, the Head Coach of the Boys' Junior Varsity Basketball Team. Coach Mitchell is deeply appreciative of these coaches for teaching his team to respect the fundamentals of the game and for always being there when needed.

Although athletics are important, academics have not taken a backseat. In an era when sports achievements have sometimes replaced excellence in English, math, science and other academic areas, the coaches have demanded a high level of academic performance from team members. As an example, two players rank in the Top 10 of their senior class and four members of the starting five have received college acceptance offers.

Long after the last shot has been taken and the last ball dribbled, the members of the 2006 ''Lady Eagles'': Naledi Anderson, Alana Arthurs, Veldina Chaunce, Karanja Craigg, Tiffan Dugue', Tabrese Harris, Ayana James, Shada Jordon, Dalkeitha Layne, Shamika Mcintosh, Krista Mitchell, Tashanya Morris, and Tara Powell will benefit from the leadership, love and guidance given to them by their coaches, teachers and administrators at East New York Family Academy.

I am certain that in the days to come, the members of the 2006 ''Lady Eagles'' will build upon their experiences in basketball and their days at the East New York Family Academy and there will be more achievements to come.

Mr. Speaker, in this spirit, I believe that the accomplishments of the 2006 ''Lady Eagles,'' and the work of their coaches, teachers and administrators, are truly worthy of our recognition here today.

TRIBUTE TO ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL OF THE SACRED HEART

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor St. Joseph's School of the Sacred Heart, on the occasion of the celebration of its centennial on May 20, 2006.

Emilie Blain Donohoe, an alumna of Sacred Heart in St. Louis, strongly believed in the educational mission of the Religious of the Sacred Heart. In 1904, she made an offer to them to fund a new school if they would agree to run it. In 1906, St. Joseph's School in Atherton, California opened its doors to 74 students. Then and now the school is guided by the spirit of the foundress of the Religious of the Sacred Heart, St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, who said, ''Let us respect childhood; let us honor the soul of that small creature of God.'' It was her vision of teaching children of all social levels that inspired Emilie Blain Donohoe to fund a tuition-free school.

One hundred years later, St. Joseph's School of the Sacred Heart is considered the ''gold standard'' in K through 8 education. It is led by capable leaders and a faculty headed by Cee Salberg, Principal of the Preschool and Kindergarten, and Karen Eshoo, Principal of grades 1 through 8. Karen is my daughter and a graduate of St. Joseph's (Class of 1983) and Sacred Heart Preparatory (Class of 1987) and as such; exemplifies the best of a Sacred Heart education. The enrollment today is 520 children from Preschool through 8th grade. St. Joseph's has undergone many changes in 100 years but its mission remains the same: the development of the whole child spiritually, intellectually, emotionally and physically.

A St. Joseph's education represents the finest in academics . . . serious in principles, and rich in the spirit of life and love. The five Goals of the Sacred Heart Network inform everything that is done at St. Joseph's. They guide the community in a genuinely integrated approach to learning which is spiritually nurturing, academically challenging, and produces students who are committed to social justice in a spirit of Christian community. St. Joseph's students are continually challenged to support each other, while at the same time achieving their own personal goals.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring an extraordinary school, St. Joseph's of the Sacred Heart, as it celebrates one hundred years of educating our children. I pay tribute to the Religious of the Sacred Heart for their inspired work of educating generations of children and my congratulations to the entire Sacred Heart community of students, teachers, staff, alumni, parents and donors who have all helped to shape responsible citizens of our country. May the next century be marked by the excellence and achievements of the first 100 years at St. Joseph's School of the Sacred Heart.

HONORING THE CREW OF USS ''LAGARTO''

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. LIPINSKI Mr. Speaker, I wish to pay tribute to 86 brave men who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country and, for freedom—the crew of the submarine USS *Lagarto*—as well as their loved ones—their wives and sweethearts, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers—who have all kept them in their hearts for more than 60 years.

The story of the *Lagarto* represents the sacrifices made by sailors in the ''Silent Service,'' the most dangerous of all the missions, as submariners suffered the highest percentage of combat deaths of any service in any branch of the armed forces during World War II.

The *Lagarto,* built in the shipyards of Manitowoc, Wisconsin, had a short but distinguished career. The submarine joined the assault on Imperial Japan in early 1945, and was credited with sinking a Japanese submarine and other enemy vessels.

However, on May 3, 1945, the *Lagarto* and its sister submarine, the USS *Baya*, were coordinating an attack on a Japanese convoy off the coast of Thailand. The Japanese escort minelayer *Hatsutaka* was able to drive off the *Baya* in the early hours of May 4. But the *Lagarto* was never heard from again. Evidence pointed to a depth charge from the *Hatsutaka* that may have sunk the *Lagarto,* and the submarine was presumed lost with all hands on board.

For the next 60 years, many of the loved ones of the *Lagarto* crew continued to wonder where their final resting place might be. Then, in the Spring of 2005, a fishing boat snagged a large object off the Thai coast. Eventually, renowned wreck diver Jamie McLeod investigated and helped confirm that the wreckage in about 180 feet of water was the *Lagarto.*

On Saturday, May 6, 2006, the crew of the *Lagarto* was honored by the Navy during a special annual USS *Lagarto* Remembrance Day Memorial Ceremony at the Wisconsin Maritime Museum in Manitowoc. This event was attended by more than 150 family members of the crew of the *Lagarto.*

As Nancy Mabin Kenney, who was a toddler when her father, Seaman 1st Class William T. Mabin, was lost on the *Largato,* said: ''This ceremony will be our way of saying goodbye that we never had.''

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me honoring the brave men of USS *Lagarto* and to express our sincere gratitude to their families and friends upon the ultimate sacrifice these sailors gave for our great nation.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 376) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2008 through 2011:

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, today I rise in support of the Spratt budget substitute and in strong opposition to H. Con. Res. 376, the Republican budget.

Our son, daughters, and neighbors are bravely fighting wars abroad. Unfortunately, when they return home, they will find a country that has lost its way. We pay lip service to shared sacrifice, but while they risk their lives for us, Republicans in Congress are providing tax cuts for the richest 1 percent of Americans, slashing programs for working-class families and turning their backs on the middle class. The budget before us today continues these misguided policies. It does not represent the priorities of the American people, nor does it respect the values our soldiers are fighting to protect.

For too long, Republicans have racked up charges on the national credit card, while passing the bill on to future generations. Now is our chance to set this country on the proper course to ensure America's economic success and protect our grandchildren from having to pay for today's irresponsible decisions.

There is a better way. Despite the horrible fiscal outlook facing our Nation due to Republican policies, the Spratt substitute still manages to balance the budget in 6 years, cut taxes for the middle class, and provide realistic funding for education, health care, and veterans programs, all of which are shortchanged by the Republicans.

The Spratt substitute has a better bottom line than the Republican budget every year. Fiscal responsibility today will lead to lower deficits, smaller interest payments, and less national debt in the future. Most significantly, after the budget is balanced, we can finally begin to pay off the trillions of dollars in debt that have accumulated since President Bush took office.

Unfortunately, the budget proposed by House Republicans does nothing to improve the quality of life in America. It would add more than $350 billion to the national debt next year alone. Under Republican stewardship, the five years between fiscal year 2003 and 2007 will provide us with the five largest deficits in American history. This is not a legacy worth continuing. We cannot afford to borrow additional money to continue paying for failed economic policies.

Not only does the Spratt substitute match the President's request for defense spending, but it also includes additional needed funds for homeland security programs, including port security. As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, I am concerned that the Republican budget closely mirrors the President's, which proposes to eliminate several programs important to the safety of all Americans. Programs on the chopping block include the COPS Interoperability Grant Program, the SAFER Program for firefighting equipment, the Metropolitan Medical Response System, the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program, and Justice Assistance Grants. In 2005, these programs provided more than $13 million in grants to help Rhode Island's first responders keep my constituents safe. Since September 11, we have asked our police and firefighters to do so much more, but this budget fails to provide the resources they so badly need.

In addition, the budget would freeze or cut all non-homeland security discretionary spending. If the Republicans have their way, 5 years from now, education and health programs will receive even less than they do today. Cuts to social programs would place a larger burden on the working class at a time when they can least afford it.

Even with all of these cuts, the Republicans still have no plan to balance the budget. Instead, they want to give away the savings to the wealthy by making permanent tax cuts on investment income. As a recent New York Times article indicated, ''Americans with annual comes of $1 million or more, about one-tenth of 1 percent of all taxpayers, reaped 43 percent of all the savings on investment taxes in 2003.'' At the same time, those earning less than $50,000 saved an average of only $10 on the same capital gains and dividend tax cuts. The wealthiest Americans are doing fine on their own, and we should not be borrowing money to give them more special favors.

Deficit spending has stymied job growth and is plaguing our economy. No Rhode Islander would write a check without sufficient funds to cover it. Neither should the government. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Spratt budget substitute and opposing the underlying Republican plan.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, due to circumstances beyond my control, I missed Roll Call Vote 153 on Wednesday, May 17, 2006. Had I been present I would have voted ''aye.'' This was a vote to order the previous question on H. Res. 817, a rule providing for further consideration of the budget resolution.

THE AMBASSADORS' REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL OF AMERICAN AMBASSADORS

HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I wish to insert in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the following statement by Joseph Verner Reed, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations.

VIEWPOINTS: UNITED NATIONS

Secretary-General Kofi A. Annan will step down from his position as Secretary-General when his second five-year term ends on December 31.

The search for a successor to Secretary-General Annan promises to create differences within the U.N. Security Council. Russia and China back the customary procedure of rotating the post among the world's regions, while the U.S. and Britain are questioning the need to do so.

Since the United Nations was established in October 1945, the post of Secretary-General has been held by Trygve Lie of Norway

(1946–1953); Dag Hammarskjold of Sweden (1953–1961); U Thant of Burma (1961–1971); Kurt Waldheim of Austria (1972–1981); Javier Perez de Cuellar of Peru (1982–1991); and Boutros Boutros-Ghali of Egypt (1992–1996). Kofi A. Annan, who is from Ghana, has served since January 1997.

The list of candidates widely discussed in the international press include: Aleksander Kwasniewski, former Polish president; Vaira Vike-Freiberga, Latvian president; Kemal Dervis, Turkey, currently head of the U.N. Development Program; Surakiart Sathirathai, Thailand's deputy prime minister; Shashi Tharoor, India, U.N. under-secretary-general for Communications and Public Information and an award-winning journalist/novelist; Ban Ki Moon, South Korea's foreign minister; Jose Ramos-Horta, foreign minister of East Timor and a 1996 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate; Jayantha Dhanapala, Sri Lanka, served as U.N. undersecretary-general for disarmament and as ambassador to the United States; Goh Chok Tong, former prime ministr of Singapore; and Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein, Jordanian ambassador to the U.N. The list is not exhaustive and the selection of a dark-horse candidate cannot be discounted.

The BBC (February 14) reported, ''Analysts say there is much support for an Asian leader among U.N. member states, in line with an informal tradition that rotates the role on a geographical basis. But Washington's U.N. Ambassador John R. Bolton said last month that Kofi Annan's successor should be selected on merit alone.''

There have been calls for a Woman as Secretary-General. Woman's groups have begun lobbying for a woman to succeed Secretary-General Annan. Their campaign has taken on new urgency with the recent announcement that Secretary-General Annan's deputy, Louise Frechette, appointed in 1998 partly because she was a woman, will leave in April to return to her native Canada.

As the campaigns move forward it is to be noted that there are no established qualifications for the post, no search committees, no interviews, no background checks, no campaign rules and no forums for showcasing aspirants and their ideas.

If history is a guide, it is likely that none of the discussed candidates will emerge the winner and that the person who does is not being publicly discussed.

Wang Guangya, China's Ambassador (the PRC holding a Permanent seat on the Security Council) at a recent reception said China would support only candidates from Asia, a polite way of saying the PRC would threaten to veto candidates from elsewhere.

The current Chief of Staff for the Secretary-General is Mark Malloch Brown, recently Head of the UNDP (United Nations Development Program). He will take the post of Deputy Secretary-General in April.

Meanwhile, the Secretary General has presented a far-reaching report with proposals for an overhaul ranging from setting up a 2,500-strong core of mobile peacekeeping professionals to multimillion-dollar invesments in training and technology.

His far-reaching report ''Investing in the United Nations: For a Stronger Organization Worldwide,'' focuses on ensuring efficiency and accountability in a way that reflects the fact that more than 70 per cent of the $10 billion annual budget now relates to peacekeeping and other field operations, up from around 50 per cent of a $4.5 billion budget ten years ago.

''Our current rules and regulations were designed for an essentially static Secretariat, whose main function was to service conferences and meetings of Member States, and whose staff worked mainly at Headquarters,'' the Secretary-General said as he presented the report in the General Assembly Hall. ''Today thanks to the mandates that Member States have given us, we are engaged directly in many parts of the world, working on the ground to improve the lives of people who need help.''

In the 16 years since the cold war ended, the Organization has taken on more than twice as many new peacekeeping missions as in the previous 44 years and spending on peacekeeping has quadrupled. Over half of its 30,000 civilian staff now serve in the field—not only in peacekeeping, but also in humanitarian relief, criminal justice, human rights monitoring, supporting national elections, and in the battle against drugs and crime.

The Secretary-General's comprehensive reform blueprint was called for in the Outcome Document adopted by national leaders at last September's World Summit in New York. It builds on a package of reforms Mr. Annan launched last year to enhance ethics and accountability and address weaknesses exposed by the Indepdent Inquiry on the Oil-for-Food Programme as well as evidence of sexual exploitation in certain peace eping operations.

In the report, the Secretary-General urges Member States to seize the moment for change. ''This is an opportunity, which may not occur again until another generation has passed, to transform the United Nations by aligning it with, and equipping it for, the substantive challenges it faces in the twenty-first century,'' he writes. ''It is a chance to give Member States the tools they need to provide strategic direction and hold the Secretariat fully accountable for its performance.''

While the report identifies a number of areas of potential cost savings and efficiencies, the primary financial message is that it is time to reverse years of under-investment in people, systems and information technology to address operational deficiencies and ensure that the UN can reach the level of effectiveness expected by Member States.

The Secretary-General said that although the UN had made a number of major organizational changes in recent rears to keep up with the increasing expectations of Member States, these efforts had only addressed the symptoms, not the causes, of the Organization's shortcomings. ''It is now time to reach for deeper, more fundamental change,'' he said.

Along these lines, the proposals encompass a revamped version of how to recruit, contract, train, assign and compensate staff, with an emphasis on bringing conditions for field-based personnel up to par with those at other UN agencies operating in the field. This will include proposals for converting 2,500 existing short-term peacekeeping positions into a new flexible and mobile core of dedicated specialists who can be deployed rapidly in urgent peacekeeping and special political missions.

''Increasingly complex mandates require staff with different skills,'' the Secretary-General told the Assembly. ''We need to be able to recruit and retain leaders, managers and personnel capable of handling large multidisciplinary operations, with increasingly high budgets. ''As things stand,'' he added, ''many of our staff, especially the field staff who serve with great idealism and integrity, often in situations of hardship and danger are demoralized and de-motivated by lack of opportunities for promotion, and by the frustrattons of dealing with a bureaucracy that can seem both excessive and remote.''

The report calls for consolidating reporting to address logjams associated with the current system, where over 100 senior UN officials are directly answerable to the Secretary-General. It also proposes the formal delegation of responsibility for management policies and overall operational matters to a redefined post of Deputy Secretary-General to help free the Secretary-General to focus on political and policy issues.

The report also proposes significant investment to overhaul the Organization's information and communications infrastructure by replacing current antiquated, fragmented technology systems with an integrated global platform that should be led by a dedicated Chief Information Technology Officer.

Separately, the report identifies significant opportunities to realize cost savings and efficiency gains, recommending that the Secretariat explore options for alternative service delivery, including the potential for relocating core functions from Headquarters to lower cost duty stations and possible outsourcing of less central functions such as printing.

One area where investment could yield substantial savings is procurement, where the report outlines change that would improve transparency and realize up to $400 million.

A number of the proposals fall under the direct authority of the Secretary-General, who said he intends to immediately carry them out. But most of the fundamental changes, particularly with regard to budget and personnel issues, require approval from Member States.

To help ensure momentum for this agenda through the end of his term and to help equip his successor to follow through, the Secretary-General also proposes creating a Change Management Office that would seek to work closely with Member States to drive the implementation of the reforms.

In the report, Mr. Annan cautions against complacency, stressing that the proposals must mark the beginning of a process that will be carried over the next several years. ''One of the weaknesses of the old culture is precisely the view that a report or a vote in itself represents change,'' he notes. ''In practice, reports and votes enable and authorize change, but change itself is the long march that follows.''

Last week the international community took an important step forward in the fight for global human rights by way of the General Assembly voting to adopt a new Human Rights Council.

The new Human Rights Council represents a significant improvement over the old, discredited Human Rights Commission because it includes a number of new provisions and characteristics that will significantly strengthen the UN's human rights machinery and prevent human rights violators from participating in the Council.

The President of the General Assembly, Jan Eliasson, has done a masterful job of diplomacy, as demonstrated by the broad support that exists among governments and non-governmental organizations.

His proposal was made considerably stronger through pledges by a large number of countries.

These recent pledges will help ensure that countries with dubious human rights records will not be elected to the new Council and that countries under Security Council sanctions are prevented from participating in the Council.

The new commitments significantly enhance the proposal and set the stage for additional efforts to strengthen the new body as it is formed and made operational.

Countries committed to human rights must know that leadership and diplomacy can continue to improve the Council as it gets up and running and into the future.

While this unfortunate that the United States found itself virtually alone in New York and was unable to join consensus, it is

a positive sign that the United States did not abandon the Council altogether.

Result of the GA resolution on Human Rights Council: 170 in favour; 44 against (U.S., Israel, Marshall Islands, Palau); and 3 abstained (Venezuela, Iran, Belarus).

Building on these principles, the U.S. should participate actively in the next phase of the Council, exercising leadership and summoning enlightened diplomacy to advance the Council and the cause of human rights.

The creation of this new Council—which was mandated by world leaders in last September's summit at the UN—also fuels the momentum in the ongoing reform process at the UN.

The Secretary-General attended the World Economic Forum in January of this year and addressed the Plenary Session:

''A NEW MINDSET FOR THE UNITED NATIONS''

''Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear friends:

''Some of you may remember me coming to Davos nine years ago, as a freshly minted Secretary-General.

''Since then I have attended all but three of your annual meetings—including the memorable one in 2002 when you came to show confidence in New York, after the attack on the World Trade Center.

''So I did not hesitate one minute, Klaus, before accepting your kind invitation to come here once more, at the beginning of my last year in office. And I was also very happy to accept the title you suggested for this session—'a new mindset for the United Nations'.

''Why? because it expresses something I have striven to achieve throughout these nine years, and something in which Davos itself has played a part.

''In 1999, when I came here and called for a 'global compact' between the United Nations and the private sector, many of my colleagues in the Secretariat—and many representatives of member States—would hardly have been more shocked if I had proposed a compact with the Devil.

''It is the mindset that I have been seeking to change throughout my time in office—the mindset that sees international relations as nothing more than relations between States, and the United Nations as little more than a trade union for governments.

''My objective has been to persuade both the member States and my colleagues in the Secretariat that the United Nations needs to engage not only with governments but with people. Only if it does that, I believe, can it fulfill its vocation and be of use to humanity in the 21st century.

''That's why, in the year 2000, I used the first words of the UN Charter, 'We the Peoples' as the title of my report setting out the agenda for the Millennium Summit, at which political leaders from all over the world came together to assess the challenges of a new century, and adopted a collective response, known as the 'Millennium Declaration.'

''And that was why last year, in my report called 'In Larger Freedom', I urged governments to accept that security and development are interdependent, and that neither can be long sustained without respect for human rights and the rule of law.

''That report was intended as the blueprint, not only for a far-reaching reform of the United Nations itself, but also for a series of decisions that would enable humanity to realize the aims of the Millennium Declaration, particularly in the light of new challenges that had arisen since.

''How far the blueprint will be translated into reality, remains to be seen. But in the meantime the United Nations has not stood still. Far from it! This has been a decade of rapid change. Let me give you a few examples.

''When I took office there was a widespread perception, based on the tragic events in Bosnia, Somalia and Rwanda, that UN peacekeeping was a failed experiment, and that henceforth this task would have to be handled by regional organizations.

''Peacekeepers, especially in countries where conflict is still raging—where there is literally no peace to keep—continue to face immense challenges. Even so, today we have 85,000 people serving in 16 UN peacekeeping operations, spread across four continents. Most of these operations are not static observers of a truce, but active participants in the implementation of peace agreements, helping the people of war-torn countries make the transition from war to peace.

''Certainly, in many parts of the world regional organizations play an important role, and so they should. But most often they do so in partnership with the United Nations. The UN has become, in effect, the indispensable mechanism for bringing international help to countries recovering from conflict—and member States have now recognized this by agreeing to set up a Peacebuilding Commission, within the UN, to manage this highly complex process.

''The last decade has also seen growing use of United Nations economic sanctions. These are now used to influence or restrict the activity not only of recalcitrant States, but also of non-State actors, such as rebel movements or terrorist groups. At the same time, the Security Council has developed more sophisticated and humane types of sanctions, aimed at individuals rather than whole societies—travel bans, for instance, and the freezing of bank accounts.

''The same philosophy of punishing individuals rather than communities has driven the work of the UN criminal tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia—one of which was the first international court to convict people of genocide (including a former prime minister) and of rape as a war crime, while the other has become the first to indict and try a former Head of State.

''This in turn has led to further innovations, including the mixed tribunal in Sierra Leone and, of course, the International Criminal Court. The latter is not an organ of the United Nations, but the UN convened and serviced the conference, which adopted its Statute in 1998.

''Over 100 States have now ratified the Statute—which means that the Court's jurisdiction is now recognized by well over half the UN's membership.

''Another way the UN has changed is the increasing focus on human rights—which is reflected in the recent decision by member States to strengthen the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. That office is now a dynamic operational entity, which deploys and supports hundreds of human rights workers around the world. And I hope that within the next week or two we may see agreement on a corresponding change at the intergovernmental level, with the establishment of a more authoritative Human Rights Council, to replace the now widely discredited Commission.

''One more example of change: the United Nations has responded to the growth of international terrorism. Even before '9/11', the Security Council had imposed sanctions on Al-Qaida, and set up a special committee to monitor its activities. Immediately after the attack, the Council went much further, with its historic resolution 1373, which imposed stringent obligations on all countries, established a list of terrorist organizations and individuals, and created the Counter-Terrorism Committee to monitor member States' compliance and help them improve their capacity to enact and implement anti-terrorist legislation.

''In short, I believe the United Nations is proving itself an increasingly flexible instrument, to which its member States turn for a wider and wider array of functions.

''For instance, within the last five years the UN has been asked: to shepherd Afghanistan's transition from the anarchic wasteland of the Taliban and the warlords to the nascent democracy—still struggling, but hopeful—that it is today; to help establish the Interim Government of Iraq, and to help organize the referendum and elections there—as it has supported democratic elections in half the world's nations over the last 12 years; to verify the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon and carry out, for the first time ever, a full criminal investigation into the assassination of a former prime minister; to coordinate global relief efforts after the tsunami, and again after the earthquake in Kashmir; and to take the lead in raising global awareness, as well as funds, to protect the world's peoples against avian flu.

''What all these activities have in common is that they involve the United Nations not simply in relations among its member States, but also in the lives of their peoples. To carry out such tasks, we must engage not only with governments but with all the new actors on the international scene.

''That includes the private sector, but it also includes parliamentarians; voluntary, non-profit organizations; philanthropic foundations; the global media; celebrities from the worlds of sport and entertainment; and in some cases labour unions, mayors and local administrators. And it includes less benign actors such as terrorists, warlords, and traffickers in drugs, illicit weapons or—worst of all—the lives and bodies of human beings.

''That is why I have repeatedly urged all the organs of the United Nations to be more open to civil society, so that their decisions can fully reflect the contribution made by groups and individuals who devote themselves to studying specific problems, or working in specific areas.

''It is also why I myself have cultivated contacts with scholars, with parliamentarians, with practitioners of all sorts, and with young people—seeking to learn from their views and also encouraging them, whatever sector they work in, to use their talents for the public good and to keep the global horizon in view.

''It is one of the reasons why I have worked constantly to make our Organization more transparent and comprehensible to the public, and thereby more genuinely accountable.

''And, of course, it is why I launched the Global Compact, to which the international business community—including some of you in this audience—has responded with such enthusiasm that it is now the world's leading corporate citizenship initiative, involving more that 2,400 companies, in nearly 90 countries.

''This new mindset must also extend to the domain of international peace and security—so that we think of security not only in conventional terms, focusing on prevention of war between States, but also as including the protection of the world's peoples, against threats which, to many of them today, seem more immediate and more real.

''One of those threats is the threat of genocide and other crimes against humanity. I called the General Assembly's attention to this in 1999, warning that such mass atrocities can never be treated as a purely domestic affair. Being rightly called crimes against humanity, they demand a collective response from humanity, which should be organized and legitimized by the United Nations.

''More recently, the High-Level Panel that I appointed in 2003 has identified a broad range of threats, including: poverty, infectious disease and environmental degradation; conflict within States, as well as between them; the spread of nuclear, radiological, chemical and biological weapons; terrorism; and transnational organized crime.

''My 'Larger Freedom' report built on this re-definition of global security, drawing it together with the detailed recommendations of the Millennium Project for achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015—which in itself would rescue many millions of people from the threats of poverty and disease.

''But my report also included a third dimension: human rights and the rule of law. Without these, any society, however well-armed, will remain insecure; and its development, however dynamic, will remain precarious.

''Member States took the report as their starting-point in negotiating the outcome of last September's world summit. I won't say that that document fulfills all my hopes. But it does contain many important decisions—from the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission and Human Rights Council, through the commitments to advance the Millennium Development Goals, to the acceptance, by all States individually and collectively, of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

''Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

''The United Nations cannot stand still, because the threats to humanity do not stand still. Every day the world presents new challenges, which the founders of the UN 60 years ago could never have anticipated. Whether it is a looming crisis over Iran and its compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, continuing atrocities in Darfur, or the threat of an avian flu pandemic, people all over the world look to the United Nations to play a role in making peace, protecting civilians, improving livelihoods, promoting human rights and upholding international law. I have worked long and hard to transform the United Nations so that when called upon, as we are every day, we will deliver what is asked of us—effectively, efficiently and equitably. That is the true objective of the changes I have sought to bring about, and it will be the true measure of my success or failure.

''And my successor—since I understand several members of this panel may be interested in the position—need not worry. Changing the mindset of the United Nations, so that it can both reflect and influence the temper of the times, is a never-ending challenge. There will be plenty more work to do in the years and decades to come.''

I have worked for three Secretary Generals and been at post for some 20 years. I am honored to have worked for the House of Peace. As we approach the new era of a new Secretary-General I say it is time for renewal.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT F. CARROLL CHAIRMAN, APLASTIC ANEMIA & MDS INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

HON. NANCY L. JOHNSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to inform the House of the passing of Robert F. Carroll, a constituent of mine from Wolcott, Connecticut. I ask that you join me in paying tribute to this great man, who served both as the Chairman of the Board of the Aplastic Anemia & MDS International Foundation and the Assistant Executive Director for the Connecticut Association of Schools in Cheshire, CT.

In April 1991, at age 57, Bob was diagnosed with myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS), a serious and non-contagious rare bone marrow failure disease. Bob was told he had MDS after having gone to his doctor for a routine check-up required by the school district for which he worked. He was given two to four years to live. He had always told his wife, Marie, that he would not want to know if he had a life-threatening disease. But courageously Bob transformed his fear of dying to a fear of dying without giving back. From at month in 1991 until today, Bob set about to make a difference for individuals and families suffering from bone marrow diseases.

In early 1992, Bob and his wife were searching the Internet and came across the Aplastic Anemia & MDS International Foundation. He contacted the executive director immediately and, as a result, was given everything he needed to educate himself about the disease, clinical trials, and support networks of other patients. He soon became active and a member of the board. Four years later, he became President of the Foundation, the first patient President in the history of the organization. He believed in the same goals as the Foundation, which is to keep patients attitudes positive. He refused to let his life change because of his MDS. He did not retire, and instead continued with his career in education and the many projects that kept him active and busy.

For 15 years, Bob advocated tirelessly for the tens of thousands of individuals diagnosed with bone marrow diseases (about 35,000 new cases are diagnosed annually). He also became involved in the recovery efforts in Sri Lanka after the devastating tsunami of 2004, traveling to that country and raising money in the U.S. for recovery efforts. And through his service with the Connecticut Association of Schools, Bob worked strenuously to improve the quality of education in our school systems.

Bob was able to live with MDS thanks to the hundreds of transfusions he received over a period of 15 years. Unfortunately, though, there is no cure for MDS. The extreme low blood counts that are caused by MDS ultimately took their toll on Bob's long-term health Bob passed away yesterday in Connecticut.

Bob would not want us to remember him as a victim of a rare disease, but rather as one who experienced a new challenge that gave greater purpose to his life. He often referred to MDS as his ''gift'' because it taught him that relationships with others are what are important in life. Let us honor this spirit today by paying the highest tribute to this great American and tireless advocate for those suffering from rare diseases.

CONGRATULATIONS TO COACH TREY GIBSON AND THE LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY DEBATE TEAM

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Louisiana Tech University Debate Team for its continued success this academic year. Just last month, the debate team regained its national championship status and the team is poised to continue its success next season.

The team's success is not accidental; the foundation of this team's success was established by hard work, determination, dedication and experience. At the helm of the Louisiana Tech Debate Team is Trey Gibson, a Louisiana native who came to Louisiana Tech in 2000. This year's team includes: Levy Leatherman, John Emory, Bill Willis, Kris Lucas, John McCorkle, Michelli McKnight, Matt LaCaze, Baileigh McClaran, Henry Shuler, Courtney McGuffee, Rachel Taylor, Kyle O'Neal, Taryn Branson, Kacey Richard, Nick Cordaro, Richie Robinson, Christina Linza and Reece Lewis.

Gibson works tirelessly to promote this program and uses his talent, energy and drive toward developing articulate students. Long after these students graduate, Gibson's lessons and dedication will continue to surface as his students succeed in business and public service professions. By winning the national championship, the Louisiana Tech Debate Team also earned the prestigious Protagoras Cup. It is also important to note that this year's team faced the trials and tribulations that Hurricanes Katrina and Rita brought to our state. Most north Louisiana institutions of higher learning had to carry the burdens of finding space for our south Louisiana students from other universities, and all state universities had to address budget cuts. Through all of this, the team continued on its successful journey.

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to know that the academic honors these students have achieved will truly pay off for our nation. This type of training will enhance and strengthen each student's educational experience. I am thankful for professors like Trey Gibson, who exude energy and determination in the classroom. The fruits of his labor are evident in his team's storied success.

BILL IN SUPPORT OF RELIEF TO MENNONITE MUTUAL AID

HON. MARK E. SOUDER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a bill that would offer relief to Mennonite Mutual Aid, a organization affiliated with the Mennonite church based in Indiana that provides individuals with socially-conscious investment and retirement options.

For more than 40 years Mennonite Mutual Aid has been offering defined benefits to its customers in the form of annuities paid directly from its 401(a) defined contribution church retirement plan, a process known as ''self-

annuitization." However, regulations issued by the IRS in 2002 prohibited the practice of self-annuitization, although they allowed it for church retirement plans organized under section 403(b)(9). Instead, the IRS stated that plans must purchase annuities from commercial insurance companies.

Mr. Speaker, there is no good policy reason for why the two types of church plans should be treated differently regarding self-annuitization. Furthermore, the Department of the Treasury has indicated they would not oppose a legislative change on this issue. Churches should have the right to invest for retirement in the ways they see fit, and commercial insurance companies cannot and do not manage their investments according to these high standards. Moreover, the ability to offer annuities is necessary to prevent the possibility of beneficiaries outliving their retirement funds under an alternative installment payment system. In order to prevent this unfairness, my bill would use a "grandfather" approach to grant the ability to self-annuitize only to those 401(a) plans that were in existence on the date the final IRS regulations were issued in 2002.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill so that the Mennonites can continue to offer annuities invested in the way they see fit.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOE BARTON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, May 17, 2006, I was diagnosed with an inner ear infection and was unable to fly to Washington, D.C. ahead of all votes. As a result, I missed several votes on this day and ask that my statement be placed in the appropriate part of the RECORD to reflect how I would have voted on the following roll call votes, had I been present.

Wednesday, May 17, 2006:

Nay: on agreeing to the Rahall (WV) amendment Failed by recorded vote: 189–236 (Roll no. 147). Strikes section 103 of H.R. 4200, regarding expedited procedures and certain exceptions to compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Nay: On agreeing to the DeFazio (OR) amendment Failed by recorded vote: 184–240. (Roll no. 148). Strikes section 104 of H.R. 4200, regarding "availability and use of pre-approved management practices" and replaces it with a new section 104.

Nay: On agreeing to the Inslee (WA) amendment Failed by recorded vote: 191–231 (Roll no. 149). Adds a new section to H.R. 200, stating that the Act shall not apply to any inventoried roadless area within the National Forest System.

Nay: On agreeing to the Udall (NM) amendment Failed by recorded vote: 197–228 (Roll no. 150). Adds a new section to H.R. 4200, which would require the Secretary concerned (when implementing any pre-approved management practice or catastrophic event recovery project as described in the bill) to "consider the effect of the practice of project fire risk and forest regeneration," and prohibits implementing the project unless the Secretary certifies that the practice or project will not increase fire-risk or decrease forest regeneration.

Aye: On passage Passed by recorded vote: 243–182 (Roll no. 151). H.R. 4200, Forest Emergency Recovery and Research Act.

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF LARRY KIRK

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Rutherford County's Larry Kirk, who will retire on June 30, 2006, from the Murfreesboro Electric Department after 24 years of outstanding service.

Larry has been in the electricity business for 40 years and started working for Murfreesboro Electric Department in 1982. He transferred to Murfreesboro after working in Chattanooga for 13 years and working for Mississippi Power & Light for three years.

Under his leadership, Murfreesboro Electric Department has grown from 15,000 to 45,000 customers as the population of the city has doubled.

Active in his trade, Larry has served as the President of the Tennessee Municipal Electric Power Association. He has also served on the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Public Power Association and currently serves on the Middle Tennessee Industrial Development Association Board of Directors.

Larry has served his country, as well as his community. During the Vietnam era, he served in the U.S. Army Special Forces and the Special Forces National Guard. He has served on the Board of Directors of the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce and United Way of Rutherford and Cannon Counties, where he was once chairman and president. He has served on the Board of Directors of Heart of Tennessee Chapter of the American Red Cross, and he has donated an astounding 14 gallons of blood over the years.

Upon retirement, Larry plans to devote more of his time to his love of Middle Tennessee State University athletics. Although Larry is a graduate of Ole Miss and Delta State, MTSU is his adopted university. He has served on the Board of Trustees of the MTSU Development Foundation and is an active member of the Blue Raider Athletic Association, where he once served as president.

I commend Larry Kirk on his numerous accomplishments and his involvement within the Murfreesboro community. I wish him all the best in his retirement.

A WELL DESERVED TRIBUTE TO BENNETT CAREER INSTITUTE'S BRIGHTEST SHINING STAR, MS. BRENDA C. ARNOLD

HON. G.K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ms. Brenda C. Arnold, one of Bennett Career Institute's most dedicated, compassionate and qualified instructors. I applaud Ms. Arnold for all that she has done over the years to nurture, motivate, and instill confidence in the students who have crossed her path. In her own special way she touches the lives of so many daily.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Arnold is indeed the human catalyst at Bennett Career Institute who stimulates the cosmetology students in a very unique and special way. While encouraging the students to maximize their greatest potential, Ms. Arnold lets them know that she expects nothing but the best that they have to offer. Because of Mr. Chett Bennett, Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Arnold, Freshman Instructor, and other qualified and dedicated instructors, the Bennett Career Institute has grown over the years in leaps and bounds. The opportunities and exposure that this Institute provides to its students is unsurpassed.

Mr. Speaker, I have learned that Bennett Graduates who have taken instruction under Ms. Arnold, in past years eagerly return to Bennett Career Institute to pay tribute to her and to express their gratitude for the positive ways that she touched their lives. They return frequently to Bennett Career Institute to say "thanks" to Ms. Arnold for her role in enhancing their quality of life.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the experience at Bennett Career Institute, Ms. Arnold has provided instruction and held management positions at various other Institutions in the District of Columbia. She has worked as a Manager at Jazzmin's Hair Gallery; a Sales Representative with Barry Fletcher Products; as an Instructor with Parvane Institute of Esthetics; as an Instructor with the District of Columbia Beauty Academy; as a Freelance Stylist and Consultant with Added Attraction; as an Educational Therapy Assistant with the District of Columbia Public Schools—Central Diagnostic Placement Center; and as a Director and Instructor with Image Makers Beauty Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my Congressional Colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to help me pay tribute to this bright star, Ms. Brenda C. Arnold, for rekindling the life of so many of our young citizens who, but for her, may have gotten distracted and gone astray joining the ranks of far too many others who are still searching for direction and their station in life.

Mr. Seaker, I wish God's continued blessings upon Ms. Brenda C. Arnold, Mr. Chett Bennett, other members of the Faculty, Administrative Staff and the student body of Bennett Career Institute.

TRIBUTE TO KEN BORELLI

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in gratitude to recognize the social services and social work practices of Mr. Ken Borelli so valued by the residents of Santa Clara County today. Mr. Borelli has worked with the Santa Clara County Social Services Agency for 36 years. I first met Ken over 25 years ago when I was a member of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors which had responsibility for funding the Department of Social Services and providing oversight for the Department. Ken was a standout then and he has remained so to this day. He began his career as a Social Work

Supervisor in the Food Stamps Unit and moved throughout the Social Services system to include: the Multicultural Child Welfare Unit, Basic Services, Adult Protective Services, Immigration, Social Work Coordinator, Voluntary Foster Home Intake and Coordinator of Special Projects.

Mr. Borelli developed the first Immigration Services Unit for Santa Clara County in 1974, where he worked closely with neighborhood youth groups. In fact, Ken is an expert and leader in the field of Immigration Services and has exhibited his accomplishments in many ways. He not only provided professional development training in the field of immigration, but also significantly contributed to the development of the 1990 Federal legislation which established ''Special Immigrant Juvenile Status'' laws to help immigrant children in the Child Welfare System across the country. Ken also was responsible for the development of an invaluable ''Immigration Resource and Practice Guide'' which helped so many families. Ken accomplished other written work in the field of Social work practice including topics such as: Child Welfare, International Social Services, and Domestic Violence. Mr. Borelli continues to remain involved in all levels of social service issues, including: child welfare abuse issues, dependency court investigations, AIDS research and fund-raising, immigration, and development and enhancement of our library systems. His participation in Committees and Advisory Boards included: the Multi-Disciplinary Interview Committee of the Child Abuse Council of Santa Clara County (20 years), the Alum Rock Library Committee, the County Library Commission, the Advisory Board of the Eastside Athletic Club, and the Board of Catholic Charities Immigration Services.

Mr. Borelli is a prominent leader in the community and continues to demonstrate his innovative contributions. He was a founding member and Chair for 20 years of the Social Service Agency's AIDS Services Committee. He is a supporter of the Opera San Jose and is being honored as ''2006 Volunteer of the Year'' by the Italian American Foundation. I hereby honor Ken Borelli, on the closure of this chapter of his life, but know he will continue to have a tremendous impact on social services in the county.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF DAMU AMIRI IMARA SMITH

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Damu Amiri Imara Smith, a prolific fighter for justice and peace who succumbed to colon cancer on May 5th of this year. In keeping with his long and distinguished career of activism, Damu continued his fight until the very end. Helped along the way by his ''Army of Angels'' and inspired by his enduring love for his daughter Asha, Damu outlived all the doctors' predictions. Not letting his terminal diagnosis dampen his spirit, he turned his personal health crisis into a fight for better health care services for black and poor people.

Just as Damu's resolve to speak truth to power was not constrained by his illness, neither did his sense of justice know any limit. Damu's concerns and actions ranged from the local to the global. He started out fighting for the Martin Luther King holiday and against the apartheid regime in South Africa. Later, his concerns expanded to include environmental justice; he monitored corporate pollution on Louisiana's Gulf Coast as national associate director for Greenpeace USA. He sought to unite the civil rights and environmental movements by founding the National Black Environmental Justice Campaign, which led the nationwide fight against contaminated water and waste dumps in poor and black communities.

Damu furthered his concern for peace and nonviolence at home and abroad as the associate director of the American Friends Service Committee's Washington Bureau. He confronted police bruality and worked to end gun violence in the District of Columbia while advocating for an international freeze on nuclear weapons. He saw health disparities and the lack of adequate health care as another form of violence, and added his efforts to the campaign for universal health care. After September 11th, Damu founded Black Voices for Peace. Continuing in his fearless tradition of speaking truth to power, Damu took on the Bush administration for spending billions of dollars on the Iraq war, money that could have been used for health care, education and basic services here at home.

Damu's voice is something that we'll all dearly remember. I was privileged to be a guest on his WPFW radio show, ''Spirit in Action,'' a number of times and I will remember Damu Smith not only for being a tireless advocate for peace and justice, but for the generosity of his spirit. He could spend his entire program excoriating Condoleezza Rice or Colin Powell, and then end by saying, ''But you know I love you.'' He was able to rise above all of the injustices he spent his life fighting to recognize his opponents' humanity. That kind of bigheartedness is sorely lacking in America's public discourse today. We Members of Congress could stand to learn a thing or two from Damu Smith, and though he is no longer with us in body, but his spirit will live on, as always, in action.

HONORING DR. ROBIN LOWITZ

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Robin Lowitz on the occasion of her receipt of the prestigious Tikkun Olam Award from the Jewish Community Center of Sonoma County (formerly the Jewish Community Agency). The ''Healing the World'' Award is bestowed upon an individual who demonstrates this Jewish Value and Obligation of dedication, perseverance, creativity plus giving time, energy, talents and resources to make an important social justice impact on the quality of life in a community.

Robin Lowitz saw a great need in Sonoma County and preceded to fill it by envisioning and implementing The Jewish Community Free Clinic, a medical clinic specifically for the uninsured,—''the working poor, barely able to make ends meet who fall through the cracks.''

A Berkeley, California, native, Dr. Lowitz had volunteered for several faith-based free medical clinics in the Bay Area in the 1990's. Upon arriving in Sonoma County and witnessing the need first-hand, she garnered volunteers and financial support from the Jewish Community, synagogues, and other groups and individuals. In October, 2001, she opened the Jewish Community Free Clinic in a space donated by the Lions Club of Petaluma.

That first night there were 6 patients and 15 volunteers. The Clinic now provides 2,500 free medical care visits to over 1,000 uninsured patients annually, offering free medical care for anyone in need, without regard to ethnicity, race or religion. The vast majority of patients are uninsured Latino immigrant men, women, and children (many of whom need immunizations and physicals in order to attend school). They also serve uninsured single parents, students, the elderly, homeless, and temporary/unskilled workers.

The medical equipment at the Clinic is donated, and its 100+ volunteers come from all sectors of the community—including the communities it serves. Fifteen volunteer physicians, with as many nurses, nurse practitioners and physician assistants rotate each week, supplemented by a large referral network of volunteer physician specialists. Volunteers also offer social work, growth and development monitoring, safety awareness in Spanish and English, Spanish language interpreting and community resource referrals.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to offer my congratulations to Dr. Robin Lowitz. She had the commitment, passion, and energy to make the Jewish Community Free Clinic a reality for the people of Sonoma County and truly exemplifies the spirit of Tikkun Olam, Healing the World.

TRIBUTE TO CORP. NEIL W. REID, POST 2358

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 70th anniversary of the Corp. Neil W. Reid Post 2358 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, created in 1936, and named after Neil W. Reid, the first casualty of World War I from Macomb County.

The Post was formed in 1936 by members of the Post in Mount Clemens who sought to establish a separate post in the Village of Roseville. At its foundation, the Corp. Neil W. Reid was operating out of the old township hall and had 24 members. Shortly after, the Ladies Auxiliary of the Post was chartered, made up of 20 former servicewomen and wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters of veterans.

In 1939, members of the Post received a charter from the Military Order of the Cooties, formed to better the metal attitude of bed-ridden soldiers through hospital visitation and fundraising activities.

By the end of World War II the membership of the Post had grown to 175. This growth was recognized in 1950 when the National Commander of the VFW visited the Post's Home, an honor that few Posts throughout the nation have received.

In 1958, Mildred Mueth, a member of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Post, was elected

President of the organization in the State of Michigan, and one year later, Post member Fred McDaniel was elected to the position of commander in the State of Michigan. McDaniel would go on to coordinate the National Convention of the VFW, held in Detroit in 1960.

The Post continued to grow, and during the 1960's and 1970's expanded and remodeled its Home several times. With the added space, the Post became an important community institution, hosting baby showers, birthday, anniversary, and retirement parties, as well as funeral lunches.

Over the years, the Post has been an important fundraiser for the Roseville Police and Fire Departments, the Roseville Community Schools Scholarship Foundation and has been active in raising money for several other charities as well. The Post has been rewarded with numerous awards for Community Service, Americanism, and Youth Activities, demonstrating its involvement and commitment to the local community.

Today, the Post helps veterans in need of medical care and other assistance, and has been active in providing household goods to soldiers in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Corp. Neil W. Reid, Post 2358, and its Ladies Auxiliary on the occasion of their 70th anniversary. These organizations have been an important and active force in aiding local veterans as well as the community as a whole.

IN TRIBUTE TO ROBERT B. WEGMAN

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise with sadness today to honor Robert B. Wegman, chairman of Wegmans Food Markets, Inc., who died on April 20, 2006, at the age of 87. Mr. Wegman was surrounded by his family, as he passed away peacefully in his hometown of Rochester, NY.

Mr. Wegman made his mark as a pioneer in the supermarket industry, transforming the conventional grocery store into a superstore, emulated by others across the country. Mr. Wegman's passion for business began as a child, when he worked in the family store operated from the front of his grandmother's home. He developed a philosophy that has served as the foundation for the company. He believed: "I am a merchant and I have, therefore, my own philosophy about merchandising. That is: To do something that no one else is doing, and to be able to offer the customer a choice that she doesn't have at the moment." Mr. Wegman embodied the American entrepreneurial spirit from the start, and proved to be one of the most successful businessmen in the grocery store industry.

From the beginning, Mr. Wegman made it his goal to make Wegmans supermarkets the finest chain in the country—he was not concerned if it was the fastest growing, but more with growth itself. In 1930, Mr. Wegman and his brother received national attention with the opening of their innovative grocery store. The 20,000-square-foot store was unlike anything seen before—it featured modern techniques for keeping produce fresh with vaporized water spray and refrigerated food displays. Over the next 56 years, Mr. Wegman transformed his store with the concept of one-stop-shopping. He imported fine cheeses, and wine, ethnic foods, and introduced patisseries and prepared foods into the grocery stores. In the 20th century, Wegman integrated pharmacies, photo labs and video departments into his stores, propelling the model for customer convenience to its highest levels.

Wegmans Food Markets has expanded to now over 70 stores, and the company is now as well known for its corporate responsibility as it is for exceptional customer service. Wegmans Food Markets has been named one of 'The Top 100 Companies to Work For' by Fortune magazine several years in a row, and in 2005 was ranked #1 as the best company to work for in the nation. Fortune's annual ranking of companies is determined by the number of employees and is measured by benefits, job growth, pay, percentage of minorities and women, and turnover. For example, Wegmans provides a scholarship program which has given close to $60 million in tuition assistance to its employees. Although the superstore helped to shape the Rochester community, Robert Wegman has crafted his company into one that serves as a national model, both for its corporate success and for the opportunities and environment he has provided for his employees.

Mr. Wegman is also highly admired for his philanthropy. In 1995, he and his wife, Peggy, announced a 10-year, $25 million gift in support of Catholic education, allowing hundreds of families to choose Catholic education in the Rochester-area community. Mr. Wegman also made considerable contributions to Aquinas Institute high school, giving $10 million to the school for new athletic facilities and a fine arts center. In 1997, Wegmans Food Markets became the title sponsor of the Wegmans Rochester LPGA (Ladies Professional Golf Association); with proceeds supporting camps for disabled children. Most recently, Mr. Wegman contributed a combined $13 million to St. John Fisher College, which will be used for the establishment of the Wegmans School of Pharmacy and the Wegmans School of Nursing.

Mr. Wegman's pursuit of excellence is portrayed in every aspect of his life: family, community, and corporate responsibility. He will be remembered as a pioneer and leader of his industry and for his extraordinary compassion and generosity.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Robert Wegman.

CONGRATULATING LIEUTENANT COLONEL THEO F. MIDDLETON, JR., ON RECEIVING THE LEGION OF MERIT AWARD

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Colonel Theo F. Middleton, Jr. on receiving the Legion of Merit Award.

The Legion of Merit Award is a military decoration of the United States armed forces, which is awarded for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements. We congratulate Colonel Middleton on being awarded this medal.

Colonel Middleton is a native of Mobile, who attended UMS Preparatory School and completed the ROTC training program at Marion Military Institute. After graduating from Louisiana State University, Colonel Middleton was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army. His initial assignment was to the Korean Demilitarized Zone as Rifle Platoon Leader. Following training as an Army helicopter pilot, Colonel Middleton was assigned as an Aero-Scout Platoon Leader. He is a founding member of Task Force 158, which is the U.S. Army's first long range, night vision capable special operations helicopter unit. He presently serves as the congressional district commander for Alabama's First Congressional District.

Colonel Middleton's other awards and decorations include the Army Commendation Medal, Army Reserve Commendation Medal, Korea Defense Service Medal, Overseas Service Ribbon, and Master Army Aviator wings.

Colonel Middleton served as past president of the Mobile County Wildlife Conservation Association, as well as the Greater Mobile Area LSU Alumni Association. He is an investment advisor with the Wealth Management Group of Regions/Morgan Keegan in Mobile.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Colonel Ted Middleton on receiving his award. I acknowledge his invaluable work and significant contribution to not only the state Alabama but our Nation as well.

IN HONOR OF OFFICER SKERSKI AND PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY AND POLICE WEEK

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for five minutes and to revise and extend my remarks.

This past Friday, I attended the funeral of Philadelphia Police Officer Gary Skerski. I saw the pain of his wife Anne, 13-year old son Robert, and 10-year old daughter Nicole—a pain that may dull with time, but will never go away.

They lost a husband and a father. And Philadelphia lost one of its finest.

Officer Skerski was a community relations officer, and a 16-year veteran of the force. And, on May 8th at 10 pm, Officer Gary Skerski was murdered in the line of duty.

Gary was working overtime when he and his partner responded to a robbery call. He entered a neighborhood watering hole to stop a gunman who was terrorizing patrons and staff. Gary was shot in the neck by a cold-blooded killer who has no regard for the law and no regard for life. Gary never even had a chance to draw his gun.

Officer Skerski worked to protect the families, homes, and businesses of Northeast Philadelphia. He interacted with my staff often, and I had the pleasure of meeting Gary at a community meeting just this past winter.

Gary was, however, far more than a respected member of our police force. He was a loving husband for more than 18 years, he was the proud father of two, and he was an active, well-recognized, and beloved member of Port Richmond—a home to many Philadelphia police officers.

I rise today to pay tribute to Officer Gary Skerski and in remembrance of the 56 United States law enforcement officers who have died this year in the line-of-duty.

These brave men and women in uniform have given their lives while protecting our communities. These brave men and women died while enforcing and upholding our laws. And, these brave men and women left behind family, friends and colleagues for the benefit of others.

Our nation must never forget their contributions to the safety, security and betterment of our neighborhoods. I know I and my staff will not forget Gary, his sense of dedication, and the contributions he made to our community.

Mr. Speaker, my thoughts and prayers are with the Skerski family during this very difficult time. And, I know that all of my colleagues, and all Americans, join me in honoring Officer Gary Skerski and all of the officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed Roll Call vote 159. Had I been present, I would have voted "Aye" for 159. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my statement appear in the permanent RECORD immediately following these votes. H. Res. 740, Roll Call No. 159, Vote "Aye".

FOREST EMERGENCY RECOVERY AND RESEARCH ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 17, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4200) to improve the ability of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to promptly implement recovery treatments in response to catastrophic events affecting Federal lands under their jurisdiction, including the removal of dead and damaged trees and the implementation of reforestation treatments, to support the recovery of non-Federal lands damaged by catastrophic events, to revitalize, Forest Service experimental forests, and for other purposes:

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Chairman, I would have hoped to be able to rise today to support a bill that strengthened our existing law in caring for and protecting our environment. Unfortunately, this is not so.

When the Forests Emergency Recovery and Research Act was introduced, I did not consider it perfect, but I felt that the intent was good. I had faith that as the bill moved through committees, any weaknesses or inconsistencies would be amended, and that ultimately we would have on the floor a bill that I would want to support.

Unfortunately, this does not seem to be the case. The bill purports to provide for emergency recovery projects to help lands heal from natural disasters such as floods and fires, when in fact it imposes unnecessary exemptions from provisions in the Clean Water Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the Endangered Species Act.

New research and peer-reviewed science is emerging that verifies that post-disturbance or post-fire logging destroys wildlife habitat, pollutes watersheds, and delays a forest's ability to regenerate itself. In fact, what some term "salvage logging" may even increase the risk of fire.

These studies have indicated that ecosystems have an amazing ability to recover quickly from fires; in fact, fires are needed for regeneration and re-growth. Forests are, in fact, much like the legendary Phoenix, experiencing a majestic rebirth from ashes periodically. Dead or damaged trees help to insulate ground-level growth and absorb moisture, preventing fire. These "snags" also serve as protective homes for multitudes of wildlife before they decompose and return sustenance to the soil.

At stake here, however, is writing into law land management practices that are quickly proving themselves not only out of date, but detrimental to the environment. We must remember that fire clean-up and logging profit is not the only goal—our main goal should be to preserve these forests for posterity.

Therefore I can not support this bill in its current form, and I encourage my colleagues to vote against an act that attempts to undermine existing environmental protections and damage delicate ecological balance.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DR. WILLIAM F. HARVEY

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. William F. Harvey who donates his optometric services to the Paiute Tribe Health Services, and the Las Vegas Blind Center.

Dr. William F. Harvey was born in Las Vegas, Nevada, on November 2, 1948. Dr. Harvey attended Western High School in 1967 before finishing his undergraduate education at Brigham Young University in 1972. Dr. Harvey graduated at the top of his class at Illinois College of Optometry in 1976 and moved back to Las Vegas to start his private practice.

Dr. Harvey works hard in his private practice and is a devout husband, father of three, and grandfather of six; however, he still reserves time to serve the community. Since 1993 Dr. Harvey has donated his time to the Las Vegas Blind Center and continues to serve the Paiute Tribe Health and Human Services, giving their patients free optometric care.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Dr. William F. Harvey on the floor of the House. I commend him for his continued service to the residents of southern Nevada.

RECOGNIZING THOMAS MERSHON FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Thomas Mershon, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 98, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Thomas has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over any years Thomas has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Thomas Mershon for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO WILBERT "BILL" TATUM, RECIPIENT OF THE 2006 "HUDSON LINK'S BILL WEBBER AWARD"

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a dear friend and colleague on the occasion of a very special awards recognition to honor him with the Hudson Link's Bill Webber Award.

Wilbert "Bill" Tatum has been an integral part of the fabric of New York for many, many years. When I think back on the years of our association many thoughts come to mind. Bill is not only an intellectual, in the best sense of that word, but a pioneering journalist, and entrepreneur who for more than 30 years has guided the Amsterdam News, one of the Nation's most important newspapers. In doing so, he has dedicated his professional life to informing and defending his people, building his community, and fighting to make our country better.

In April 1971, when he. along with Percy Sutton and Clarence Jones. acquired the Amsterdam News, Bill Tatum was determined to play a role in changing the social climate in New York. By the mid-1970's the newspaper took what some called militant positions on civil rights issues but by the end of the decade began to focus more broadly on the social and economic issues. Under Bill's leadership, the Amsterdam News continued to flourish and gained a reputation as an intrepid African American voice on controversial local issues.

Most New Yorkers can remember how tenacious Bill Tatum was when he applied pressure on the then New York mayor, Ed Koch. Bill, through the newspaper, constantly monitored the activities of city hall and the mayor. Holding the mayor's feet to the fire, brought New Yorkers out of the polls, and cleared the way for the election of David Dinkins, New York's first African American mayor.

I would like to acknowledge that Bill's daughter, Elinor, continues the Amsterdam News' legacy into the 21st century. She has pledged to keep the Amsterdam as the unwavering voice the Black community in New York.

Mr. Speaker, again I congratulate my friend Bill Tatum as a much deserving recipient of the prestigious ''Hudson Link's Bill Webber Award'' as I enter this recognition into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

HONORING THE EDGEWOOD BULLDOGS GOLF TEAM

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor the Edgewood Bulldogs golf team who recently won the Texas University Interscholastic League State 2–A Championship.

On Thursday and Friday, May 11–12, 2006, the golf team competed in the University Interscholastic League Championship tournament at the Jimmy Clay Golf Course in Austin, Texas, for the State Championship. The Bulldogs competed against 200 other 2–A schools, holding to a one-stroke lead that brought home their first ever Boys Golf Championship and second team title in Edgewood High School history.

Today I would like to congratulate Head Coach Stan Williams, and players Dillon Phillips, Brett Perry, Garrett Cecil, Justin King, and Michael Waites.

As the Congressional representative of the players, families, coaches, and supporters of the Edgewood Bulldogs, it is my pleasure to recognize their tremendous victory and outstanding season.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5386) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes:

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the resolution expressing the Sense of Congress that calls for mandatory reductions of greenhouse gas emissions to address global warming.

There is no doubt in my mind that global warming is happening and that man is contributing to it. Now, it is our responsibility to work to mitigate the impacts of potentially catastrophic climate change.

The year 2005 is currently tied for the warmest year on record with 1998. However, the warmth in 2005 is remarkable because, in contrast to 1998, it was not boosted by El Niño. And since 1990, we've had the 10 hottest years on record.

Hurricanes are getting stronger, heat-waves are hitting harder and more often, and the polar ice cap and Greenland's ice are melting. We must act now.

We need to deal with climate change with concerted action and with bipartisan dialogue, regional cooperation and an alliance between industry and environmentalists.

The threat from global warming is very real, and we must act now to combat potentially catastrophic climate change. We cannot leave this legacy to our children and grandchildren.

We simply will not have a world to live in if we continue our neglectful ways.

HONORING THE CONGREGATION ETZ CHAIM ON ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. TOM PRICE

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, this Sunday, May 21, 2006, the Congregation Etz Chaim of Marietta, Georgia will mark its 30th anniversary. As the first Jewish congregation in Marietta, Etz Chaim has grown from its beginning in 1975 to be a leader today in the Jewish community of Atlanta.

In celebrating their commitment to faith and service, the congregation is honoring two of their most distinguished members: Judy and Stan Fineman. Over the years, Judy and Stan have dedicated their time and energy to Etz Chaim with a selfless devotion. They share in the excellent reputation and tradition of this congregation, and I applaud their generous contributions to our community.

On this anniversary, we have the opportunity to reflect on the message of excellence and altruism Etz Chaim has brought to Marietta. Spurred by their spiritual leader Rabbi Shalom Lewis and embodied in each individual member, the principles of the message of Etz Chaim are as important today as they were 30 years ago: A ''commitment to our faith and tradition, community service, giving to others, life long learning, and the passing of Judaism from generation to generation.''

It is my privilege to join Congregation Etz Chaim in looking forward to a future of continued growth and service to others.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO PATTY SUE HUCHINSON

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Patty Sue Hutchinson to celebrate the anniversary of the McFadden Insurance Agency, which she started 25 years ago.

Patty Hutchinson was born on March 25, 1933 in Springfield, Missouri. After graduating as Valedictorian of her high school in 1950, she started in the insurance business the very next week. Her first time out of her small town she had no formal education on the insurance business she received on the job training due to the lack of insurance education classes at the time.

In 1952, she married Bob Hutchinson, and due to his Air Force career they were transferred first to Anchorage, Alaska then to Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas, NV. Patty worked for various independent agents and adjustors after moving to Las Vegas. After the birth of her first child she went to work for Farmers Insurance Company when they opened their first claims office in Las Vegas. When her second child was born she decided to work part time for Key Adjustment Company. When deciding to return to full time employment Patty returned to work for Peccole Insurance Agency. In 1960, she was rehired at Key Adjustment Company. In 1966 she was requested by a former Key Adjustment Employer, to move with him to Horsey Insurance Agency as an office manager and commercial underwriter. In 1979, she took insurance courses, receiving her Certificate for General Principles of Insurance from the Insurance Institute of America. She soon after took the State test and became an agent. Patty then joined with John McFadden opening McFadden Insurance as a 50 percent partner in 1981.

Her commendations include: the Insurance Women's Association of Las Vegas' Woman of the Year, President of the Nevada Independent Insurance Agents from 1983–84, Education Chairperson for the Nevada Independent Insurance Agents, the Nevada Insurance Education Foundation Trustee, and was the first woman to go through the chairs and serve as President of the Independent Insurance Agent's of Southern Nevada. Patty has received many awards with the Nevada Independent Insurance Agents, and most recently in 1996 was Insurance Person of the Year for the University of Nevada Las Vegas's Institute for Insurance and Risk Management.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Patty Sue Hutchinson for her years of service and her many successes in the insurance industry.

RECOGNIZING ANDREW MEYERS FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Andrew Meyers, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 98, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Andrew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Andrew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Andrew Meyers for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING THE 81ST BIRTHDAY OF MALCOLM X

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, on what would have been his 81st birthday, to enter the RECORD a salute to El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, also known as Malcolm X. Malcolm X was a formidable character who was truly ahead of his time and very much under appreciated during his lifetime. He remained an advocate of racial pride and self-determination during a period in history where African Americans were systematically denied the rights enjoyed by white America.

Malcolm X's teachings focused on helping African Americans to deny negative stereotypes impressed upon them by the white society and also stressed economic empowerment through community building with other African Americans.

To understand the man is to know about his past. To understand the man is to know what life lessons affected his being. Born Malcolm Little on May 19, 1925 to a Baptist minister in Omaha, Nebraska his father was killed while attempting to fight racial oppression. His mother was committed to a mental institution. After moving to New York Malcolm was arrested in 1946 for burglary. Unbeknownst to him, his incarceration led to the first of many life altering experiences. During his incarceration he developed an interest in the philosophy of the Muslim movement and joined the Nation of Islam. Upon leaving prison in 1952 he changed his last name to "X". This change in surname signified the shedding of linkage to the white slaveholders who had given him and other African Americans their family names.

Unde the tutelage of Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm flourished as one of the most effective speakers for the Nation. He increased membership and founded new mosques, eventually being assigned to be the Minister of the Nation's Harlem, New York mosque. In 1963, disagreements with Elijah Muhammad caused Malcolm to leave the Nation of Islam. In 1964 he embarked on a pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia. That pilgrimage proved to be another life altering experience for Malcolm X. While in Mecca he witnessed the union of all races. His observances proved to be the foundation that led to the development of the Organization of Afro-American Unity and the Muslim Mosque Inc.

When he returned to New York, Malcolm gained an even more loyal following. His popularity was at a pinnacle. Malcolm's success did not fair well with many of the Muslim sect. He quickly became the victim of death threats from those who disagreed with his views. In February, 1965 his home was firebombed. His family escaped unharmed. A week later Malcolm X was shot to death at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem as he prepared to make a speech.

Malcolm X had a profound influence on Americans of all races and all around the world. While he was often portrayed as a black militant leader because he encouraged Black Nationalism, separatism and black pride little was said to recognize him for creating a framework for world brotherhood and human justice.

Mr. Speaker: This cursory review that I offer does not do justice to the larger-than-life figure known as Malcolm X. I encourage everyone to read "The Autobiography of Malcolm X" to understand one of the 20th century's true Renaissance figures.

On this 81st anniversary of his birthday, I rise to honor an unforgettable and extraordinary individual who during his lifetime changed the world.

His conviction and devotion to instilling the concept of self empowerment in people of color still resonates today. He left an indelible mark on mankind. I wonder what Malcolm X would think of the world today?

HONORING MORGAN MAYSE OF ATHENS HIGH SCHOOL

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor Morgan Mayse of Athens High School for her first place finish in the Texas University Interscholastic League State 4–A Track and Field Meet.

On Friday May 12, 2006, Morgan competed at the University of Texas in Austin's Mike A. Myers Stadium for the Girls High Jump earning the gold with the record jump of 5′9″.

As the Congressional representative for Athens and the Fifth District of Texas, I would like to congratulate Morgan, as well as her family, coaches, and supporters on her tremendous undefeated season and her second straight District 14–AAAA and Region II–AAAA titles.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5386) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes:

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment to protect clean water. For more than three decades, the Clean Water Act has been protecting all of our Nation's waters from unregulated pollution, filling and destruction.

However, in May 2002, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized a rule that changed the definition of "fill material" for both the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). The new definition allows waste to be used to fill streams, wetlands and other waters.

Allowing coal mining spoil and other types of waste material to be dumped into our waters and wetlands is contrary to the central goal of the Clean Water Act: preserving physical, chemical and biological integrity of the Nation's waters.

While there may be a need for some regulatory changes so that the Corps and EPA use consistent definitions of "fill" material, this can and should be accomplished by ensuring that both agencies' definitions explicitly exclude the use of wastes to fill our Nation's waters—not, as proposed, to weaken the Corps' regulations to sanction this long-prohibited practice.

EHLERS-DANLOS SYNDROME AWARENESS MONTH

HON. TOM PRICE

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, May is the first annual Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS) Awareness Month. Unfortunately, this syndrome, which affects nearly 60,000 Americans and 1.5 million people worldwide, is still largely unrecognized by the healthcare community.

In 1986, the Ehlers-Danlos National Foundation was established to research, support, and awareness for those suffering from this potentially debilitating illness. A heritable connective tissue disorder, EDS, in its most severe circumstances, weakens the vascular system making it rupture. This potential for complication is coupled with an inadequate level of funding and recognition which all too often leads to a lack of diagnosis or a misdiagnosis. Early detection is the key to an effective treatment and affords the individual suffering from EDS the opportunity to manage their syndrome and enhance the quality of life.

It is imperative that, in the absence of a cure, we in Congress join hands with the healthcare community to focus more attention on this matter. Accurate detection and sustained treatment will lead to a more fulfilling life for those afflicted with EDS. I am pleased to have this opportunity to applaud the efforts made by the brave men and women living with this illness as well as the countless friends, families and health professionals that have committed their time and expertise.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CANDY SCHNEIDER

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Candy Schneider who is retiring after 33 years of service in the Clark County School District.

Candy ha been a teacher of art, humanities and she is academically talented at the junior high school level as well as a Visual Arts Administrative Specialist with grades K–12 for over three decades. She has also served as the district liaison and coordinated the Congressional Art Contest for the past three years. During her career as an educator, Candy has also served as the Assistant Director of the School-Community Partnership Program, as Nevada Arts Council Chairwoman, as the chair of the Arts in Education Committee and on the Executive Committee. Among Candy's many achievements, she has

been honored with the Nevada Educator of the Year Award, the Excellence in Education Award and a National Gallery of Art State Scholarship. Candy is also a member of the Arts Council of Henderson and an honorary member of the Henderson Art Association.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Candy Schneider for her years of dedicated service to the students in the Clark County School District. Her passion is truly arts education and she has surely enriched countless lives with her tutelage. I wish her the best in her retirement.

RECOGNIZING BRANDON CRAIN FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Brandon Crain, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 98, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Brandon has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Brandon has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Brandon Crain for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HORSERACING AND THE BLACK JOCKEY—THE RETURN TO CHURCHILL DOWNS AND KENTUCKY DERBY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in appreciation of an article printed in New York's CaribNews entitled, "Horseracing and the Black jockey, the return to Churchill Downs and Kentucky Derby". Little is known about the history of Blacks in horseracing and how they dominated the sport, but it spans back from the 19th and early 20th centuries in the United States and Europe.

With such an illustrious and long history, why is it that such few Blacks are seen engaging in the sport? What we come to learn from the article is that because of racism and greed, Blacks were eliminated from the sport in North America. They were simply denied the chance to engage in horseracing, an activity loved by so many. Late tennis great Arthur Ashe made the case in his book, "A Hard Road to Glory", a history of the African American Athlete between 1619–1918, that "Black jockeys enjoyed an unprecedented streak of good fortune until racism forced them off the tracks. No civil rights groups came to their aid and then most had unfortunate endings."

In the article we learn about a man, Patrick Husband who grew up in a poor Barbadian neighborhood who with strong-will and determination was able to ride in the Kentucky Derby. He was not the first to do so, but his mere presence at the Derby that day brought admiration to all that watched. Truly this has become an inspiration for people up in those same neighborhoods as Husband. Witnessing these historic moments encourage Black youths to seek experience and careers as jockeys and trainers, a career once dominated by Blacks.

There is so much history to be studied and very few people know about it, nor do they have access to the information. Few people know that 14 of the 15 jockeys who participated in the inaugural year of the Kentucky Derby in 1875 were Black and that the first winner, Oliver Lewis atop Aristedes was Black. Another interesting fact was between 1875 and 1902, Black jockeys won 15 of the 27 Kentucky Derby races. This type of information should not be hidden from people. There was a time in racing history known as the "golden days" in which the greatest contributions were made by Black jockeys and trainers.

The youth of today should know the names of Isaac Murphy, Willie Simms, Jimmy Winkfield, Billy Walker, Alonzo Clayton, Isaac Lewis, Erskine Henderson and James Perkins who have made history for their achievements in racing in the United States from 1875 to 911. These are names forever to be cherished and embraced by people everywhere. When L.P. Tralton, a famous trainer, died in 1896 he wrote in the Thoroughbred Record, "I have seen all of the great jockeys of England and this country for years back, but, all in all Isaac Murphy is the greatest of them all."

I enter into the RECORD with pleasure the article by Tony Best published in New York's CaribNews for its careful historical analysis of some of America's most talented yet sadly forgotten athletes. We must never forget the sacrifice Black jockeys have made for the sport of horseracing. The article helps in increasing the awareness about those who have made the sport what it is today and who rightfully deserve their place in the history books.

HORSERACING AND THE BLACK JOCKEY—THE RETURN TO CHURCHILL DOWNS AND KENTUCKY DERBY

When Patrick Husbands climbs aboard Seaside Retreat in Saturday's Run for the Roses, as the world famous Kentucky Derby is often called, his presence astride the horse will write another interesting chapter in the history of horse racing in the U.S.

It's a chapter that brings to mind the glory days of Blacks in the saddle in the 19th and early 20th centuries in the United States and their elimination from a sport in North America that attracts and holds people's attention around the world, the pernicious effects of racism and greed and now the return of Blacks to the pinnacle of a sport from which they should never have been driven out in the first place.

That Husbands, who grew up poor in a Barbadian neighborhood that's within walking distance of one of the Caribbean's leading race tracks, the Garrison Savannah, can make it all the way to Louisville, Kentucky, tells a story about sheer grit, determination and talent and recalls the era of the golden days of Black jockeys and trainers.

Granted, he is not the first Black to ride in the Derby since the turn of the 21st century. That honor belongs to an African American from Louisiana who rode in the race in 2000. But his presence brings pleasure to tens of millions, not only racing fans in North America and the Caribbean but elsewhere. It can also inspire Black youth to seek careers as jockeys and trainers once again in a sport, a multi-billion dollar business that they once dominated.

Unfortunately, too few television viewers and horse racing fans who will watch the 2006 Kentucky Derby from the comfort of their living rooms, sports bars and other places and who will follow the course of the race in their car radios know that Husbands is simply adding his name to a long list of outstanding Blacks who have ridden in the Derby and various major races.

Indeed 14 of the 15 jockeys who rode in the inaugural year of the Kentucky Derby in 1875 were Black and the first winner, Oliver Lewis atop Aristedes was Black. Between 1875 and 1902, Black jockeys won 15 of the 27 Kentucky Derby races.

Names like Isaac Murphy, Willie Simms, Jimmy Winkfield, Billy Walker, Alonzo Clayton, Isaac Lewis, Erskine Henderson and James Perkins dot the pages of racing's history books for their accomplishments in the saddle between 1875 and 1911 in the U.S.

For example, Murphy, a native of Fayette County in Kentucky, became the toast of the horse racing fraternity in the 19th century, so much so that historians insist he was to the sport of kings what Michael Jordan became for basketball, Jessie Owens to track and field, Hank Aaron to baseball, O.J. Simpson, Jim Brown and Jerry Rice to American football, Sir Garfield Sobers to cricket and Tiger Woods to golf. That is the greatest performer in their sport.

Murphy rode winners three times in the Kentucky Derby, including back-to-back victories in 1890–1891; captured the Travers in 1879; the Saratoga Cup in 1881 and 1886; the Kentucky Oaks in 1884. At the height of his career in the late 19th century, he was making more than $20,000 a year back then, in today's money, we are talking about millions of dollars.

When he died of pneumonia in 1896 at the age of 35 years, L.P. Tarlton, a famous trainer, wrote in the Thoroughbred Record, "I have seen all of the great jockeys of England and this country for years back, but, all in all Isaac Murphy is the greatest of them all."

In his book, A Hard Road to Glory, a History of the African-American Athlete between 1619–1918, Arthur Ashe, the late tennis great explained that "from roughly 1800 until the eve of World War I, Black jockeys had few peers in their profession."

He went on: "Black jockeys enjoyed an unprecedented streak of good fortune until racism forced them off the tracks. No Civil rights groups came to their aid and then most had unfortunate endings.

What a pity.

Most observers and historians blame the Jockey Club which was formed in 1894 to license riders for the disappearance of Black jockeys. Greed and racism were the major engines that systematically drove them out. The ebony-skinned riders were just too good and made too much money to suit the whites in charge, complained Ashe.

But Blacks weren't restricted to the saddle or to being grooms. Dating back to the colonial days and continuing long after the Revolutionary War and the Reconstruction period in America's history many of the trainers were Black.

Blacks in horse racing were the first to make a name for themselves in the business of sport.

Now that they are returning astride horses in growing numbers, jockeys from the English-speaking Caribbean, principally Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago are

leading the way in North America, especially in Canada where they are consistent winners.

Competitive sport, often called the product of western civilization, a people's desire for conquest, empires and exploration have spawned the Olympics and other major competitions, giving Blacks the chance to show that they can thrive in any area, where ability rather than skin color or place of birth is the means to success.

HONORING THE PALESTINE WILDCATS GOLF TEAM

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor the Palestine Wildcats golf team who recently won the Texas University Interscholastic League 3A State Championship.

On Friday, May 12, 2006, the Wildcats golf team competed at the Jimmy Clay Golf Course in Austin, Texas, for the High School Boys State Championship. The Wildcats shot a 2-day total of 594 to claim the University Interscholastic League Class 3–A Title. The Wildcats, who represented four out of the top five players in the tournament, were the only team not to have a single round in the 80's.

Today I would like to congratulate Head Coach Tommy Allison, and players Jacob Taylor, Nicholas Verela, Joseph Totah, Jeremy Lambright, and Steve Harrington.

As the Congressional representative of the players, families, coaches, and supporters of the Palestine Wildcats, it is my pleasure to recognize their tremendous victory and outstanding season.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN CLAYTON L. ADAMKAVICIUS

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Captain Clayton L. Adamkavicius, who died on April 21, 2006 in Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Captain Adamkavicius, who was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 149th Armored Brigade, 35th Infantry Division of the Army National Guard was killed by small arms fire in the Uruzghan Province in the central part of Afghanistan. He was in the process of investigating a weapons cashe when he fell.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor the life of Captain Clayton L. Adamkavicius. Captain Adamkavicius made the ultimate sacrifice for his country while fighting the War on Terror and defending democracy and freedom.

RECOGNIZING KYLE MURRAY FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Kyle Murray, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 98, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Kyle has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Kyle has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Kyle Murray for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PANAMANIANS HONOR DR. MARCO A. MASON

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Marco A. Mason for all that he has done for the Panamanian community here and abroad. A distinguished academic, Dr. Mason has been directly involved in the community through various educational services and youth development for many years. He is very deserving of the honor being given to him.

Due to the fact that Dr. Mason has remained committed to the community for so long, The Panama Canal International Alumni Association Inc. (PCIAA) and The Panamanian American Community Center honored him for Distinguished Community Service at their fourth annual Spring Dinner Dance and Distinguished Awards Presentation, held at Crystal Manor in Brooklyn, New York.

Dr. Mason is also a medical sociologist and serves as an assistant professor of social and behavioral sciences at Medgar Evers College in New York City. He is also a member of an array of associations and councils including being a charter member of the Caribbean Women's Health Association (CWHA), the Caribbean American Medical and the Scientific Association, the Caribbean American Social Workers Association as well as various other community action groups.

An academic at heart, Dr. Mason's primary field of study includes very pertinent topics such as the impact of United States immigration policy on ethnic communities, and the delivery of culturally competent health services to ethnic groups. He is well versed in his field and has written extensively on the subject.

He has contributed so much to not only the Panamanian people in the United States, but to those at home, too. Former New York State Senator Dr. Waldaba Stewart, who currently heads the Diaspora Research and Development Center presented the award to Dr. Mason and he noted that, "under Dr. Mason's leadership for the past two decades, facilitate the growth of CWHA to become a noted urban problem solver that creates innovative solutions to community issues with a focus on breaking the cycle of poverty".

Dr. Stewart makes it clear that Dr. Mason knows what it takes to keep one's community strong for future generations, and it starts with as Dr. Stewart points out, "grassroots initiatives".

I enter into the RECORD with great admiration the article published in New York's CaribNews for its recognition of such a true humanitarian. Dr. Mason without a doubt is deserving of the acknowledgment for all that he has done over the years. He should be recognized for his commitment to the fundamental belief that changes start at home in the community and he did his best to make others see just how much power they really had.

PANAMANIANS HONOR DR. MARCO A. MASON

The Panama Canal International Alumni Association Inc. (PCIAA) and The Panamanian American Community Center Inc., recently honored Dr. Marco A. Mason, for Distinguished Community Service. At their Fourth Annual Spring Dinner Dance and Distinguished Awards Presentation, held at Crystal Manor in Brooklyn, New York.

Dr. Mason is a Medical Sociologist. He serves as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, at Medgar Evers College. He is the President of the Panamanian Council of New York Inc. He is also a charter member of the Caribbean Women's Health Association (CWHA) the Caribbean American Medical and the Scientific Association, the Caribbean American Social Workers Association, among other community and professional organizations.

Dr. Mason also serves as a consultant to a number of private, community, public and international sector organizations. He is accredited to practice Immigration Law.

His principal scholarly interests include: U.S. Immigration Policy Impact on Ethnic Communities, and the Delivery of Culturally Competent Health Services to Ethnic Groups. He has written extensively on these topics.

He has a Doctorate in Social Welfare (Immigration and Health Policy) from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

Former New York State Senator Dr. Waldaba Stewart, head of the Diaspora Research and Development Center, presented the award to Dr. Mason and lauded Dr. Mason's solid track record in the Panamanian community at home and abroad.

He also stated that, under Dr. Mason's leadership for the past two decades, facilitate the growth of CWHA to become a noted urban problem that creates innovative solutions to community issues with a focus on breaking the cycle of poverty through building diverse partnership and grassroots leadership initiatives.

CWHA has concentrated its efforts on a variety of issues: Immigration, Youth Development, Public Health, Welfare Reform, Economic Revitalization and Community Empowerment.

Ms. Laura Thomas James, PCIAA's President stated that, PCIAA's objective is to keep the Panamanian Antillean culture and heritage alive and pass it on to future generation through cultural, educational, and social programs. She also stated that Panamanian American Community Center is a non-profit information and referral service that provides services to approximately 500

social support family, immigration, health, housing, legal, emergency shelter, child care, education, employment, cultural, citizenship and youth services. She also said that, this gathering of the finest women and men in our community allows us the opportunity to recognize the outstanding services and accomplishments of outstanding members of our community.

They deserve our best wishes and congratulations. In addition to Dr. Mason, other awardees include: Club El Pacifico, Inc., Ms. Petrona Pet Honeywell, Ms. Gloria A. Spencer Morgan, The Rev. Frank Elcock and Mr. William Ben Townsend.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEACE CORPS

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my sincere congratulations to the men and women of the Peace Corps, which celebrates its 45th Anniversary this year.

Since its creation in 1961, over 180,000 men and women—including several of our colleagues in Congress—have served in the Peace Corps.

These Peace Corps Volunteers have made a difference in a very concrete and personal way. Over the last 45 years, these dedicated volunteers—through their talent, hard work, and dedication—have shown people in 138 countries the very best face of America.

From agriculture to business development to HIV/AIDS prevention, the Peace Corps is a vital, vibrant organization that promotes mutual trust, cooperation, and understanding between Americans and the countries in which they serve.

And course, I can't stand up here and talk about the Peace Corps without noting that the Director of the Peace Corps, Mr. Gaddi Vasquez, is a long-time resident of Orange County, California. I want to express my thanks to him and to all Peace Corps participants, for their hard work, their sacrifice, and their spirit.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CORPORAL SHAWN T. LASSWELL, JR.

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Corporal Shawn T. Lasswell Jr. who died on April 23, 2006 while in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and defending America.

Corporal Lasswell, who was assigned to C Troop, 7th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division, died in Taji, Iraq when an improvised explosive device detonated near his military vehicle. Lasswell, who grew up in Alton, Illinois was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor the life of Corporal Shawn T. Lasswell Jr. Corporal Lasswell made the ultimate sacrifice for his country while fighting the War on Terror and defending democracy and freedom.

RECOGNIZING ETHAN STOCKDALE FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Ethan Stockdale, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 98, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Ethan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Ethan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Ethan Stockdale for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO RON ZIMMERMAN

HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Ron Zimmerman of Connersville, Indiana. He died this week in Afghanistan when a suicide bomber hit his vehicle while he was working as contractor on a U.S. State Department police training project.

Ron was working in Herat, Afghanistan, near the border with Iran and Turkmenistan. Among other things, he was training local police forces in methods of combating the illicit drug trade of opium poppies. He was in a convoy going to work to continue these training efforts when the vehicle he was traveling in was attacked by a suicide car bomber. He had been in Afghanistan since early April of this year.

Ron graduated from Connersville High School. Before going overseas, Ron served in the Fayette County Sheriff's Department, volunteered as a local firefighter, and most recently worked as a police officer in Brookville, Indiana. He left the police force in December 2004 to become a contractor. Prior to going to Afghanistan, he had worked for 1 year as a contractor training police forces in Kosovo.

Ron's courage and selfless dedication to others are shown through his willingness to travel to dangerous areas of the world in an effort to help those areas become safer and more secure. His wife Marla stated, ''He was the type of person that felt like he had to do what he had to do. He was a very giving person.''

I offer my deepest condolences to his wife, Marla; his two daughters, Mel Walker and Cheyenne Zimmerman, his son, Matt Walker, and all other family and friends who loved and admired this fine man.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NANCY L. JOHNSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 172 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''aye.''

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JAMES KELLY

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of James Kelly, who died Saturday, May 12, 2006.

James served the city of North Las Vegas for decades in a number of different capacities. He was a Justice of the Peace for 24 years, a former city council member, past President of the North Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce, and a past President of the Nevada Judges Association. James lived in North Las Vegas since 1959 and was very community-minded. He quietly led a life of public service.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor the life of James Kelly. His long and distinguished record of public service is admirable and should serve as an example to us all. He will be greatly missed by the city of North Las Vegas.

RECOGNIZING CHARLES K. LIGHT II FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Charles K. Light II, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 397, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Charles has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Charles has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Charles K. Light II for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

STRONG WOMEN STAND TALL

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, the week of May 14 thru 20, 2006 is designated by the Department of Health and Human Services as

National Women's Health Week, an effort to raise awareness about women can take to improve their health.

One disease that disproportionately affects women is osteoporosis. Often called a ''silent disease'' because bone loss occurs without symptoms, bones become fragile and are more likely to break with age.

Osteoporosis is a major public health threat for millions of Americans. Ten million individuals are estimated to already have the disease and almost 34 million are at risk of developing osteoporosis. Eighty percent of those affected by osteoporosis are women.

One program that is helping to spread awareness about osteoporosis is Strong Women Stand Tall—a new program to motivate women to join together and take action to protect their bone health. Friday, March 12, 2006 was declared as ''Fuchsia Friday'' to show solidarity among women and to raise awareness of bone health.

When women take even the simplest steps to improve their health, the results can be significant. It is important to action to find out your risk for developing osteoporosis. We need to stay informed and take responsible actions to improve our health.

Reducing our risk for this disease is a lifelong process—it is never too early or too late to protect bone health. Women must recognize their risk for osteoporosis, educate themselves about how to stay strong and healthy, and empower other women to take charge of their bone health. I encourage all women to see their physician and have an osteoporosis screening.

DENOUNCING ANTI-IMMIGRANT HATE MESSAGES

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, its been 4 years since 9-11, yet the Republicans in Congress and this President have failed to secure our borders and protect this country against future terrorist attacks.

Americans want and deserve better.

The country is depending on us to take action but this Administration and the Republians in Congress have let us down over and over again.

The Democrats' plan offers real security that will protect America from harm.

It's time for Republicans to put politics aside and enact real reforms now.

It's time for Republicans to stop playing politics with our security.

Just take immigration reform, for example.

Instead of recognizing the need for real, comprehensive reform Republicans have used th border security issue to play on people's fears and exploit the debate for their political gain.

They've hijacked the debate to incite xenophobia in the minds of the American people!

I want my colleagues to be aware that this rhetoric can provoke extremists to commit violence against immigrants.

Remember that words have consequences and set the tone for public debate.

Unfortunately, all over America racists are taking advantage of the immigration debate to voice their message of hate.

And they are using the media—which our Constitution protects—to do so.

Several years ago, I founded the Congressional Sex and Violence in the Media Caucus because I was disturbed by the messages our children were receiving.

As co-chair of this caucus, I have led the effort to help parents protect their kids from harmful and inappropriate content such as graphic sex and violence.

Now we must be on the lookout for racist content in the media.

On March 29, 2006, a New Jersey radio talk show host Hal Turner exclaimed, ". . . It is time to fight. To kill such invaders. . . . If you don't fight AND don't support those of us who do, when we're done with them, we can come for you.''

I recently learned about a racist game distributed freely on the Internet called ''Border Patrol'' that encourages Players to shoot at Immigrants as they cross into the United States.

The game first surfaced in 2002, but has come up once again amid the immigration debate.

This is obscene and crosses the line!

For years, White supremacists have used the Internet to get their messages out to as many people as possible.

But the use of computer video games is new.

They are deliberately targeting our children and recruiting them into their hate groups!

The fact that the national immigration debate is fueling their efforts is downright scary.

It just takes one individual with hate in his heart to act on these notions!

Border Patrol is one of several racist computer games that hate groups are currently for sale or download on the Internet.

Other games like ''Ethnic Cleansing,'' ''DriveBy 2'' and ''African Detroit Cop'' were created to further racist, anti-Semitic or homophobic opinions.

Already, the National Alliance, a violent neo-Nazi group, is selling ''Ethnic Cleansing'' and is promising to market and sell similar games.

As the issue of comprehensive immigration reform has moved to the forefront of national policy debate, these hate-messages have grown more radical.

As the Aryan Nation's Web site puts it, ''We now have another game animal to add to our list of available targets for our favorite pastime, hunting, and we'll declare permanent OPEN SEASON on these dirty wetbacks! From what I've heard through the grapevine the Skinheads and Klans across the country are more than prepared for this type of action. I say let's play by state and see which state can claim the most kills and let the jewsmedia whores keep score!''

This is a big real concern especially as the debate continues.

These extremist groups are going to gain momentum.

A report by the Anti-Defamation League shows that hate groups have organized numerous assaults against immigrants within this month alone.

As members of Congress, our first responsibility is the security of every American and of that means securing our borders.

But the outcome of this debate will speak volumes about how we embrace diversity in our communities and welcome foreigners in our society.

We cannot have this debate at the expense of the safety of immigrants in our communities.

I understand that not everyone in Congress agrees with a more inclusive vision of the American family.

But regardless of your position on immigration and border policy, I call on you to join me in condemning all the extremists who are hijacking this debate for their hateful agendas.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO FIRST SERGEANT CARLOS N. SAENZ

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of First Sergeant Carlos N. Saenz, who died on May 5, 2006 in Baghdad, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and defending America.

Sergeant Saenz was assigned to the 490th Civil Affairs Battalion, 321st Civil Affairs Brigade, U.S. Army Reserves, died when an improvised explosive device detonated near his military vehicle. Sergeant Saenz, who resided in Las Vegas, Nevada, was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor the life of First Sergeant Carlos N. Saenz. Sergeant Saenz made the ultimate sacrifice for his country while fighting the War on Terror and defending democracy and freedom.

RECOGNIZING CHRISTOPHER ADAM ROTH FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Christopher Adam Roth, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 98, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Christopher has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Christopher has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Christopher Adam Roth for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

BIOFUEL ACT OF 2006

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Ms. HERSETH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and address an oversight that occurred on legislation that I recently introduced in the House of Representatives. For

the past several months, I have been working with several of my House colleagues to draft a comprehensive bill that would significantly increase the production and utilization of renewable fuels in this country. The bill, H.R. 5372, is entitled the Bioenergy Innovation, Optional Fuel Utilization, and Energy Legacy (BIOFUEL) Act of 2006.

Throughout this process, one of my colleagues, the chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, JIM CLYBURN, was among the most helpful and enthusiastic supporters of this legislation. Prior to introduction of the bill, Chairman CLYBURN had made it clear to my office that he would like to be listed as an original cosponsor when the bill was introduced. Unfortunately, due to an oversight on my part, Mr. CLYBURN's name was not included on the bill as an original cosponsor, as it should have been. His name has since been added to the legislation but I regret this error and I wanted my colleagues to know of his invaluable contribution to the bill and that he should be considered an original cosponsor.

SUPPORT FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH WEEK

HON. PHIL GINGREY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of National Women's Health Week. It is during this week that the Office on Women's Health, within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, urges women to focus on their health.

It is a time when we need to tell all the women in our lives; our mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, aunts and friends how important it is to take time out for their health.

This can be as simple as taking the stairs instead of the elevator, eating healthier or scheduling an appointment with their healthcare provider.

A good relationship with your doctor is so important in maintaining your health. Women need to have conversations with their physicians regarding their family health history and the importance of recommended screening tests.

So, today, Mr. Speaker, I want to encourage all of America's women to take a moment to focus on promoting health and preventing disease and illness by taking simple steps to improve their physical, mental, social, and spiritual health.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JAMES ''JIM'' MAACK

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of James ''Jim'' Maack, who succumbed to cancer on May 4, 2006.

Jim was a newspaper carrier for the Boulder City News for 24 years, starting off with a small delivery route around Lake Mead Parkway and Van Wagenen Street, he took on larger routes until he was delivering papers to stands and stores throughout the Henderson and Boulder City area. Jim was a good guy, with a great sense of humor, who always had a smile on his face.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor the life of James ''Jim'' Maack. He was a very special man who enriched the lives of all he encountered.

RECOGNIZING ALEXANDER DANIEL SHINN FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Alexander Daniel Shinn, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 98, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Alexander has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Alexander has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Alexander Daniel Shinn for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF DR. MICHAEL CHARLES

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Michael Charles on his 50th Music Anniversary. Born in 1946 in Kansas City, Missouri, his musical road began with singing locally in the Novice Choir at Mariah Walker A.M.E. in 1956. He is known as a ''Son of Psalms'' and as an individual whose name has become synonymous with excellence in sacred music in many religious circles.

Dr. Charles has sung individually and with various gospel and church groups, locally and across this country. He is fortunate to have performed at the Apollo Theater in New York City, and in many notable venues across our Nation. At one of his unforgettable engagements, Dr. Charles was able to meet and receive advice from the late, great, Mahalia Jackson, the First Lady of Gospel music.

Through his association with various gospel groups, churches, and church related associations, in 1992 the ultimate recognition, an Honorary Doctorate in Sacred Music, was bestowed upon him by the Maryland School of Theology and Theism of Baltimore, Maryland. On a more personal level, I have been honored to have Dr. Charles' expertise as the Minister of Music for Saint James United Methodist Church, of which I am the Senior Pastor. He has shown enormous energy while facilitating our music ministry which consists of eight singing units, two liturgical dance groups, and a seventeen member music staff. This has lead to the recording of two compact discs, ''I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes Unto the Hills,'' and ''A Celebration of Praise.''

Dr. Charles composed a tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. the day after he was assassinated, called ''Freedom After While.'' This composition is sung as the finale each year at the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's Martin Luther King Celebration in Kansas City, Missouri. It is sung with such feeling and emotion that there is hardly a dry eye in the crowd. I may be biased in my praise of him because he is one of my parishioners, but I am privileged to hear Dr. Charles' music and deeply appreciate the time and care he takes with our congregation. May God continue to bless him and give him inspiration.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in expressing our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Michael Charles for his fifty years of utilizing music as a means to bring people and God together, not only within the boundaries of Missouri's Fifth Congressional District which I represent, but within the United States and the entire global community. He represents the best in all of us. I urge my colleagues of the 109th Congress to please join me in congratulating Dr. Michael Charles on celebrating his 50th Musical Anniversary.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF MAYOR ROBERT S. BERNSTEIN

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the achievements of a man who exemplifies finest combination of civic consciousness, personal drive, and family responsibility. Robert S. Bernstein, Mayor of the Village of Lake Success, has been a catalyst, providing the means and motivation for the continued progress and success of this community.

Half century ago, Robert began his journey in public service as an Eagle Scout. During his tenure at Adelphi University, the student body elected him president of both his freshman and sophomore classes, and as president of the entire student government as a senior. Parallel with his college education, he joined the United States Naval Reserve, and served on active duty for 27 years, retiring at the rank of full Navy Captain. Since then he has served his community in a variety of different capacities: a member of the North Shore University Hospital Cardiology Leadership Committee, a Trustee and then Deputy Mayor of the Village of Lake Success, President of the Great Neck Village Officials Association, and currently as the Mayor of the Village of Lake Success.

Focusing his attention on his community, Robert has accomplished much to be proud of. As a trustee for the Village, he instituted its first Environment Committee in 1986, to promote clean air and water, as well as the safe enjoyment of the outdoors by keeping public land pesticide-free. As Mayor, he improved the infrastructure of the Village by tearing down an old building and building in its place a new Police Station and Courtroom (that doubles as a summer camp for resident children between the ages of three and six), a Community Center, and extra housing for those in need. Robert will step down from his municipal office,

after years of dedication, to focus his attention on developing emergency and disaster procedures, and continuing his focus on environmental issues affecting his community.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize such an accomplished individual and commend Mayor Robert Bernstein for his years of dedicated service. On behalf of his wife, three children, two grandchildren, and the Village of Lake Success, I ask the whole House of Representatives to join me in honoring Mayor Robert S. Bernstein, and wishing him many years of happiness and good health as he celebrates his well deserved retirement.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR HAL ROTHMAN

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Professor Hal Rothman, who has recently received the President's Medal which is the highest honor awarded by the University of Nevada Las Vegas.

Professor Rothman was selected for this honor based on the recommendation of a University Committee. The honor is granted only after serious consideration of a highly select group of faculty, and awardees must have demonstrated extraordinary qualities both as teachers and scholars and must have achieved national and international recognition in their fields of study.

Professor Rothman joined UNLV's department of history in 1992 and served as chair from 2002–2005. During his tenure, Professor Rothman received numerous awards for his scholarship, teaching and contributions to the academic environment in Las Vegas, including the Marjorie Barrick Distinguished Scholar Award, the Harry Reid Silver State Research Award, and the Alumni Association Distinguished Faculty Award. Professor Rothman is also a prolific author and has published numerous books and articles on a variety of topics, including tourism in the Western U.S., Las Vegas history, and the environment. He has won five prizes for his books and been named to the Nevada Writers Hall of Fame. Professor Rothman is considered one of the Nation's leading experts on tourism and post-industrial economies.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Professor Hal Rothman for his receipt of the University of Las Vegas President's Award. His demonstrated academic excellence and skillful tutelage have greatly enriched the academic caliber of the University and the quality of education for the students. I congratulate him for receiving this distinguished award and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING JONATHAN MATTHEW LEONE FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jonathan Matthew Leone, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 98, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jonathan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jonathan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned the numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jonathan Matthew Leone for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING MRS. PINKIE HARDY

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Mrs. Pinkie Hardy of Eunice, Louisiana on the occasion of her 90th birthday.

Born May 19, 1916 in Washington, Louisiana, Mrs. Pinkie and her family moved to Eunice when she was just two years old. A self-educated woman, Mrs. Pinkie attended school until the seventh grade. During the years of the segregated south, African American children did not have a high school to attend in smaller communities like Eunice, and if their parents could not afford to send them to larger towns for a high school education, their schooling was limited to an elementary education. Despite this obstacle, as a girl Mrs. Pinkie developed a love for reading that has stayed with her ever since with the Bible being among her favorite things to read.

Mrs. Pinkie married Herman Hardy in 1936. Together, the couple had seven children and one stepson. They were married for 43 years until he passed away in 1979. During most of those years, Herman worked in the dry cleaning business and Mrs. Pinkie worked in food services at Charles Drew High School, which became Central Middle School when the local high schools were integrated in 1969. She continued to work there until she retired from the Louisiana school system in 1980. Mrs. Pinkie's children are now living and working in various states across the country, and many of them are now retired and pursuing second careers. She has 22 grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren, and has always encouraged and stressed the importance of education and independence to all her children and grandchildren.

Mrs. Pinkie was and still is active in her church and community. A devout Catholic, she was one of the first Eucharistic Ministers in Eunice, and in 2002 received the Bishop's Medal from the Diocese of Lafayette for her achievements. She also served as State Deputy for the Knights of Peter Claver Ladies' Auxiliary, and was honored with an award for 50 years of service. In 1987, Mrs. Pinkie was presented with the Martin Luther King Jr. Award and in 1990, she was honored as Mother of the Year. Furthermore, in February 2005, she was presented with the "Woman Who Made a Difference" Award from he National Association of University Women. In addition, she has served as President of the Legion of Mary and St. Mathilda School Parent Teacher Association.

In her lifetime, Mrs. Pinkie has witnessed and made a great deal of history, living through some of the most tumultuous periods in our country's history, particularly in the years before and during the Civil Rights Movement. Throughout that time she has been a leader in her community and her family, providing wisdom and direction to all who know her.

One of her sons is married to my sister, so I know firsthand what a strong, caring, unique and inspirational woman Mrs. Pinkie is. As the leader and matriarch of her family, Mrs. Pinkie is who everybody turns to. She is the voice of reason and compassion for all her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, relatives, her church community and her friends, and continues to be a bright light we all look to for guidance.

Today, the friends and family of Mrs. Pinkie Hardy come together to celebrate the 90 incredible years during which we have been blessed to have her in our lives and the lives of our loved ones. On this very special day, I join all of them and the entire Eunice community in congratulating Mrs. Pinkie on this wonderful occasion, and in saluting her for her many years of service, leadership and dedication to helping others in her family and her community.

CONGRATULATING RICHARD COSGROVE WHO WAS AWARDED AN HONORARY DOCTORATE DEGREE BY KINGS COLLEGE

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to Richard B. Cosgrove, of Pittston, Pennsylvania, who was recently presented with an honorary doctorate degree from King's College.

Mr. Cosgrove enjoys a reputation as the dean of local journalists in Northeastern Pennsylvania. After graduating from St. John the Evangelist High School in Pittston in 1941, he joined the staff of the Wilkes-Barre Times Leader in January, 1943. He later joined he staff of the Pittston Dispatch in 1947 in time for the publication of their very first edition on February 9.

Mr. Cosgrove continued his newspaper career with the Pittston Dispatch until the summer of 2000 when he joined the staff of the Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice as a correspondent, a position he continues to hold. He also served for several years as a local correspondent for the Scranton Tribune.

Richard is a son of the late George and Elizabeth Healy Cosgrove. Mr. Cosgrove's wife, the former Mary Neary, died in April, 1981. Their union was blessed with two sons, George B. Cosgrove, principal of the Pittston Area Middle School and Joseph M. Cosgrove, a practicing attorney in Luzerne County. His family also includes two granddaughters, Jill, a nurse at Geisinger Wyoming Valley Hospital and Mary Ann, a drug and alcohol counselor in Scranton.

Mr. Cosgrove has a long history of community service. He is a member and past president of the Wyoming Valley Sierra Club of Wilkes-Barre and he is a past district governor of District 80, Sierra International.

Mr. Cosgrove is also a member and past grand knight of President John F. Kennedy Council 372 of the Knights of Columbus in Pittston and a member of the council's Fourth Degree Assembly.

He is a member of the parish community of St. Casimir, St. John the Evangelist and St. Joseph Churches in Pittston where he serves as a Eucharistic Minister, an altar server and a member of the parish liturgy committee. He also performs bereavement counseling with those who have lost loved ones. He is also a past president of the parish's Holy Name society.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mr. Cosgrove on this auspicious occasion. His love for his community, his devotion to the pursuit of truth and his faithful service to his church have endeared him to many, many people and has earned him widespread respect. Mr. Cosgrove's contributions to his community have clearly improved the quality of life in the greater Wyoming Valley.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE BERT M. GOLDWATER

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of the Honorable Bert M. Goldwater, who died on May 3, 2006.

Judge Goldwater attended schools in Reno and Stockton, California. He attended Stanford University for three years, and because of his lifelong battle with asthma, returned to the University of Nevada, Reno, where he graduated in 1936. He received his law degree from the University of Colorado in 1939, where he was the Editor of the Rocky Mountain Law Review. Judge Goldwater was admitted to the Nevada Bar in 1939 and practiced both civil and criminal law. He was later appointed the United States Bankruptcy Judge in October 1979. After retiring from the bench in 1982, he joined Lionel, Sawyer and Collins Law Firm, where he practiced private law for more than a decade. Judge Goldwater was recalled to serve as a U.S. Bankruptcy Judge by the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in October 1994, where he served until his death.

Judge Goldwater was also very active in the Nevada Bar. He served as President of the Washoe County Bar Association, Secretary and Chairman of the State Board of Bar Examiners and Chairman of the National Conference of Bar Examiners. Judge Goldwater was also very passionate about education, serving as the president of the B.D. Billinghurst Junior High School P.T.A. and Chairman of the statewide Save Our Schools Committee. In the 1960's, he was appointed by the Nevada Legislature to serve as Chairman of the Citizens Committee on Taxation and Fiscal Affairs. He also served on the Nevada State Gaming Commission, the Nevada State Human Rights Commission, and was a 1964 alternate delegate to the Democratic National Convention.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of the Honorable Bert M. Goldwater. His dedication to justice and community are admirable and should serve as an example to us all. He will be greatly missed by the community.

RECOGNIZING LARRY REETER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I stand to recognize Larry Reeter, a lifelong resident of Livingston County, Missouri and the recipient of the Elks Citizen of the Year Award. Born in 1941, Larry has lived in Livingston County his entire life. He graduated from Chillicothe High School in 1958 and then went to serve his country honorably in the Army National Guard from 1959 to 1968. After 42 years of service as a lineman and construction supervisor for the Farmers Electric Co-op, Larry retired in March of 2004.

In service to his community, Larry joined the Calvary Baptist Church in 1961. Then he became a Deacon in 1970, was licensed to preach in 1979, and ordained as a minister in 1986. During that time he presided over services in the Ludlow Baptist Chapel, Calvary Baptist Church, and for 30 years at the National Guard Armory. He routinely fills in for churches in the area that are in need of a pastor and holds services at the Chillicothe Correctional Center. Larry has also donated his time to many families who have suffered the loss of a loved one or are experiencing an illness in the family, and he makes frequent trips to visit with people in the local hospitals and hospitals in Kansas City.

In his spare time in retirement, Larry continues his service by taking community members to their doctor appointments and to visit family members or friends in the hospital. He also makes presentations portraying Abraham Lincoln to the local elementary schools, giving young students a history of Lincoln's life and the strong values that he believed in.

I am proud to represent Larry Reeter as an outstanding member of our community and now as the recipient of the Elks Citizen of the Year Award. The residents of Livingston County appreciate his service and all of Northwest Missouri is proud to have him as one of our most valued citizens. It is an honor to represent him and I ask the United States Congress to extend their appreciation for his lifelong service.

TRIBUTE TO THE 2006 MIAMI HERALD/EL NUEVO HERALD SILVER KNIGHTS

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to 15 outstanding students in Miami-Dade County schools who were honored on May 16th at an impressive ceremony in the Dade County Auditorium. These 2006 Miami Herald/El Nuevo Herald's Silver Knights were cited for their academic excellence and all-around leadership, as well as for their dedication to uplifting the lives of others. This honor reflects their personal achievement as "visionaries and role models" for whom we feel absolute pride and unique honor. These exceptional students represent the best and the brightest of our youth, and it is in this spirit of service and commitment to their fellow man that our community will rest assured of a bright future.

The awardees and their achievement areas are: Athletics—Amanda Estevez from Florida Christian School; Business—Stephanie Fink from Coral Gables Sr.; English—Gerardo Munoz from Miami Sr.; General Scholarship—Xavier Gonzalez From Coral Park Sr.; Journalism—Marcus Parramore from Coral Gables Sr.; Math—Gongqi "Gina" He from Palmetto Sr.; Music—Cathy Kim-King Ng from Sunset Sr.; News Media—Kemy Joseph from Homestead Sr.; and Speech—Clarissa Parks from Coral Reef Sr.

I would also like to commend the following honorees, who are my constituents and attend schools in my District. They are: Art—Charolette Jarrett from Dr. Michael Krop Sr.; Drama—Brittany Little from Miami Northwestern Sr.; Foreign Language—Dave Fils-Aime from Dr. Michael Krop Sr.; Science—Zachary Sandoval from Dr. Michael Krop Sr.; Vocational-Technical—Chynna Clayton from Turner Technical Sr. In a special manner, I am extending my commendation to Nicholas Nelson-Goedert from North Miami Beach Sr., the Social Science awardee, who is currently serving as an intern in my District Office.

There are other Silver Knight Honorable Mentions from my District: Business—Diana Augustin from Turner Tech Sr.; English—Dmitriy Rokhfeld from Dr. Michael Krop Sr. High; Foreign Language—Carol Toro from Miami Country Day School; Music—Drew Davis from Dr. Michael Krop Sr. and Trestiese Davis from Miami Central Sr. High; Math—Willedra Mosley from Miami Carol City Sr. and Kevin Pan from Dr. Michael Krop Sr.; Science—Genevieve Carvil from Carol City Sr.; and Speech—Rhyanne Carrington from Miami Norland Sr.

This group of accomplished young men and women represent the finest high school seniors around, and their individual and collective achievements give me comfort in knowing that the future of our community is in good hands. With earned scholarships they will soon be attending their respective schools of higher learning to once again compete and demonstrate their abilities and character in tackling the demands of a yet greater challenge. Bound by the same commitment to hard work and personal ethic, I am confident that they will bring to fruition their dreams of personal achievement and scholastic excellence in a manner that will benefit society as they go about spreading their contribution of good will as productive and responsible citizens.

Against innumerable odds that would have intimidated lesser spirits, and guided by their faith, work ethic and utmost discipline, these young men and women have genuinely earned their kudos as the 2006 Silver Knights. My pride and honor in representing them in Congress are only exceeded by my deep gratitude for all that they have done to uphold the honor and dignity of our community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall no. 151, I was listed as voting in favor of H.R. 4200, the Forest Emergency Recovery and Research Act. This was an error; I oppose H.R. 4200 and intended to vote ''no''.

H.R. 4200 is unnecessary legislation with significant negative consequences. It allows almost any activity, including timbering and roadbuilding, to proceed on an expedited basis with little or no environmental review and with little or no ability for the public to challenge a decision, under a broad array of circumstances beyond what most would view as emergencies. It shares many of the misguided goals and harmful effects of the so-called ''Healthy Forest Restoration Act'' of 2003, which I voted against.

Again, I intended to vote ''no'' on H.R. 4200.

IN HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE OF JAMES E. SOMERVILLE

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and remembrance of James E. Somerville, devoted husband, father and grandfather, WWII Veteran, and friend to many.

Mr. Somerville grew up in Cleveland, Ohio, where he learned at an early age the values of family, faith, hard work and community. Together, he and his beloved wife Phyllis raised their three children, Gregory, Peggy and Kathleen. His quick wit and friendly demeanor easily drew others to him. Mr. Somerville consistently lived life with a certain kindness and grace, and he was always willing to help out a family member or friend whenever needed.

Mr. Somerville's life focused on service to country, devotion to family and dedication to work. He served with honor and valor as a Sergeant in the United States army during WWII. After the war, Mr. Somerville focused on providing a safe, stable and loving environment for his family. He was a dependable and hardworking employee in the textile industry for numerous years. His devotion to his Catholic faith never wavered; he was a longtime member of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Strongsville. Although Mr. Somerville struggled with illness for many years, his faith and family gave him strength, and his kind heart and wonderful sense of humor continued to give strength to those who loved him most.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor and remembrance of James E. Somerville. Please also join me as I offer my deep condolences to his wife Phyllis; to his son, Gregory; to his daughters, Peggy and Kathleen; to his sons-in-law, William and Tom; to his grandchildren, Brandyn, Jordan and Camron; to his sister, Eileen; and to his extended family members and many friends. Although he will be greatly missed, the kindness, humor and love that framed his life, will live on within the hearts of his family and friends, today and for all time, and he will never be forgotten.

IN HONOR OF AUGUSTINE PEREZ

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Augustine Perez of the Northwest Postal Station on Northwest Highway in Dallas, Texas, which I am proud to represent in Congress. Mr. Perez's record of accomplishment as a letter carrier is truly remarkable. Very few carriers become members of the U.S. Postal Service's Million Mile Club. Only those carriers who have driven 1 million miles, 25,000 hours, or 30 years without a preventable accident can earn induction. While membership in this club is very exclusive, Mr. Perez continues to exceed these expectations, as he joined the club more than five years ago and is still delivering the mail.

Mr. Perez's normal daily routine includes 240 delivery stops with at least six hours of driving. Moreover, most of his delivery vehicles are without air conditioning in what is often a brutal summer Texas heat.

I salute Mr. Perez for his continued service in delivering the mail to the community, and I wish him many more years of great service to the Post Office and its customers. His dedication is unmatched and for this I express my sincere thanks.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM NUSSLE

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5386) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes:

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on the appropriations bill for the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies. This measure is the first appropriations bill to be considered for fiscal year 2007, and has reached the floor one day after this House passed its budget resolution for the coming year. As such, the procedure for bringing up the measure deserves a brief explanation.

Although the House and Senate have passed their respective budget resolutions, a final conference agreement on the budget has not been completed. Therefore, to proceed with the consideration of 2007 appropriations measures, the House has agreed in effect to ratify the levels in the House-passed budget resolution (H. Con. Res. 376) as the ones to be enforced in the House. This second confirmation of those levels was included in the rule for consideration of this bill (H. Res. 818). With the adoption of the rule, the budgetary levels established under the budget resolution will be enforced in the House as if the resolution were a conference report. More specifically, the appropriations bills will be limited to the budget resolution levels of $873 billion; and any emergency spending will be subject to the procedures established in the budget resolution House-passed budget resolution.

This bill provides new budget authority [BA] equal to the subcommittee allocation, so is in compliance with the Budget Act provisions regarding consideration of appropriations measures in excess of the suballocation. Further, because this is the first bill considered under the budget resolution, it does not cause a breach of the budgetary aggregates, which would violate the Budget Act.

This measure provides for the resource management needs for our Nation, clearly a national priority. The bill, which is in compliance with H. Con. Res. 376, the concurrent resolution on the budget, provides appropriations for most of the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Forest Service, the Indian Health Service, the Smithsonian Institution, and the National Foundation for the Arts and Humanities, among others.

INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES

H.R. 5386 provides $25.9 billion in appropriations for fiscal year 2007, which is $4 million, or less than one percent, below the fiscal year 2006 level. The level is $411 million over the President's request. The bill complies with section 302(t) of the Budget Act, which prohibits consideration of bills in excess of an Appropriations subcommittee's 302(b) allocation of budget authority and outlays established in the budget resolution.

H.R. 5386 does not contain any emergency-designated BA, which is exempt from budget limits. The bill reduces a National Park Service contract authority account by $30 million—an account not subject to annual appropriations—thereby offsetting discretionary spending through changes in a mandatory spending program. The contract authority allows the National Park Service to enter in to contracts to purchase lands under the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. If this provision were stricken (because it constitutes legislating on an appropriations bill) the measure as reported would exceed its allocation under section 302(b) of the Congressional Budget Act.

The second change in mandatory programs reduces the Coastal Impact Assistance Fund by 3 percent from 2007 to 2010 ($9 million each year) and spends the money on the Mineral Management Service's Royalty and Offshore Minerals Management Account. The Coastal Impact Assistance fund provides infrastructure and environmental remediation grants to states with oil and/or gas production on Outer Continental Shelf waters adjoining their borders. As a result, transfers to states under the Coastal Impact Fund reduced by an equal amount.

As we enter the appropriations season, I wish Chairman LEWIS and our colleagues on the Appropriations Committee the best in maintaining their admirable pace of bringing bills to the floor.

In conclusion, I express my support for H.R. 5386.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5386) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes:

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of jobs and lower energy costs for the American people. The House Appropriations Committee correctly voted to take a first step toward opening more access to natural gas in the outer continental shelf. Natural gas is an affordable, clean-burning fuel that can be safely extracted without causing harm to the environment. But there are opponents of expanded access to this domestic energy source who are trying to strip language that lifts the annual congressional moratoria on natural gas leasing and production in the OCS.

I urge my colleagues to join Mr. Peterson and Mr. Abercrombie in defeating all attempts to prohibit America from taking this small, but important, step toward energy independence. I commend Mr. Peterson for his work on this important issue and for his persistence in bringing this issue before the American people.

America is the only country in the world that has a moratorium on off-shore drilling for natural gas. While there are vast amounts of this environmentally clean energy source available in areas far off our shorelines, opponents of lifting the moratorium are standing in the way of lowering energy costs for our farmers, chemical workers, small businesses and manufacturers.

Because Americans pay as much as 600 percent more for natural gas than other countries, American businesses are often at a competitive disadvantage when trying to compete with foreign businesses.

Our farmers depend upon natural gas for everything from irrigation to food processing to nitrogen fertilizer production. When the price of natural gas is high, that translates to more economic hardship for rural America. Unlike most other businesses, farmers are not able to pass along their increased input costs to consumers. It simply means less income for them and the rural communities that depend on an agriculture economy.

Natural gas prices account for most of the cost of fertilizers, which means that as long as we refuse to open up more of our natural gas reserves and lower the costs, farmers and rural farming communities will continue to suffer. Additionally, 21 fertilizer plants in this country have closed in the past 6 years because they were no longer able to compete. High natural gas prices are closing businesses and killing jobs.

Small businesses suffer when natural gas prices are high because they have to spend more money for heating and cooling bills rather than investments in new technologies or better wages for workers. Instead of being able to sell their products and services for less, many businesses are forced to raise their prices. And in today's economy, many small businesses are often competing with foreign competitors.

Manufacturing jobs are even more at risk for leaving if we do not address the high cost of natural gas in this country. Over 100,000 chemical jobs have been lost over the past 5 years because of high natural gas costs. These are jobs that we should not be forced to lose. Americans deserve better than a continuation of an out-dated moratorium on offshore drilling for natural gas.

I urge my colleagues to join me in defeating the amendment to strip language that would help make America more energy self-sufficient.

TRIBUTE TO MYRTLE BEACH INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL, WINNER OF THE PALMETTO'S FINEST AWARD

HON. HENRY E. BROWN, JR.

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the Myrtle Beach Intermediate School is one of four schools in South Carolina to have received the 2006 Palmetto's Finest Award sponsored by Carolina First and the South Carolina Association of School Administrators. This award is the highest level of recognition that a school can receive in the state and was presented for the school's accomplishments in the areas of student achievement, student leadership, service learning, school culture including physical environment, safety and relationships, communication and involvement with community, instructional methods, success interventions, innovative programs, use of technology and staff quality.

Myrtle Beach Intermediate School serves a population of 565 students, 60 percent of which received subsidized meals. The school has met Federal Adequate Yearly Progress requirements for the past 2 years, meeting 27 out of 27 subgroup objectives, and has the second highest number of subgroups in the district.

Myrtle Beach Intermediate School has received an Absolute Rating of Excellent on its state report card for the last 3 years and an Excellent Improvement rating for the past 2 years. The school has been recognized by the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee for closing the achievement gap among student subgroups.

Myrtle Beach Intermediate School has been distinguished as a South Carolina Palmetto Gold Award winner for student achievement for the last 2 years and is the recipient of the Superintendent's Award for Service Learning, the Exemplary Writing School Award, and the Red Carpet Schools Award.

Congratulations to the students, teachers and administrators of the Myrtle Beach Intermediate School for a job well done.

FREEDOM FOR ROLANDO JIMÉNEZ POSADA

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Rolando Jiménez Posada, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Jiménez Posada is a lawyer and Director of the Democratic Human Rights Center. As a pro-democracy activist, Mr. Jiménez Posada has committed himself to portraying the true horrors of life under the tyrant in Cuba. Because of his vigorous opposition activities, the regime fired him from his job.

According to Amnesty International, Mr. Jiménez Posada has been detained and threatened numerous times over the past years. On December 10, 2001, while taking part in a peaceful celebration to commemorate the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, he and several others were beaten and pushed into police vehicles and then dumped in remote areas. Amnesty International reports that in July 2002, Mr. Jiménez Posada was threatened at his home after handing out copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Later, Castro's thugs told him that he would be imprisoned if he continued carrying out public activities in support of political prisoners.

Despite the horrific harassment and constant threats, Mr. Jiménez Posada never wavered in his convictions. He was arrested and thrown in the gulag on April 25, 2003. According to Amnesty International, he is still awaiting ''formal charges'' and a ''trial.''

Let me be clear, Mr. Jiménez Posada has been locked in sub-human conditions for over three years without ''charges'' and without even a farce of a ''trial.'' Simply because Mr. Jiménez Posada does not subscribe to the lies and propaganda demanded by the communist dictatorship, he is locked in a miserable dungeon. Mr. Jiménez Posada is one of the many heroes of the peaceful Cuban democratic movement who are locked in the dungeons of the dictatorship for their beliefs. They are symbols of freedom and democracy who will always be remembered with respect and admiration when freedom reigns again in Cuba.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Jiménez Posada is languishing in the repulsive squalor of the tyranny's gulag because he believes in truth and freedom. It is detestable that at the dawn of the 21st century, and a mere 90 miles from our shore, honorable men and women are imprisoned in repugnant gulags for believing that all men have an inherent right to live in freedom. My colleagues, we must demand the immediate and unconditional release of Rolando Jiménez Posada and every prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

TRIBUTE TO R.R. 'PETE' EBBING

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a valuable and respected

member of Michigan's business community, Mr. R.R. "Pete" Ebbing. Pete is retiring from the day-to-day operations of Detroit Edge Tool Company effective today.

Since July 1, 1955, Pete Ebbing has been instrumental in the growth of Detroit Edge Tool Company, a leading supplier of machine ways, rails, knives, and other precision machine parts to industries globally. On June 24, 1885, the company was incorporated in the State of Michigan and is now the oldest machine knife manufacturer in the world. During the first half of the 20th Century, Detroit Edge was a major supplier of industrial knives and associated equipment. However, in the early 1960s the company began to evolve and manufacture machine tool components such as hardened and ground, precision detachable ways and rails.

Throughout this evolution, Pete Ebbing was there working to ensure the company remained successful. The company's headquarters remains in the city of Detroit and has other plants in southeast Michigan.

In fact, Detroit Edge Tool Company has been in the Ebbing family for more than 80 years, spanning four generations. Two of Pete's six children, sons Ray and John, now manages the business together with a highly skilled and experienced staff of employees.

I have known Pete for nearly 40 years and am proud to call him a friend. Pete's dedication and vision for Detroit Edge Tool Company has service set the course for the next generation and I wish him luck in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM KOLBE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I missed the following votes because I was traveling with President Bush to Arizona:

H. Res. 818, on ordering the previous question, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5386) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes (#160). Had I been present I would have voted "aye."

H. Res. 818, on agreeing to the resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5386) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes (#161). Had I been present I would have voted "aye."

H. Res. 795, on motion to suspend the rules and agree, condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks in Dahab and Northern Sinai, Egypt, on April 24 and 26, 2006 (#162). Had I been present I would have voted "aye."

H.R. 5386, on agreeing to the Weiner of New York amendment (#163). Had I been present I would have voted "nay."

H.R. 5386, on agreeing to Poe of Texas amendments (en bloc) (#164). Had I been present I would have voted "aye."

H.R. 5386, on agreeing to the Pallone of New Jersey amendment (#165). Had I been present I would have voted "nay."

H.R. 5386, on agreeing to the Beauprez of Colorado amendment (#166). Had I been present I would have voted "nay."

H.R. 5386, on agreeing to the Hinchey of New York amendment (#167). Had I been present I would have voted "nay."

H.R. 5386, on agreeing to the Chabot of Ohio amendment (#168). Had I been present I would have voted "nay."

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5386) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes:

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the amendment to increase funding for the NEA by $5 million and the NEH by $5 million. Frankly, this is a modest amendment; I wish this amendment asked for an even greater increase in arts funding. It's astounding that this year the President will spend $60 billion in Cold War-era defense programs, such as a missile defense system that doesn't defend against missiles, and yet each year we have to come to the floor to defend this minimal amount of spending. The amount we are asking for is little more than a fraction of one percent of the Federal budget.

This is not controversial funding. The NEA and the NEH are two of the best investments this Nation makes. The NEA distributes grants in all 50 states. These grants fund theatres, orchestras, dance companies, and visual artists that move us, challenge the way we think, foster dialogue, and help us to understand one another. The NEH is the largest single funder of humanities programs in the country. NEH grants help museums, archives, libraries, universities, scholars and documentary filmmakers allow us to understand our rich history and cultural heritage.

The cost-benefit ratio of this funding is tremendous. Each year, the arts generate $134 billion in economic activity; arts organizations employ 4.85 million Americans; they generate $89.4 billion in household income; and lead to $24.4 billion in total tax revenues.

Not only do the arts and humanities have a positive economic impact, but they strengthen and build communities. They help revitalize our nation's cities, and provide venues for people from disparate communities to come together and share a common experience. Students who are exposed to the arts have higher test scores—in math and sciences as well as liberal arts—and have better attendance at schools and increased self-discipline. At-risk teens who participate in arts programs are half as likely to repeat their crimes.

Mr. Speaker, every year, my friends from the other side of the aisle try to slash funding for the arts. I just don't understand their thinking. This modest amendment is the very least we should do today. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, and to vote against any attempts to slash funding from the arts that may be offered in other amendments.

HONORING SHANE REEVES AS TENNESSEE'S SMALL-BUSINESS CHAMPION

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Rutherford County's Shane Reeves as Tennessee's recipient of the National Federation of Independent Business' 2006 Small-Business Champion award.

Shane, a partner in the Reeves-Sain Family of Medical Services, comes from good stock. His mother, the former Carolyn Boatwright, got me off to a fine start as my seventh grade student teacher at Hobgood. I also enjoyed working with his father, Richard Reeves, a progressive voice for Murfreesboro for many years while he served on the Murfreesboro City Council and as the city's mayor.

Shane has been a strong leader in Reeves-Sain's success. With two locations in my hometown of Murfreesboro, the company has become the leading provider of pharmaceutical and healthcare services in the area. Since its creation in 1980, Reeves-Sain has grown from a small healthcare business into a multi-million dollar corporation, all the while maintaining its hometown appeal.

Reeves-Sain strives to deliver comprehensive customer care to all patients and to uphold Christian values in the workplace, and Shane has been instrumental in making that goal a reality. Shane has been the recipient of numerous accolades, including University of Tennessee's 1998 Co-Preceptor of the year award, Tennessee's 2000 Most Innovative Pharmacy Award and Tennessee's 2003 Distinguished Young Pharmacist award.

Active in the community, Shane chairs NFIB/Tennessee's Leadership Council and works with NFIB/Tennessee's SAFE trust. He also serves as a board member of the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce and is past president of Leadership Rutherford. Shane serves as a deacon at North Boulevard Church of Christ.

I commend Shane Reeves on his award, as well as his numerous accomplishments and involvement within the community. I wish him continued success in the future.

CONGRATULATIONS TO PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY, WINNING EPA'S P3 AWARD

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, in 2003, the Environmental Protection Agency launched the P3 Award, a competition that focuses on the three components of sustainability: People, Prosperity and the Planet. Groups of undergraduate and graduate students from all around the country collaboratively design and develop projects that improve the environment, economy, and livability of their communities. These projects range from developing green tea polymers to treat cancer, to using bio-composite materials in load-bearing elements in buildings. All of the projects involved

in the 2006 competition were innovative and novel, but only a few won the P3 Award, making them eligible to apply for grants of up to $75,000.

Among the winners is a group from Portland State University in Oregon. Michelle Guthrie, Candy Lai Kuen, and Kristen Lans designed an educational and interactive website called WISE—Whole systems, Integrated Site design for Education. The website, hosted by a friendly and informative owl, guides students through a multi-step process to improve the sustainability of their school campus, and ultimately, get them interested in improving the sustainability of their communities at large.

Portland State University has a long standing reputation for innovative and progressive thinking, offering programs that foster and promote sustainability, so it is no surprise that this award-winning project came from Portland State minds. The project, as well as the university community itself, serves as a strong example of the educational values we need to promote in this country.

I want to congratulate the project adviser, Pramod Parajuli, and the entire university community on this tremendous success. Most of all, I congratulate these women whose combination of talent and commitment lead to the development of this exciting and valuable project. I am honored by their service to our community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 165, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5386) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes:

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of Congressman POE's amendment to open the outer continual shelf (OCS) to oil and gas exploration. Opening the OCS to exploration would expand America's energy pie. The Gulf of Mexico OCS has been producing oil and natural gas since the 1950s. Virtually all of the oil and natural gas produced from the OCS is from the Central and Western sections of the Gulf of Mexico. The 1.5 million barrels per day of oil from the Central and Western Gulf of Mexico OCS is equivalent to our imports from Saudi Arabia. Imagine if we expanded OCS production and could cut out Saudi Arabian imports altogether. No more subsidies for radical Islamists who are intent on harming Americans.

Currently 4.4 trillion cubic feet of natural gas is produced annually from the Central and Western Gulf of Mexico. To put that impressive number into perspective, the undiscovered resources on the federal OCS, that could be recovered with today's technology, is estimated at 420 trillion cubic feet, almost 100 percent more than current production.

While the Central and Western sections of the Gulf of Mexico OCS have been the workhorse of oil and natural gas production, Mineral Management Service and the Department of Energy forecast that, without expanded access beyond the Central and Western Gulf of Mexico, the growth in deepwater production will not be able to offset declines in shallow water production for more than a few years.

U.S. energy policy has not sufficiently emphasized the importance of developing domestic oil and natural gas supplies which are essential to our economic growth and to our energy security. Supporting Congressman POE's amendment is the right first step in the domestic production of energy.

HONORING LIEUTENANT GENERAL JAMES RONALD HELMLY ON HIS CHANGE OF COMMAND

HON. STEVE BUYER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, today marks the change of command for one of the finest Chiefs ever to command the United States' Army Reserve. James Ronald Helmly, born 25 September 1947, to John James Helmly and Geneva Maxine Slover, grew up in Savannah, Georgia. Ron Helmly attended high school in Savannah, where he enrolled in the Junior ROTC program. He did very well academically in school and played football and baseball. Though he had an academic scholarship, he found he missed military structure (from ROTC) and took the West Point entrance examination. Circumstances prevailed that saw Helmly leave Armstrong State College and enlist in the Army in 1966, attending Basic Training at Fort Gordon, Georgia. He completed his Advanced Individual Training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and transferred to the Infantry Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia, because of the delay in getting a slot in the Engineer officer program. Following school, he received his commission as a second lieutenant and went on to complete the Basic Airborne course.

In September 1967, Helmly joined Company B, 3d Battalion (Airborne), 187th Infantry, 101st Airborne Division, at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, as a platoon leader and then went to Vietnam where he says the experience shaped the outlook of his entire life and gave him a fundamental love of soldiers. His Vietnam experience provided him with essential lessons about the need for good leadership and selecting people of good character and disposition, as well as professional preparedness in positions of leadership. He learned the importance of soldiers and leaders having self-confidence and training to standard. Helmly continued to serve on Active Duty from 1966 to 1973 in a variety of company- and battalion-level assignments, to include another tour in Vietnam with the 101st Airborne Division and command of an infantry company in Panama. It was during his time on active duty that Helmly met Maria Glasbrenner, the daughter of a retired Army sergeant major. They married on 6 March 1970, just before Helmly left for his second tour in Vietnam. They have two daughters and three grandchildren.

As an Army Reserve Soldier, Lieutenant General Helmly has held logistics and operations positions in the 87th Maneuver Area Command and the 81st Army Reserve Command (ARCOM). He commanded the 352nd Maintenance Battalion in Macon, GA, and the 449th Area Support Group in Forest Park, GA. He was also the Deputy Chief of Staff for Training and the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel of the 81st ARCOM.

He served as the Deputy Chief, Army Reserve, Washington, DC, from June 1995 to June 1999. From June 1999 to August 1999, he served as the commander of the joint task force conducting Operation PROVIDE REFUGE at Fort Dix, NJ. Until taking command of the 78th Division in May 2001, he was the Military Assistant, Manpower and Reserve Affairs (Individual Mobilization Augmentee), Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Washington, DC, from October 1999 to May 2001.

LG James R. Helmly was confirmed by the U.S. Senate for promotion to lieutenant general and appointment as the Chief, Army Reserve, March 21, 2002. He took command of the U.S. Army Reserve Command on May 3, 2002, and became the Chief, Army Reserve, on May 25, 2002. His promotion to three-star rank was effective on May 25, 2002.

During his tenure as Chief of the Army Reserve he managed the mobilization of more than 147,000 Army Reserve soldiers in support of the Global War on Terror. General Helmly increased Reserve units and soldiers' readiness by having developed a progressive and cyclic training strategy that prioritized resources and managed readiness levels, improved facilities, adapted training to ever changing battlefield conditions, and streamlined Command and Control of the Army Reserve Forces.

His military education includes the Infantry Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the Command and General Staff College, the Armed Forces Staff College and the Army War College. He has a bachelor's degree in liberal studies from the State University of New York in Albany.

Among his numerous awards and decorations are the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Bronze Star with Valor Device and three Oak Leaf Clusters, Meritorious Service Medal with silver Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Commendation Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, Combat Infantryman Badge, Parachutist Badge, Army Staff Identification Badge and Ranger Tab. He was inducted into the Infantry Hall of Fame in 1996. General Helmly will continue his fine tradition of success as he begins his assignment in Islamabad, Pakistan, as the Chief Office of Defense Representative.

COMMENDING THE BOBBY DODD INSTITUTE AND THE JAVITS-WAGNER-O'DAY PROGRAM

HON. JOHN LINDER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, today there are roughly 45 million Americans with a disability, many of whom are forced to rely on public assistance because they cannot find or keep a job. Of people with disabilities, approximately 5.2 million receive Social Security Disability Insurance, 3.5 million receive Supplemental Security Insurance, and 1.3 million receive both.

By tapping into the potential of a person with a disability through a job opportunity we can help them to become taxpaying citizens who can help to power America's economy and strengthen our communities. I recently had the opportunity to visit the Bobby Dodd Institute (BDI) in Atlanta, Georgia, and was able to witness first-hand the power of employment for disabled individuals. BDI offers a variety of vocational services including employee development training, computer and customer service training job readiness classes and daily living courses.

For this reason, I salute the Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Program. JWOD provides employment opportunities to Americans with disabilities by using the purchasing power of the Federal Government to buy products and services from participating, community-based nonprofit, agencies dedicated to training and employing individuals with disabilities.

The JWOD program serves 40,000 people with disabilities nationwide, and last year it generated approximately $280 million in earned wages, and nearly $1.5 billion in products sold.

In Georgia alone, approximately 1,000 people with disabilities earned almost $3 million in wages last year as a result of JWOD. These numbers vividly demonstrate the difference that can be made in both the economy and the lives of Americans with disabilities. This is a program that truly makes a difference in lives of people with disabilities, and today I am proud to offer my commendation for all of these noble and inspiring efforts.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. J. GRESHAM BARRETT

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that one of my votes yesterday, Thursday, May 18, 2006, as recorded as an "aye" but my intent was to vote "nay."

I ask that the RECORD reflect that I would have voted "nay" on Roll Call vote #168 (On Agreeing to the Chabot Amendment to H.R. 5386).

TRIBUTE TO MS. MARTHA R. ROBERTS

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a wonderful educator who is retiring after 34 years of service to our Nation's children. Ms. Martha R. Roberts, principal of Lonnie B. Nelson Elementary School in Columbia, South Carolina, will officially retire at the end of this school year from the very same school where her career began.

Ms. Roberts is a product of Richland School District Two, having graduated from Dentsville High School in 1967. She didn't stay away long, securing her first teaching position after graduating from Winthrop College (University) at Richland Two's Lonnie B. Nelson as a combined fourth and fifth grade teacher. She excelled as a classroom teacher winning awards as Outstanding Elementary Teacher of America in 1975, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Award for School Mathematics Program in 1978, and Lonnie Bee Teacher of the Year in 1979. That same year, she took a position as the Lead Teacher for Lonnie Bee's Math Lab program that gives extra attention to students who need it.

The administration at Lonnie Bee recognized the talent they had in Ms. Roberts, and in 1983, she was named Assistant Principal. In this role, she coordinated the school's curriculum and utilized her classroom expertise to help guide other teachers. During her time as Assistant Principal, Lonnie "Bee" earned the distinction as a National Blue Ribbon School Award recipient.

In 1988, Ms. Roberts left South Carolina to pursue opportunities in the Chicago, Illinois area. She consulted first for Kishwaukee Community College and Shabbona School System. She later became principal of Shabbona Schools that served children from preschool (child development) through the 12th grade.

Yet, Ms. Roberts' heart always remained in South Carolina, and she returned in 1992 to Walterboro (South Carolina) High School. Two years later she returned to Richland School District Two in Columbia to serve as principal of Forest Lake Elementary. During her six years there, the school was a National Blue Ribbon School Award winner.

Ms. Roberts later transferred to become principal of Dent Middle School, the former Dentsville High School from which she had graduated, for one year before she retired in June 2001. Her retirement was short-lived.

Ms. Roberts was pressed back into service in June 2002 to serve as a principal trainer at Killian Elementary School in Richland School District Two. The following year, she consulted with the district on creating a comprehensive and effective school choice program. Then in July 2004, she returned once again to Lonnie B. Nelson Elementary School to serve as principal at the very school where she began her career.

During her busy career, Ms. Roberts found time to complete her Masters in Education at the University of South Carolina, and do postgraduate work at USC, The Citadel and Northern Illinois University. She has also raised her son, Chris, and is now the proud grandmother of Chris and his wife, Stephanie's son, Chandler.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating Martha Roberts for her exemplary commitment to educating young children. She has demonstrated a tremendous talent and love that has helped nurture countless students during her 34-year career. I applaud her dedication to public education, and extend best wishes and Godspeed upon her retirement.

HONORING SGT. FIRST CLASS ROBERT V. DERENDA

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sergeant First Class Robert V. Derenda, a brave American soldier who paid the ultimate sacrifice in his service to this Nation on a mission in Iraq.

A native of Cheektowaga, New York, SFC Derenda earned a degree in Education from The Citadel and a Chemical Engineering degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

After serving 4 years of active duty with the United States Army, SFC Derenda joined the reserves and worked as a drill sergeant in the 1st Brigade, 98th Division, based in Rochester, New York.

Comrades knew SFC Derenda as a leader and a mentor who shared his skills and experience so that others could serve and protect in the name of freedom. In fact, SFC Derenda's last mission involved the training of recruits for Iraq's military.

As a young boy, SFC Derenda walked down Candlelight Lane on his way to St. Joephat's School. On May 20th, western New York will pay tribute to this soldier and patriot by renaming that street "R.V. Derenda Lane" in his honor.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the residents of the 27th Congressional District and all Americans, I wish to extend my sincerest gratitude for the supreme sacrifice made by Sergeant First Class Robert V. Derenda, a courageous and noble soldier. He has served to protect the safety and freedoms that make this Nation great and his memory will live on for those who travel down "R.V. Derenda Lane" for generations to come.

CONGRATULATIONS TO LINCOLN ELECTRIC

HON. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Lincoln Electric, a manufacturer in my congressional district, for receiving the President's "E Star" Award for Exports. Lincoln Electric's export achievements are significant because it supports our economy by helping create jobs in Ohio and the United States.

The President's "E Star" Award is awarded for continued superior performance in increasing or promoting exports. Only previous recipients of the "E" Award are eligible. Lincoln

Electric was presented with the President's "E" Award in 1994 for its strong commitment to developing and growing exports.

Headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, Lincoln Electric is the world leader in the design, development and manufacture of arc welding products, robotic arc-welding systems, plasma and oxyfuel cutting equipment and has a leading position in brazing and soldering alloys.

Lincoln Electric has approximately 3,000 hard-working employees in Northeast Ohio, and 7,000 nationwide and throughout the globe. Exhibiting its commitment to its employees, Lincoln Electric guarantees employment to its workers after three years of service. The company has not exercised its layoff options in the United States operations since post war 1948.

Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, May 23, 2006, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez will present Lincoln Electric with the President's "E Star" Award. I am proud of Lincoln Electric, which since its founding in 1895 by brothers John and James Lincoln, has shown a strong commitment to Cleveland and Northeast Ohio. I praise Lincoln Electric and its hard-working employees and wish them continued success.

TAIWAN'S STATUS IN THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

HON. G.K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, with a population of 23 million people, Taiwan is a democracy and a global economic power, yet it is not a member of the United Nations. In January of this year a proposal failed concerning Taiwan's World Health Assembly observer status during the World Health Organization's Executive Board meeting in Geneva. I am concerned that with the outbreak of SARS and ongoing concerns related to the possible human-to-human transmission of H5NI Bird Flu, Taiwanese membership in international health entities should be considered with a greater sense of urgency.

I urge the Administration to take steps to allow entry of Taiwan into all relevant international health organizations to ensure the best possible response to any potential future health outbreaks that could ultimately invade the United States and detrimentally impact Americans. Despite not being a member of the World Health Organization, Taiwan has declared its voluntary early compliance with all provisions of the International Health Regulations (2005).

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Administration to encourage key leaders of other nations to resume talks with Chen Shui-Bian as soon as possible.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I was unavoidably delayed and missed the vote on the Inslee amendment to H.R. 4200, the National Defense Authorization Act, Roll Call 149.

I respectfully request the opportunity to record my position. Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on Roll Call 149.

IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF MRS. SALLY FALKMAN

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of Mrs. Sally Falkman, upon the occasion of her retirement from teaching—an exemplary career that follows 30 years of outstanding service, commitment, inspiration and instruction on behalf of every child who was a student in her classroom.

Mrs. Falkman has dedicated the past 29 years of her professional expertise as a teacher at St. Ignatius of Antioch Elementary School. Her dedicated focus on shaping, growing and inspiring the minds and hearts of young children never faded or wavered. For 30 years, Mrs. Falkman instructed students in social studies and religion classes, teaching third, fourth and fifth graders, and has done so with grace, compassion and a gentle spirit, capturing the curiousity and imaginations of her students and the admiration of parents and peers.

Mrs. Falkman's exceptional work ethic, excellent rapport with her students and her colleagues and creative and enthusiastic style of teaching consistently captivated the children, guiding them to a platform where learning and discovery flourished. As new and advanced teaching technologies and advancements evolved, Mrs. Falkman regularly learned and embraced every new technique. But the heart of teaching—the respect, love and confidence that a teacher expresses to her students, will never change, and this vital element in a child's educational experience is the intangible gift that Mrs. Falkman consistently gave to every student.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of Mrs. Sally Falkman, for giving true meaning to the words: teacher, mentor, guide and friend. Her chosen vocation of teaching will be forever remembered by her students, their parents, and also by the faculty and staff at St. Ignatius of Antioch Elementary School, where her excellence, compassion, kindness, gentle nature and true gifts for teaching and inspiring our children will be remembered always and held as a brilliant example for all young teachers to follow.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER AND PUBLIC SERVICE OF JOEL CARP—SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS FOR THE JEWISH FEDERATION/JEWISH UNITED FUND OF METROPOLITAN CHICAGO

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the career and public service of Joel Carp.

For 28 years, Joel Carp has been an effective leader for the Jewish Federation/Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago, and the Jewish community as a whole. As Senior Vice President, his responsibilities include management of its Government Affairs Program, delegating the budget for social welfare programs, and supervising the State of Illinois refugee and immigration programs, as well as several homeless services programs. Joel's persistent dedication and devotion to social services has truly made a difference in many people's lives and in many organizations.

Joel has dedicated his life to creating public policies that provide quality, comprehensive health and human services for people in Chicago and nationally. He is a member of numerous local, state, and national professional and community service organizations, and has served on various governmental task forces, including the City of Chicago's Task Force on Hunger. His work at the Illinois Department of Human Services includes service on the Governor's Families and Children Leadership Sub-Cabinet. With his knowledgeable background, he has published over 30 articles on various subjects in the field of social work, social planning and resettlement.

Joel was the recipient of the Melvin A. Block Award for Professional Distinction from the Associated YM-YWHAs of Greater New York, and he also received the City of Chicago's Commission on Human Relations Award. His vision is credited as the driving force behind numerous projects that continue to enhance not only Chicago, but our entire nation.

Mr. Speaker, it is hard to overstate the impact that Joel Carp has had on improving the quality of life for thousands of people in Illinois and across the nation. I am proud to call him a friend, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing his contributions and wish him and his family the very best in the future.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF MS. VALRIE A. BENNETT

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Ms. Valrie A. Bennett who recently departed this world as we know it. Although we grieve her being taken from us we must not see her departure as a loss because she fought the good fight, ran the good race and completed her life's mission. A woman of true character gifted with an

endearing spirit, she was an inspiration and mentor to many in her life, including a very close family member and a dear friend and colleague of mine Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON-LEE of Houston, Texas.

A matron of the family, she dedicated her life to keeping her family together and instilling exemplary values in those she influenced. Congresswoman JACKSON-LEE can attest to this because that same dedication has made her what she is today, a compassionate and honorable public servant.

Ms. Bennett was not only active in providing for those she loved in her own household, but she was deeply involved with the many institutions and people in my Congressional District in New York where she resided for almost 50 years. She was a prominent member of her community church in which she served as an Elder always welcoming strangers into the fellowship and assisting in serving their spiritual needs. She is remembered for her belief in and practice of fervent prayer.

With many years of experience connecting with young people in the community she has influenced my lives. Ms. Bennett has accomplished this through the use of certain outreach programs that get to the core of problems within our inner cities. Ingrained with the caring spirit that only a mother has, she was responsible for many of the great initiatives aimed at keeping young people off the streets.

With high admiration I enter into the RECORD a tribute to Ms. Valrie A. Bennett, for I know that Ms. Bennett's heart of gold has touched someone in the community; whether it is a person of youth, vibrant with life and spirit, or a person of age with greater life experience. All who knew her benefited from her active counsel and example. Even though Ms. Bennett has gone on her strong spirit and commitment live on in each and everyone of us. She will truly be missed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES A. LEACH

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, May 18, 2006, I missed a series of votes because of a commitment to give a commencement address at Indian Hills Community College in Ottumwa, Iowa. If I had been present, I would have voted the following way: roll No. 160, On ordering the previous question and agreeing to the resolution, ''aye''; roll No. 161, On agreeing to the resolution, ''aye''; roll No. 162, On the motion to suspend the rules, ''aye''; roll No. 163, Weiner of NY amendment, ''aye''; roll No. 164, Poe of TX amendment, ''no''; roll No. 165, Pallone of NJ amendment, ''aye''; roll No. 166, Beauprez of CO amendment, ''no''; roll No. 167, Hinchey of NY amendment, ''aye''; roll No. 168, Chabot of OH amendment, ''aye''; roll No. 169, Oberstar of MN amendment, ''aye''; roll No. 170, Putnam of FL amendment, ''aye''; roll No. 171, Hefley of CO amendment, ''no''; and roll No. 172, On final passage, ''no.''

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CAMERON STAY

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Cameron Stay, a young man who exemplifies what it means to be a noble citizen.

Cameron, who is 29 years old, was recently involved in a life changing motorcycle accident. I had the pleasure of visiting Cameron while I was in Las Vegas and can personally attest to his courage and his character.

Cameron is a history buff, who graduated from Green Valley High School in 1994, and subsequently attended Community College where he earned a degree in criminal justice.

His strong work ethic and commitment to the greater Boulder City community serve as an example and an inspiration. Having met Cameron, I was struck by his magnetic personality and extremely friendly demeanor. Cameron is an enthusiastic and positive individual. As the eldest son, he has set a good example for his younger brothers and has always been a positive influence.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Cameron Stay, a young man who personifies what it is to be a civically minded individual and a good man. I wish him a speedy recovery.

TRIBUTE TO THE STANLEY F. ROMANOWSKI POST 6896 VFW

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor and acknowledge the 60th Anniversary of the Sgt. Stanley F. Romanowski Post 6896 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Westland, Michigan.

On May 12, 1946, the founding members instituted this Post in the Gymnasium of Munger Intermediate School and dedicated its mission to serving the citizens of Wayne County, Michigan. Named after Sgt. Stanley F. Romanowski, a decorated soldier of World War II who gave his life for his country, the Romanowski Post 6896 courageously pays tribute to the deceased by helping the living.

Each year, the 6896 members of the Romanowski Post 6896 launch charitable initiatives to assist the needy, aid the ill, support the students, and recognize the educators of our community. Among the many notable programs, these veterans host the Christmas Needy Basket Program, which provides food for underprivileged families; a Muscular Dystrophy Drive; a Diabetes Drive; a Cancer Drive; a $50,000 scholarship fund for students; and a Teacher of the Year program.

In memory of Sgt. Romanowski's birthday, members hold an annual December memorial service in remembrance of United States fallen veterans. This summer, the Romanowski Post 6896 will also hold the first monthly memorial service at Westland City Hall dedicated to Prisoners of War, Soldiers Missing in Action, Blue Stars Mothers, and Gold Star Mothers. These deeds serve as a constant reminder, to ensure the bravery of our soldiers, the fragility of our needy, and the heroism of our fallen will not be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, in honor of his exemplary love for the United States and our citizens, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending these veterans for their bravery and in thanking the Romanowski Post 6896 for 60 years of loyal and unrelenting service to our community and our country.

RABBI BRIAN MICHELSON

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rabbi Brian Michelson of Berks County for his service to the Jewish Community Center and surrounding community.

Rabbi Michelson grew up in the New York City area and went on to pursue a bachelor of arts degree from Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. After earning his BA, Rabbi Michelson received his MAHL from Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles, California and then his Rabbinic Ordination from Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio. Recently, he completed a graduate certification in Healthcare Ethics from Rush University.

In 1998, along with his wife Holly and their daughters Naomi and Gabriella, the family moved to Reading, Pennsylvania where the Rabbi joined the Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom. Before moving to Pennsylvania, the Rabbi chose to help spread the faith in Melbourne, Australia.

Rabbi Michelson is extremely active in the community. He is the Chair of the Chaplin's Advisory Committee of the Reading Hospital and is also an Associate Chaplain for the health community. Additionally, he is a Board member of Home Healthcare Management, serves on its Medical and Professional Advisory Committee, and is Vice-Chair of its Ethics Committee. In his quest to pursue development of interfaith relations, the Rabbi is also a member of the core group for the Interfaith Hospitality Network.

When not working in the medical arena, the Rabbi is active in the Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom where he teaches adult education programs. He is also an instructor with the Reading Area Community College's Department of Continuing Education, where he teaches an Introduction to Judaism course.

Rabbi Michelson's philosophy of action is to simply do what needs to be done. When not spending time on inter-faith and healthcare issues, the Rabbi manages to spend time cooking, drinking coffee, sailing, and watching movies.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in honoring Rabbi Brian Michelson for his outstanding dedication and service to the Jewish Community Center, the Reading Hospital, and the entire Berks County community.

RECOGNIZING ALS AWARENESS MONTH

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, this week I met with Steve Kennedy and Kyle Robertson, both from my home county of Jones County, Mississippi. We discussed ALS—also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease—funding and awareness. May is ALS Awareness Month and an opportunity for us to increase knowledge about this fatal, neurodegenerative disease that attacks nerve cells and pathways in the brain and spinal cord. When these cells die, voluntary muscle control and movement ends and patients in later stages are totally paralyzed, often despite sharp and alert minds.

Steve Kennedy's father, Dr. Larry Kennedy, is the president of William Carey College—an excellent Baptist university in Mississippi. Dr. Kennedy was diagnosed with ALS in July of 2005 and had planned to announce his condition in September, until Hurricane Katrina ravaged the school, destroying the entire Gulf Coast Campus and closing the nursing school in New Orleans. After shepherding the school through that natural disaster, Dr. Kennedy again put off his announcement rescheduled for December of 2005 when the college was presented with a generous contribution. Dr. Kennedy delayed his personal concerns again, so as not to detract from the news of the gift. He finally announced his condition in the Spring of 2006. President George W. Bush greeted Dr. Kennedy and recognized his sacrifice during his recent visit to Mississippi.

Dr. Kennedy is an example of a man facing a deteriorating disease with class and dignity and resolve. He reminds us that anyone can be afflicted by this condition which has no currently known cause, cure or means of prevention. Only one drug currently is available to even treat this disease and it only prolongs life a few months. During ALS Awareness Month, I am advocating greater research investments into ALS.

Every day, on average 15 people are newly diagnosed with ALS—more than 5,400 people per year. The average life expectancy of a person with ALS is two to five years from time of diagnosis. "With recent advances in research and improved medical care, patients are able to have longer, more productive lives. But we have much left to learn about this mysterious and deadly disease."

Mr. Speaker, I hope Congress will include $5 million in the FY 2008 Federal Budget to establish a national ALS registry at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and to enact the ALS Registry Act. This will help identify occurrences of ALS, collect data surrounding it and examine standards of care. Promoting a better understanding of the disease will enhance the nation's efforts to find a treatment and cure. With studies indicating that ALS occurs at a greater rate in military veterans, I encourage the Department of Defense to investigate the causes and take appropriate remedial action to prevent the development of this disease among our fighting men and women. Now is the time for us to invest in seeking the causes, treatments and a cure for this disease.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 18, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5386) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes:

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to thank the Chairman and the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee for their continued support of the Florida Everglades in the Interior Appropriations bill.

This legislation includes funding for implementation of the Modified Waters Deliveries Project. This project is critical to Everglades Restoration, and will ensure natural water flows continue through Everglades National Park.

The Florida Everglades is a unique and precious ecosystem that must be preserved for future generations. Everglades Restoration is a long-term investment that will ensure the Everglades is restored and protected.

I am pleased that the Chairman included $69 million for Everglades Restoration, which is so critical to ensuring continuation of this vital project. The Interior share of funding combined with the appropriations made to the Army Corp of Engineers in the Energy and Water Appropriations bill will allow restoration to move forward.

I thank my colleagues from Florida for their continued support of the Florida Everglades and Restoration funding. Additionally, I would like to thank the Governor of Florida for his steadfast support of Everglades Restoration. Floridians understand the great benefit the Everglades provide not just to our ecological diversity, but also to our economy, which is so dependent upon tourism.

On behalf of myself, and the residents of Southern Florida I am so proud to represent, I thank the Chairman and his hardworking staff for their support of this funding.

RABBI JOEL WEINTRAUB

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rabbi Joel Weintraub of Berks Country for his service to the Jewish Community Center and surrounding community.

Rabbi Weintraub hails from New York City, was educated at Brooklyn College and then went on to get his masters degree and Rabbinical Ordination from Yeshiva College. In 1972, the Rabbi moved to Atlantic City, New Jersey, to take charge of his first congregation. In 1982, the Rabbi moved his wife, Shirley, and their family, sons Yossi and Yissi, to Reading, Pennsylvania, and the Kesher Zion Synagogue.

Once in Reading, the Rabbi became an active member of the community. He has taught at Alvernia and Albright Colleges, being the Director of Hillel activities, and facilitated Passover Seders at both education institutions. Also, in order to promote interfaith dialogue, the Rabbi was involved in the annual Kristallnact program, spoke at local churches and schools, and gave tours of the synagogue. Additionally, Rabbi Weintraub used his dynamic personality to host radio and television shows and write articles for both secular and Jewish newspapers.

When not hosting Bible studies, Shabbat dinners, and teaching Hebrew School, the Rabbi enjoys being able to pursue his hobbies that include racquetball, swimming, and reading.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in me today in honoring Rabbi Joel Weintraub for his outstanding dedication and service to Berks county and the Jewish Community Center.

SALUTING CHARLES YOUNG

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, today I ask Congress to join me in saluting the life and legacy of Mississippi State Representative Charles Young for his 25 years of elected public service. Charles has put his stamp on state's educational system as Chairman of the Universities and Colleges Committee. And his impact on his hometown of Meridian, and indeed across the state, as a seminal player in our civil rights movement, cannot be overstated.

Over the years, Charles and I have partnered on initiatives to benefit East Mississippi: economic development projects, educational improvement goals, and renewal and arts endeavors like the Meridian Grand Opera House. His faith and commitment to state and country have empowered him to make a real difference through service in the lives of his neighbors and in the fabric of his community.

Mr. Speaker, it is totally fitting that tomorrow night I will join other members of the Mississippi Delegation, local and state officials, as well as community leaders and activists in honoring Charles Young as part of the Carnegie Library Renovation Project. It is my wish to take with me the well wishes and congratulations of this Congress to this longtime public servant. I hope you all will join me today—so that I might extend that unity of national goodwill to him tomorrow—in saluting Representative Charles Young.

HONORING 125 YEARS OF FIREFIGHTING HISTORY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Madison Fire Department in the Borough of Madison, New Jersey, a patriotic community that I am proud to represent. On May 20, 2006 the good citizens of Madison will celebrate the Fire Department's 125th Anniversary with a family picnic.

The Madison Fire Department was incorporated on May 23, 1881, ''for the purpose of protecting life and property from fire''. Prior to this time, the Morristown Fire Department responded to their calls for assistance. In 1882, the Firemen's Relief Association was incorporated ''for the purpose of relieving disabled or indigent firemen,'' and the first hose cart was purchased.

The Fire Department was placed under the authority of the Borough of Madison Mayor and Council in 1890. After a municipal water system was established, a hose cart with 800 feet of hose was purchased for $700.

In 1903, a new fire headquarters was built at the comer of Central Avenue and Cook Avenue. A Gamewell Alarm System was installed throughout the Borough of Madison in 1909 and the boxes were in use until 1990. In 1935, the Hartley Marcellus Dodge Memorial building was dedicated and occupied. Present day fire headquarters are still in this building.

Today, the Borough of Madison's Fire Department Chief is Douglas Atchison. He commands 14 paid and 20 active volunteer firefighters, serving 16,500 residents in a foursquare mile area. Construction of a new fire and police facility has begun with an expected completion date of early 2007.

Mr. Speaker, I urge you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Borough of Madison Fire Department and all their firefighters, past and present, on the celebration of 125 years of protecting one of New Jersey's finest municipalities.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, May 10, 2006, I voted for H. Res. 802 but unfortunately, the computer did not record my vote. I proudly support H. Res. 802, which encouraged all eligible Medicare beneficiaries who had not yet elected to enroll in the new Medicare Part D benefit to review the available options and to determine whether enrollment in a Medicare prescription drug plan best meets their current and future needs for prescription drug coverage. Please let the record show that had the computer recorded my vote, I would have voted in favor of the Resolution.

Almost 80 percent of the seniors in my district have signed up for the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan. For the first time in history, seniors are saving up to 75 percent on their prescription drug costs, and constituents who are very happy with their plan repeatedly stop me. Most had a favorable experience when enrolling, and I hope that many others will join when the open enrollment begins again.

RABBI YOSEF LIPSKER

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Rabbi Yosef Lipsker of Berks County for his service to the Jewish Community Center and surrounding community.

Rabbi Lipsker was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. The Rabbi received his formal training at Yeshiva, New York and continued his education as a student Rabbi in Sydney, Australia. The Rabbi continued a long family tradition of dedication to faith and community.

In 1997, the Rabbi moved his wife Chana and their seven children; Chaya, Seldi, Menachem, Shterna, Sholom, Zalman, and Hudi; to Reading, Pennsylvania. The Rabbi believes that food, faith, and fellowship bring a community together and invites the local community to events such as the Lag B'omer barbecue picnic, the Shavuot Ice Cream Party, and the legendary Matzah Bakery program where couples from Jewish community join the Rabbi on a walking tour of Brooklyn's many eateries. The Rabbi also organizes and holds Chanukah concerts at the Berkshire Mall and the Chanukah on Ice Program for the entire community. The Rabbi does not just bring the community together for holidays, but he uses various speakers and programs to facilitate interfaith dialogue.

Teaming together with Boscov's Department Store, and the Reading Hospital, the Rabbi offers intercommunity relationship classes. Rabbi Yosef understands the importance of bringing the entire community together to learn more about the traditional Judaism and its role in everyday life. When not working in the community, the Rabbi volunteers at the Caron Foundation and welcomes Jewish patients at Caron, together with and members of the local community, to his home for weekly Shabbat dinners.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in honoring Rabbi Yosef Lipsker for his outstanding dedication and service to Berks County, the Jewish Community Center, and the Caron Foundation.

BREAST CANCER ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH ACT

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, I recently met a young woman, a constituent, visiting Washington on behalf of the Los Angeles Breast Cancer Coalition. Stefanie LaRue, of Marina del Rey, was recently diagnosed with Stage IV metastatic breast cancer. This is the most advanced stage of the disease, where the cancerous cells have spread beyond the breast and surrounding lymph nodes.

Despite having just undergone treatment, Stefanie had come to Washington to tell me her story and to advocate for breast cancer research. She said to me, ''I just want to do my best to be a voice for women with breast cancer.'' Her inner strength and grace in the face of a very difficult battle are an inspiration, and a reminder of the resilience of the human spirit. I deeply admire her courage, and the way she fearlessly allowed the world to see her beautiful hairless head!

Stefanie is one of 200,000 American women diagnosed with invasive breast cancer each year. What is particularly troubling about her case is that she is only 31 years old. She has no family history of breast cancer. She is a vibrant young woman whose lifestyle prior to the onset of the disease was the embodiment of good health.

We know that certain lifestyles and hereditary factors contribute to the onset of breast cancer. But there is also troubling evidence that environmental factors, such as exposure to certain toxins, may affect a woman's chances of developing the disease. Common pesticides, widely accepted agricultural methods, and even chemicals in everyday household items may contribute to breast cancer. We need to understand these linkages better.

Understanding the causes of the disease is a critical step toward developing strategies for prevention, and ultimately, a cure. That's why it is so critical that the House pass H.R. 2231, the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act. The legislation, which was introduced by my colleagues NITA LOWEY and SUE MYRICK, will make grants to research the effects of environmental factors on the incidence of breast cancer.

After decades of research, there is still no known cause, prevention or cure for breast cancer. Every year, over 40,000 women die of the disease. Congress must do what it can to prevent more women from becoming a statistic. I urge my colleagues to pass the Breast Cancer Environmental Research Act.

H.R. 2231, THE BREAST CANCER AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH ACT

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to stand with the National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC) and the 3 million women living with breast cancer in the country today, and urge my colleagues to push for passage of the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act (H.R. 2231) by the end of this year.

Too many mothers, daughters, wives, and sisters are dying from breast cancer and we will not end this disease until we find out what causes it. H.R. 2231 would go a long way towards finding out what causes breast cancer and how to prevent it.

It is generally believed that the environment plays some role in the development of breast cancer, but the extent of that role is not fully understood. More research needs to be done in this area since it has been understudied in the past.

H.R. 2231 would authorize $30 million per year for 5 years for the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to award grants to study the relationship between environmental factors and breast cancer. The targeted research holds the promise for a better understanding of the causes of breast cancer, breakthroughs in prevention and treatment, and ultimately perhaps a cure.

Furthermore, this bill would create a new mechanism for environmental health research, and provide a unique process by which up to eight centers would be developed to study environmental factors and their impact on breast cancer. Modeled after the highly successful Breast Cancer Research Program, it would include consumer advocates in the peer review and programmatic review process.

There have been isolated studies looking at suspected environmental links to breast cancer. But overall, the issue of what causes breast cancer, and the association between the environment and breast cancer requires a collaborative, comprehensive, national strategy to study these issues. This bill makes that mission possible.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and enact it this year so that we can get closer to a day when no woman need worry about breast cancer again.

80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE CITY OF OPA-LOCKA, FLORIDA

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of my colleagues the 80th anniversary of the City of Opa-Locka, Florida, which I am proud to represent in the United States Congress.

Home to more than 15,000 residents in Northwest Miami-Dade County, ''The Great City'' of Opa-Locka has had a long and colorful history, from its founding in the mid-1920s, rapid expansion prior to and during World War II and its recent efforts at revitalization.

The name Opa-Locka is a contraction of the Native American name for the area, ''Opa-tisha-woka-locka'', meaning a dry place in the swamp with trees. The area was developed in the early 1920s by aviation pioneer Glenn Curtiss and was based on the Arabian Nights theme with streets that have names like Sultan Avenue, Ali Baba Avenue, and Sesame Street. The Arabian Nights style is also reflected in the city's architecture, which features 105 original buildings with an array of domes, elaborate minarets and outside staircases in brightly painted colors built between 1925–28 during Florida's land boom. Officially incorporated in 1926, Opa-Locka today maintains the largest collection of Moorish architecture in the Western hemisphere and 20 sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Opa-Locka Airport also has a long and colorful history. In 1918, the Navy relocated a blimp hangar to Opa-Locka from Key West. In the early 1930s, a Naval Reserve Training Base was established here. Commissioned NAS Miami in August 1940, training in fighter, dive-bombing and torpedo bombing skills took place at various times during the history of the base. In addition to serving as headquarters for the 7th Naval District, the station supported a naval air gunnery school, a Marine Corps Air Station, a Coast Guard Station, and a small craft-training center. The peak complement, reached in 1945, consisted of 7,200 officers and men and 3,100 civilians. During the early days of World War II, Opa-Locka's pivotal role in training pilots resulting in the airport having the unique distinction of supporting more take-offs and landings than any other airport in the world.

Opa-Locka today is a working community that is looking to the future and working hard to revitalize its economic and cultural base while maintaining its small town, close knit sense of community. City Hall, the old Opa-Locka Hotel and the original Opa-Locka Train Station have recently been renovated. Additionally, a new State of Florida Services Building and a variety of new business have located in the City in recent years, and recent interest in Opa-Locka airport holds promise for the future.

As the city begins its ninth decade, I congratulate its leaders and citizens and look forward to working with the government, businesses and people of Opa-Locka in building an even stronger, more vibrant community in the coming years.

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF BIRTH OF KEMAL ATATURK, FOUNDER OF MODERN TURKEY

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 19, 2006

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, May 19, to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the birth of the founder of modern Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, a post-World War I revolutionary leader who demonstrated that Islam and modernity are fully compatible. His example provides instruction and hope for our own era.

Ataturk died at the young age of 57 in 1938. Yet, in a short period of time starting with the end of World War I, Ataturk was able to build a nation from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, establish secular rule, and lay the groundwork for democratic development. His vision for his overwhelmingly Muslim nation was dominated by two concepts: secularism and progress. In his words, ''In an age when inventions and the wonders of science are bringing change after change in the conditions of life, nations cannot maintain their existence by age-old mentalities and tradition-worshipping.''

Mr. Speaker, Ataturk's reforms covered virtually every area of public life—political, cultural, legal, educational, and economic—all geared toward bringing the new Turkish nation to the level of what Ataturk called ''contemporary civilization.'' Some of the changes were monumental, such as abolishing the caliphate, recognizing equal rights for men and women, discarding the Arabic alphabet in favor of Latin letters, and adopting secular law. Others were seemingly minor, such as reforming traditional styles of dress and mandating surnames.

His leadership style was epitomized by the alphabet reform. A language commission he appointed endorsed the reform in 1928 and urged that it be phased in over fifteen years. Ataturk had a different time-frame in mind. He phased it in over six months, punctuating his decision with trips around the country in which he personally gave public instruction in the new alphabet. This reform has wrought a fundamental change in Turkey's outlook, as millions of Turks, schooled in the Latin alphabet, have turned westward for their second languages and the learning to which those languages are the key.

As a champion of women's rights, Mr. Speaker, Ataturk encouraged women to become doctors, lawyers, engineers, scientists, writers, and politicians. His credo in this regard was stated as a simple equation in a speech in 1926: ''If a society of men and women is content to apply progress and education to one-half of itself, such a society is weakened by half.'' It is unfortunate that, to this very day, too many nations in the Middle East cannot grasp that easy math.

When I met Pakistani President Musharraf four years ago, I gave him a copy of Andrew Mango's authoritative biography of Ataturk. ''Follow Ataturk's vision,'' I urged him, ''and you will put Pakistan on the path to progress.''

Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that this is the right advice for the leaders of every Muslim nation. With forward-looking vision, leadership, and determination in the mold of Ataturk, the entire region could expect a future of secularism, tolerance, democracy, and material progress.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

The House passed H.R. 5385, Military Construction, Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2007.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S4819–S4846

Measures Introduced: Sixty-two bills were introduced, as follows: S. 2857–2918. **Pages S4835–36**

Measures Reported:

S. 457, to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to issue guidance for, and provide oversight of, the management of micro-purchases made with Governmentwide commercial purchase cards, with amendments. **Page S4835**

Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act: Senate continued consideration of S. 2611, to provide for comprehensive immigration reform, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S4820–30**

Pending:

Ensign/Graham Modified Amendment No. 4076, to authorize the use of the National Guard to secure the southern border of the United States. **Page S4820**

Chambliss/Isakson Amendment No. 4009, to modify the wage requirements for employers seeking to hire H–2A and blue card agricultural workers. **Page S4820**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

Cornyn Amendment No. 4038, to require aliens seeking adjustment of status under section 245B of the Immigration and Nationality Act or Deferred Mandatory Departure status under section 245C of such Act to pay a supplemental application fee, which shall be used to provide financial assistance to States for health and educational services for noncitizens, previously agreed to on Thursday, May 18, 2006, was modified by unanimous consent. **Pages S4823–30**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at 1 p.m., on Monday, May 22, 2006. **Page S4845**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

Horace A. Thompson, of Mississippi, to be a Member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission for a term expiring April 27, 2011.

Kent D. Talbert, of Virginia, to be General Counsel, Department of Education.

Vince J. Juaristi, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term expiring February 8, 2009.

George McDade Staples, of Kentucky, to be Director General of the Foreign Service.

Jerry Gayle Bridges, of Virginia, to be Chief Financial Officer, Corporation for National and Community Service.

J.C.A. Stagg, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Board of Trustees of the James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation for a term expiring November 17, 2011.

11 Air Force nominations in the rank of general.

7 Army nominations in the rank of general.

26 Navy nominations in the rank of admiral.

Routine lists in the Air Force, Army, Navy. **Pages S4845–46**

Messages From the House: **Page S4835**

Measures Referred: **Page S4835**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S4836–37**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S4837–42**

Additional Statements: **Pages S4834–35**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S4842–43**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S4843**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m., and adjourned at 1:13 p.m., until 1 p.m., on Monday, May 22, 2006. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of

the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S4845.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS: NIH

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and Human Services, and Education concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2007 for the National Institutes of Health, after receiving testimony from Elias A. Zerhouni, Director, John E. Niederhuber, Acting Director, National Cancer Institute, Francis Collins, Director, National Human Genome Research Institute, Elizabeth Nabel, Director, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, and Anthony Fauci, Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, all of the National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services; and sundry witnesses representing health groups and organizations.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 11 public bills, H.R. 5426, 5428–5437; and 12 resolutions, H.J. Res. 86; H. Con. Res. 407–410; and H. Res. 823–829 were introduced. **Pages H2961–62**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H2962**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 4356, to amend title 18, United States Code, with respect to fraud in connection with major disaster or emergency funds (H. Rept. 109–473); and

H.R. 5427, making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007 (H. Rept. 109–474). **Page H2961**

Military Construction, Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2007: The House passed H.R. 5385, to make appropriations for the military quality of life functions of the Department of Defense, military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, by a yea-and-nay vote of 395 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 176. **Pages H2984–H2943**

Rejected:

Jackson-Lee of Texas amendment that sought to prohibit use of funds in the bill to implement Paragraph 4.F of "Public Affairs Guidance on Casualty and Mortuary Affairs in Military Operations"; and **Pages H2940–42**

Blumenauer amendment that sought to increase the Department of Defense Base Closure Account 1990 by $27,500,000; to decrease the Department of Defense Base Closure Account by $440,000,000; and to increase the account for Environmental Restoration, Formerly Used Defense Sites by $50,000,000 (by a recorded vote of 151 ayes to 247 noes, Roll No. 175). **Pages H2918–20, H2942–43**

Withdrawn:

DeLauro amendment that was offered and subsequently withdrawn that sought to reduce the account for Department of Defense Base Closure 2005 by $10 million and to increase the account for Defense Health Program by $5 million; **Pages H2920–22**

Lynch amendment that was offered and subsequently withdrawn that sought to add a new section expressing the sense of the Congress that the Department of Veterans Affairs should cooperate with NIH in facilitating research on management of medial issues associated with hepatitis C; and **Page H2930**

Tiahrt amendment that was offered and subsequently withdrawn that sought to prohibit use of funds to promulgate regulations without consideration of the effect of such regulations on the competitiveness of American businesses. **Page H2940**

Point of Order sustained against:

Edwards amendment which sought to reduce the taxcut for taxpayers earning in excess of $1 million by 1.78 percent, beginning in calendar year 2007; **Pages H2922–25**

Farr amendment that sought to increase funding for various veteran health care accounts and is offset by a reduction in the rate of tax reduction for taxpayers earning more than $1 million in calendar year 2007; **Pages H2925–27**

Moore of Wisconsin amendment that sought to increase funding for the Construction, Major Projects account by $32.5 million; **Pages H2927–30**

Obey amendment that sought to offset spending for various programs in the bill by providing a reduction in the taxcut for taxpayers earning in excess of $1 million beginning in 2007, by 1.23 percent; **Pages H2900, H2930–40**

The proviso beginning on page 58, line 20, and ending on page 58 line 25 violates the Budget Act. Subsequently, the point of order applied against the entire paragraph additional funds for Military Construction, Army; **Page H2930**

The proviso beginning on page 59, line 4, and ending on page 59 line 9 violates the Budget Act. Subsequently, the point of order applied against the entire paragraph regarding additional funds for Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps; **Page H2930**

The proviso beginning on page 59, line 13, and ending on page 59 line 18 violates the Budget Act. Subsequently, the point of order applied against the entire paragraph regarding additional funds for Military Construction, Air Force; **Page H2931**

The proviso beginning on page 59, line 22, and ending on page 60 line 2 violates the Budget Act. Subsequently, the point of order applied against the entire paragraph regarding additional funds for Military Construction, Defense-Wide; **Page H2931**

The proviso beginning on page 60, line 6, and ending on page 60 line 11 violates the Budget Act. Subsequently, the point of order applied against the entire paragraph regarding additional funding for Military Construction, National Guard; and **Page H2931**

The proviso beginning on page 60, line 15, and ending on page 60 line 20 violates the Budget Act. Subsequently, the point of order applied against the entire paragraph regarding additional funds for Military Construction, Army Reserve. **Page H2931**

Agreed that the Clerk be authorized to make technical and conforming changes to reflect the actions of the House. **Page H2944**

H. Res. 821, the rule providing for consideration of the bill was agreed to by a yea and nay vote of 216 yeas to 187 nays, Roll No. 174, after agreeing to order the previous question by a yea and nay vote of 211 yeas to 186 nays, Roll No. 173.

Pages H2900–01, H2901–02

Providing for a recess of the House for a Joint Meeting to receive His Excellency Ehud Olmert, Prime Minister of Israel: Agreed that it may be in order at any time on Wednesday, May 24, 2006, for the Speaker to declare a recess, subject to the call of the chair, for the purpose of receiving in Joint Meeting His Excellency Ehud Olmert, Prime Minister of Israel. **Page H2945**

Meeting Hour: Agreed that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday, May 22, 2006, for Morning Hour debate. **Page H2960**

Calendar Wednesday: Agreed by unanimous consent to dispense with the Calendar Wednesday business of Wednesday, May 22, 2006. **Page H2945**

Election Assistance Commission Board of Advisors: The Chair announced the Speaker's appointment of the following member on the part of the House to the Election Assistance Commission Board of Advisors to fill the existing vacancy thereon: Mr. Thomas A. Fuentes, Lake Forest, California. **Page H2945**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page H2902.

Senate Referral: S. 193 was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce. **Page H2960**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H2901, H2901–02, H2942, H2943. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 9 a.m. and adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

Committee Meetings

FOREIGN APPROPRIATIONS, EXPORT FINANCING, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS FOR FY 2007

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs approved for full Committee action the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs appropriations for Fiscal Year 2007.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRAM AHEAD

Week of May 22 through May 27, 2006

Senate Chamber

On *Monday*, at 1 p.m., Senate will resume consideration of S. 2611, Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act, with a vote to occur at 5:30 p.m., on or in relation to Chambliss/Isakson Amendment No. 4009, to be followed by a vote on, or in relation to, Ensign/Graham Modified Amendment No. 4076.

During the balance of the week, Senate may consider any other cleared legislative and executive business, including the conference report to accompany H.R. 4939, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations and the nomination of Brett M. Kavanaugh, of Maryland, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Senate Committees

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Committee on Appropriations: May 23, Subcommittee on Homeland Security, to hold hearings to examine biodefense and pandemic influenza issues, 10:30 a.m., SD–192.

May 24, Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, to hold hearings to examine progress of the Capitol Visitor Center construction, 10 a.m., SD–138.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: May 23, to hold hearings to examine improving financial literacy in the United States, 10 a.m., SD–106.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: May 23, to hold hearings to examine price-gouging related to gas prices, 10 a.m., SD–562.

May 24, Subcommittee on Aviation, to hold hearings to examine National Transportation Safety Board reauthorization, 10 a.m., SD–562.

May 24, Subcommittee on Disaster Prevention and Prediction, to hold hearings to examine 2006 hurricane forecast and at-risk cities, 2:30 p.m., SD–562.

May 25, Full Committee, to resume hearings to examine S. 2686, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 and for other purposes, 10 a.m., SD–106.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: May 22, to hold hearings to examine nuclear power provisions contained in the Energy Policy Act of 2005, 2:30 p.m., SD–366.

May 23, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the National Research Council report, Managing Construction and Infrastructure in the 21st Century Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Report, Managing for Excellence: An Action Plan for the 21st Century, 10 a.m., SD–366.

May 24, Full Committee, business meeting to consider S. 997, to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to convey certain land in the Beaverhead-Deerlodge Forest, Montana, to Jefferson County, Montana, for use as a cemetery, S. 1529, to provide for the conveyance of certain Federal land in the city of Yuma, Arizona, S. 1548, to provide for the conveyance of certain Forest Service land to the city of Coffman Cove, Alaska, S. 1957, to authorize the Secretary of Interior to convey to The Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail and Visitor Center Foundation, Inc. certain Federal land associated with the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail in Nebraska, to be used as an historical interpretive site along the trail, S. 2003, to make permanent the authorization for watershed restoration and enhancement agreements, S. 2028, to provide for the reinstatement of a license for a certain Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project, S. 2035, to extend the time required for construction of a hydroelectric project in the State of Idaho, S. 2054, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of water resources in the State of Vermont, S. 2150, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Bureau of Land Management Land to the city of Eugene, Oregon, S. 2373, to provide for the sale of approximately 132 acres of public land to the city of Green River, Wyoming, at fair market value, S. 2403, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to include in the boundaries of the Grand Teton National Park land and interests in land of the GT Park Subdivision, S. 2568, to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, S. Res. 468, supporting the continued administration of Channel Islands National Park, including Santa Rosa Island, in accordance with the laws (including regulations) and policies of the National Park Service, H.R. 394 and S. 2034, bills to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a boundary study to evaluate the significance of the Colonel James Barrett Farm in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the suitability and feasibility of its inclusion in the National Park System as part of the Minute Man National Historical Park, H.R. 482, to provide for a land exchange involving Federal lands in the Lincoln National Forest in the State of New Mexico, H.R. 486, to provide for a land exchange involving private land and Bureau of Land Management land in the vicinity of Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, for the purpose of removing private land from the required safety zone surrounding munitions storage bunkers at Holloman Air Force Base, H.R. 1492 and S. 1719, bills to provide for the preservation of the historic confinement sites where Japanese Americans were detained during World War II, H.R. 3507, to transfer certain land in Riverside County, California, and San Diego County, California, from the Bureau of Land Management to the United States to be held in trust for the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians, and H.R. 4000, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to revise certain repayment contracts with the Bostwick Irrigation District in Nebraska, the Kansas Bostwick Irrigation District No. 2, the Frenchman-Cambridge Irrigation District, and the Webster Irrigation District No. 4, all a part of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, and other pending calendar business, 10 a.m., SD–366.

May 24, Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests, to hold hearings to examine S. 2466, to authorize and direct the exchange and conveyance of certain National Forest land and other land in southeast Arizona, S. 2788, to direct the exchange of certain land in Grand, San Juan, and Uintah Counties, Utah, and S. 2567, to maintain the rural heritage of the Eastern Sierra and enhance the region's tourism economy by designating certain public lands as wilderness and certain rivers as wild and scenic rivers in the State of California, 2:30 p.m., SD–366.

May 25, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the outlook for growth of coal-fired electric generation and whether sufficient supplies of coal will be available to supply electric generators on a timely basis both in the near term and in the future, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: May 23, business meeting to consider S. 2735, to amend the National Dam Safety Program Act to reauthorize the national dam safety program, S. 2832, to reauthorize and improve the program authorized by the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965, S. 2430, to amend the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 1990 to provide for implementation of recommendations of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service contained in the Great Lakes Fishery Resources Restoration Study, S.

1509, to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to add non-human primates to the definition of prohibited wildlife species, S. 2041, to provide for the conveyance of a United States Fish and Wildlife Service administrative site to the city of Las Vegas, Nevada, S. 2127, to redesignate the Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge in the State of Virginia as the ''Elizabeth Hartwell Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge'', S. Res. 301, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the National Audubon Society, S. 2781, to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to enhance the security of wastewater treatment works, S. 2650, to designate the Federal courthouse to be constructed in Greenville, South Carolina, as the ''Carroll A. Campbell, Jr. Federal Courthouse'', S. 801, to designate the United States courthouse located at 300 North Hogan Street, Jacksonville, Florida, as the ''John Milton Bryan Simpson United States Courthouse'', the proposed Great Lakes Coordination and Oversight Act, S. 2023, to amend the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 to improve that Act, the nominations of Molly A. O'Neill, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Dale Klein, of Texas, Gregory B. Jaczko, of the District of Columbia, and Peter B. Lyons, of Virginia, each to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and other pending committee business, 9:30 a.m., SD–628.

Committee on Finance: May 23, Subcommittee on Long-Term Growth and Debt Reduction, to hold hearings to examine encouraging economic self-determination in Indian country, 2:30 p.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: May 23, to hold hearings to examine the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage, with a declaration, done at Vienna on September 12, 1997, Convention Adopted by a Diplomatic Conference convened by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and opened for signature at Vienna, September 29, 1997, during the IAEA General Conference (Treaty Doc. 107–21), S. Res. 312, expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the need for the United States to address global climate change through the negotiation of fair and effective international commitments, S. Res. 359, concerning the Government of Romania's ban on intercountry adoptions and the welfare of orphaned or abandoned children in Romania, S. Res. 456, expressing the sense of the Senate on the discussion by the North Atlantic Council of secure, sustainable, and reliable sources of energy, S. 559, to make the protection of vulnerable populations, especially women and children, who are affected by a humanitarian emergency a priority of the United States Government, S. 1950, to promote global energy security through increased cooperation between the United States and India in diversifying sources of energy, stimulating development of alternative fuels, developing and deploying technologies that promote the clean and efficient use of coal, and improving energy efficiency, S. 2125, to promote relief, security, and democracy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, S. 2200, to establish a United States-Poland parliamentary youth exchange program, S. 2566, to provide for coordination of proliferation interdiction activities and conventional arms disarmament, S. 2697, to establish the position of the United States Ambassador for ASEAN, and pending nominations, 2:15 p.m., S–116, Capitol.

May 24, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Gaddi H. Vasquez, of California, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as U.S. Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture, and John Clint Williamson, of Louisiana, to be Ambassador at Large for War Crimes Issues, Department of State, 3:30 p.m., SD–419.

May 25, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the current status of United Nations reform, 9:30 a.m., SH–216.

May 25, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Michael E. Ranneberger, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Kenya, Eric M. Bost, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa, and W. Stuart Symington IV, of Missouri, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Djibouti, 3 p.m., SD–106.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: May 22, business meeting to consider the nominations of Robert J. Portman, of Ohio, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget, Robert Irwin Cusick, Jr., of Kentucky, to be Director of the Office of Government Ethics, and David L. Norquist, of Virginia, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of Homeland Security, Time to be announced, S–216, Capitol.

May 22, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Lurita Alexis Doan, of Virginia, to be Administrator of General Services, 2 p.m., SD–342.

May 24, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nomination of R. David Paulison, of Florida, to be Under Secretary for Federal Emergency Management, Department of Homeland Security, 9:30 a.m., SD–342.

May 25, Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, and International Security, to hold hearings to examine Congress' role in Federal financial management, focusing on Congress' role and effectiveness in the Federal budget process, as well as ways it can improve the management of Federal funds, 2:30 p.m., SD–342.

Committee on Indian Affairs: May 25, to hold an oversight hearing to examine Indian education, 9:30 a.m., SR–485.

Committee on the Judiciary: May 23, to hold hearings to examine ensuring competition and innovation related to reconsidering communication laws, 9:30 a.m., SD–226.

May 23, Subcommittee on Intellectual Property, to hold hearings to examine post-grant review procedures and other litigation reforms relating to patents, 2 p.m., SD–226.

May 24, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the McCarran-Ferguson Act, focusing on implications of repealing the insurers' antitrust exemption, 10:15 a.m., SD–226.

May 24, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine judicial nominations, 2 p.m., SD–226.

May 25, Subcommittee on Constitution, Civil Rights and Property Rights, to hold hearings to examine the

consequences of legalized assisted suicide and euthanasia, 1 p.m., SD–226.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: May 25, to hold hearings to examine pending benefits related legislation, 10 a.m., SR–418.

Select Committee on Intelligence: May 23, closed business meeting to mark up intelligence authorization for fiscal year 2007, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

May 24, Full Committee, closed business meeting to consider intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

Special Committee on Aging: May 25, to hold hearings to examine the status of preparing for a pandemic flu, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

House Committees

Committee on Appropriations, May 23, Subcommittee on Defense, an oversight hearing on Defense Contracting, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

May 25, full Committee, to consider the Legislative Branch appropriations for Fiscal Year 2007, 9 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, May 24, hearing on Border Security—Mission of the National Guard, 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

May 25, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities, hearing on Applying Lessons Learned From Hurricane Katrina: How the Department of Defense Is Preparing for the Upcoming Hurricane Season, 10 a.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on the Budget, May 25, hearing on the Line-Item Veto—Perspectives on Applications and Effects, 9:30 a.m., 210 Cannon.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, May 23, Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness, hearing on Paying for College: Innovative Private-Sector Proposals to Complement Record Federal Investment in Student Aid," 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, May 23, Subcommittee on Environment and Hazardous, hearing on H.R. 2567, Antifreeze Bittering Act of 2005, 10 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

May 23, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled "Examining the Federal Government's Partnership With America's Pharmacists," 11 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

May 24, Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality, hearing entitled "Vehicle and Fuels Technology: Next Generation," 1 p.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, May 23, Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, to consider the following bills: H.R. 1999, State and Local Housing Flexibility Act of 2005; and H.R. 5039, Saving America's Rural Housing Act of 2006, 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

May 24, full Committee, to consider the following bills: H.R. 5117, To exempt persons with disabilities from the prohibition against providing section 8 rental assistance to college students; H.R. 4127, Data Accountability and Trust Act (DATA); H.R. 5341, Seasoned Customer CTR Exemption Act of 2006; H.R. 4804, FHA Manufactured Housing Loan Modernization Act of 2006; H.R. 3043, Zero Downpayment Pilot Program Act of 2005; H.R. 5347, HOPE VI Reauthorization Act of 2006; H.R. 5121, Expanding American Homeownership Act of 2006; and H.R. 5068, Export-Import Bank Reauthorization Act of 2006, 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

May 25, to continue hearings entitled "Protecting Investors and Fostering Efficient Markets: A Review of the S.E.C. Agenda," 1 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

May 25, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled "Oversight of the Office of Thrift Supervision," 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Government Reform, May 23, Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources, hearing entitled "FY 2007 Drug Control Budget and the Byrne Grant, HIDTA, and Other Law Enforcement Programs: Are We Jeopardizing Federal, State and Local Cooperation?" 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

May 23, Subcommittee on Federal Workforce and Agency Organization, hearing entitled "Office of Government Ethics Reauthorization," 2 p.m., 2247 Rayburn.

May 23, Subcommittee on Federalism and the Census, hearing entitled "Public Housing in the Competitive Market Place: Do Affordable and Public Housing Development Benefit from Private Market and Other Financing Tools?" 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

May 24, full Committee, hearing entitled "Getting Ready for the '06 Hurricane Season," 1 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, May 23, Subcommittee on Intelligence, Information Sharing and Terrorism Risk, executive, briefing on sharing information among Federal intelligence partners: DHS access and information controls, 11 a.m., H2–176 Fore.

May 24, full Committee, hearing entitled "The Need for CFIUS Reform to Address Homeland Security Concerns," 1 p.m., 311 Cannon.

May 24, Subcommittee on Intelligence, Information Sharing, and Terrorism Risk Assessment, hearing entitled "Examining the Progress of the DHS Chief Intelligence Officer," 3:30 p.m., 311 Cannon.

May 25, Subcommittee on Prevention of Nuclear and Biological Attack, hearing entitled "Enlisting Foreign Cooperation in U.S. Efforts to Prevent Nuclear Smuggling," 2 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on House Administration, May 25, oversight hearing on the Smithsonian Business Ventures, 12 p.m., 1310 Longworth.

Committee on International Relations, May 25, to consider pending business, 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

May 25, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations, briefing and hearing on Food Aid: Taking a Bite out of Hunger, 11 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

May 25, Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation, hearing on the A.Q. Khan Network: Case Closed? 2 p.m., 2255 Rayburn.

May 25, Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, hearing on U.S.-Canada Relations, 2 p.m., 2200 Rayburn.

Committee on the Judiciary, May 23, Subcommittee on Courts, the Internet, and Intellectual Property, hearing on H.R. 435, Equal Access to Justice Reform Act of 2005, 4 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

May 23, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security, hearing on H.R. 4239, Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

May 25, full Committee, to mark up the following bills: H.R. 5417, Internet Freedom and Nondiscrimination Act of 2006; H.R. 4777, Internet Gambling Prohibition Act; H.R. 4411, Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act of 2006; H.R. 4894, To provide for certain access to national crime information databases by schools and education agencies for employment purposes, with respect to individuals who work with children; H.R. 5318, Cyber-Security Enhancement and Consumer Data Protection Act of 2006; and H.R. 4127, Data Accountability and Trust Act (DATA), 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

May 25, Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security, and Claims, oversight hearing on Alien Smuggling: Issues and Responses, 2 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Resources, May 25, Subcommittee on National Parks, hearing on the following bills: H.R. 4275, To amend Public Law 106–348 to extend the authorization for establishing a memorial in the District of Columbia or its environs to honor veterans who became disabled while serving in the Armed Forces of the United States; H.R. 5057, To authorize the Marion Park Project and Committee of the Palmetto Conservation Foundation to establish a commemorative work on Federal land in the District of Columbia, and its environs to honor Brigadier General Francis Marion; and S. 1627, Delaware National Coastal Special Resources Study Act, 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Rules, May 22, to consider the Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies appropriations for Fiscal Year 2007, 5 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

May 23, to consider the Homeland Security appropriations for Fiscal Year 2007, 5 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science, May 24, Subcommittee on Environment, Technology, and Standards, hearing on the Views of the NIST Nobel Laureates on Science Policy, 9:30 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, May 23, Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform and Oversight, hearing entitled ''The Liabilities Driving Better Consumer Data Protection Practices,'' 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

May 25, Subcommittee on Rural Enterprises, Agriculture and Technology, hearing entitled ''Unlocking Charitable Giving,'' 9:45 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, May 23, Subcommittee on Railroads, hearing on Impacts of Railroad-Owned Waste Facilities, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

May 24, Subcommittee on Highways, Transit and Pipelines, oversight hearing on Understanding Contemporary Public Private Highway Transactions: The Future of Infrastructure Finance? 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, May 15, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, oversight hearing on VA's oversight on patient safety, 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, May 23, Subcommittee on Human Resources, hearing to Review Proposals To Improve Child Protective Services, 2 p.m., B–318 Rayburn.

May 25, Subcommittee on Oversight, hearing on Charities and Employment Taxes: Are Charities in the Combined Federal Campaign Meeting Their Employment Tax Responsibilities? 11 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, May 25, executive, briefing on Global Updates/Hotspots, 9 a.m., H–405 Capitol.

May 26, hearing on Media's Role and Responsibilities on Leaks of Classified Information, 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

1 p.m., Monday, May 22

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: Senate will resume consideration of S. 2611, Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act, with a vote to occur at 5:30 p.m., on or in relation to Chambliss/Isakson Amendment No. 4009, to be followed by a vote on, or in relation to, Ensign/Graham Modified Amendment No. 4076.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

12:30 p.m., Monday, May 22

House Chamber

Program for Monday: To be announced.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Ackerman, Gary L., N.Y., E905
Alexander, Rodney, La., E894
Baca, Joe, Calif., E904
Barrett, J. Gresham, S.C., E912
Barton, Joe, Tex., E895
Blumenauer, Earl, Ore., E910
Bonner, Jo, Ala., E897
Boustany, Charles W., Jr., La., E887
Brown, Henry E., Jr., S.C., E909
Brown-Waite, Ginny, Fla., E916
Butterfield, G.K., N.C., E895, E913
Buyer, Steve, Ind., E911
Capito, Shelley Moore, W.Va., E903
Chandler, Ben, Ky., E881
Cleaver, Emanuel, Mo., E905
Clyburn, James E., S.C., E912
Conyers, John, Jr., Mich., E896
Costello, Jerry F., Ill., E913
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