

a budget we would like to control in some way, and the States are hooked on the money we keep giving to them, with the fear if they lose the money, they will also lose control of the programs, which they don't have right now in the first place.

David Walker wrote a book called *The Rebirth of Federalism*, and in it he said from the period of 1964 to 1980 there was something that he called creeping conditionalism that came into this country. As he wrote, "There was a perennial Congressional tendency to impose strings and the more recent habit of adding regulations and mandates. The tendency even among block grants was and is to acquire conditions." We can see that in some of the programs like Safe Streets, CETA and CDBG.

In addition to that, there is a cost that is developed by the States for this Federal programming help. For example, in his book he also talks about the Safe Drinking Water Act amendments of 1986, which now impose estimated costs of \$2 billion to \$3 billion annually on public water systems. That is money that must be raised by local taxpayers to pay for mandates and requirements of the Federal Government on this program, that was originally supposed to be a sharing concept.

The Education For the Handicapped Act, passed in 1968, now averages \$500 million annually of additional costs to State and local government. It has been estimated, he said, from 1983 to 1990, additional mandates that the Federal Government imposed upon State and local governments, somewhere between \$8 and \$13 billion in additional costs. Which simply means, as the old adage says, the only thing that is worse than an unfunded mandate is actually a funded mandate.

Now, is there blame to go around? Yes, on both our sides. Blame on the Federal Government because we become too involved in too many projects in a kind-hearted effort to try and help people. There is also blame for the State governments, who take this too much, become too entrapped and need these programs and these funds to continue on. And though both of us are unhappy with the situation, we keep lumbering on with the same concept and the same program. Both of us, the Federal and State governments, find ourselves in a trap, and both of us, if we are going to improve, have got to some day realize we have to let go of the cheese.

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 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 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 gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. MCKINNEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for half the time until midnight as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that you are yielding the time to us, and we are really pleased to be on the floor tonight to talk about some of the work that we have done over the past few weeks.

Before we start, I do want to say that we are very mindful that this is Memorial Day weekend. We are all looking forward to going home and being with our constituents, and we are very respectful and appreciative of the families who have served our Nation who have given the ultimate sacrifice, and we want to express to those families our continued condolences for their losses, and we also want to express to them our thanks for how they have sacrificed and served and helped to further the cause of freedom.

We would not have the opportunity to stand in this hall, this wonderful People's House tonight, if it were not for the brave men and women who serve in uniform to protect our freedom. Because they are so important to us, we have passed some legislation, the Respect For Fallen Heroes Act, which will preserve the dignity of the men and women who have lost their lives and show respect for those families. That passed this afternoon in this body, and we thank Mr. ROGERS of Michigan and Mr. BUYER, who chairs our Veterans Affairs Committee, for their work on those efforts.

Mr. SIMMONS, the gentleman from Connecticut, and I have filed a bill this week which is the Veterans Identity Theft Protection Act. It is H.R. 5464. This was done in response to the egregious, egregious leak and actions from the Veterans Affairs Department and the employee there who lost the identity information of 26.5 million of our veterans.

We are going to be moving forward on that legislation to protect and try

to make right that situation with our veterans when we return. This is something that should not have occurred. It is a failure of the bureaucracy, and it is something that the Members of this House are moving forward to address.

Before we get into talking about our successes in this body, the bills that we have passed, the legislation that we are working hard on for the American people, I want to say a little bit about the immigration legislation. And after we finish our conversation this evening, we are going to finish up with more conversation on the immigration legislation that our friends across the dome in the Senate passed.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to have to tell you that the legislation that the other body passed, in my opinion, is a form of amnesty. I have been and remain solidly opposed to amnesty, and I do stand opposed to that legislation that they have passed.

I do continue to support the bill that we passed in the House last fall and sent to the Senate. We know that the Members of this body are going to continue to stand solid that we need to secure our Nation's border first, first and foremost, and regain the trust and confidence of the American people, and make certain that they know that we value, we value, what this Nation stands for and that the sovereignty of this Nation indeed is worth fighting for.

As we talk about where we have concentrated our efforts through the first part of this year, I want to draw attention to a couple of things. We have passed tax relief. We have taken actions and the President signed into law last week the tax reconciliation bill which addressed some of the tax issues, extensions that we had passed previously. We know that there is a second bill that will come within the next few weeks as we address other extensions of tax reductions.

We know that these work. We know that tax reductions work, and we know that this has helped to fuel the economic growth that we are seeing in this country.

We know that the 18 quarters of sustained economic growth are because this economy is robust. We know that the Federal Government doesn't create jobs, it is the free enterprise system that creates these jobs. So, knowing this and realizing this, is the reason that we had the tax relief signed into law last week.

We have also passed a budget, a budget bill that for the second year in a row will put us on the path to deficit reduction. This is so important, Mr. Speaker. It is important for a couple of different reasons, because when we work toward reducing what the Federal Government spends, when we work toward reining in the size of the Federal Government, we know that that helps with our economy. We know that that is a step in the right direction.

You know, one of the things on our economy I do want to mention is that

our first quarter growth has been revised up from 4.8 percent to 5.3 percent, and our unemployment rate is at near historic lows. This is the result of our economic policies and the fiscal policies that we have in this House.

We have taken other action too. Our energy situation in this country, we took action today in this body with looking at where we drill, where we explore, and doing this domestically, looking at the oil supply for this Nation.

I stood here earlier today and said, you know, we can't have it both ways. The liberals can't have it both ways. You can't oppose anything that is to be done on alternative fuels and you can't oppose drilling in ANWR and you can't oppose other forms of power generation and then complain about high gas prices. It just doesn't ring true, and the people know it doesn't ring true.

But we passed legislation in this body to increase our oil supply, to do it domestically, and we are sending it over to the Senate. We know they are going to be on the spot, and we will encourage them to take action. They have to recognize that this is a problem, and we certainly are looking forward to their moving forward on that legislation.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I will yield to the gentleman from Texas, Judge CARTER, who has done such a wonderful job being a part of our team that we have as we move forward with the agenda that the American people want to see us working on, working on prosperity, working on our security, being sure that this Nation is productive, that it is safe, and it is secure.

At this time I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

□ 2245

Mr. CARTER. I thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, you know, we are mighty proud that we serve in the people's House. And what we try to do and we endeavor every day to meet is what the people of the United States care about and need.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of the accomplishments of the Republican majority over the period of time that I have served in this Congress, because the efforts that we have made have been for the lives of the people of the United States and to a lesser extent people around the world.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues has just told you, we have had one of the longest continued periods of prosperity in the history of the Republic. But let's relate this to people, real people. Let me share a story with you about a young man that lives in Round Rock, Texas.

He got laid off. It has been about almost 3 years now. He got laid off on a job. He had a good job. He had a college education. He got laid off and it was a bad time for that young man at that time because he had a brand new baby girl.

Life looked a little bleak for him and for his family. But he, being a typical American, who would never say no, he went out and got two part-time jobs to keep the wolf away from the door at his house as he looked for another job.

But about the same time within that neighborhood, we started to see what happens when you give the American people their tax money back and let them spend and invest their tax money, based upon a tax bill passed by this Congress for the people of the United States.

For those taxpayers who pay taxes, we reduced their taxes. And that money was starting to work on behalf of this young man in Round Rock, Texas. The other day I ran into that kid with his almost 4-year-old daughter now coming back from one of her little dance recitals, on their way to their new home.

He was real proud of his new job, which is directly associated with providing a satellite industry that services the new Toyota plant that is opening in San Antonio, Texas. All of this, Mr. Speaker, is the result of the good tax policy of this House which encourages investment, employs people, and brings our unemployment to a record of all time, consistent low unemployment.

But it is really about that little girl and her daddy and her mamma and how life is better for them in Texas today. These stories, those untold stories are everywhere in this Nation as a result of the actions of this House.

I am very honored and privileged and humbled by the fact that I now in my direct represent the largest military facility on earth, Ft. Hood Texas. 50,000 soldiers have marched to war on multiple occasions on behalf of this Nation in the very recent past, and currently we have almost 19,000 soldiers over there now doing their duty for the United States.

And this House remembers these people in uniform who are serving our Nation. And we have remembered them by the greatest increase in spending on behalf of our veterans, overwhelming what was done in the past few decades.

We gave our military retirees and our veterans the opportunity to have better health care, and we strengthened TRICARE. We strengthened veterans benefits. We have increased benefits for veterans every year. And the veterans life is better than it was 4 years ago.

And they know it and they are grateful for it. And we solved a concurrent receipt problem that they had for 100 years. Mr. Speaker, why do we do it? Because those are the people of the United States. And this House is about the people.

As we face an immigration debate, an immigration debate that harms our Nation, the fact that we have got an invasion coming across our border, it was the House, the people's House that recognized it, not only the strain and stress upon the American people, but the harm being done to those foreign invaders.

They came in unlawfully into this country. Let us not forget these human beings that come across this border who suffer and hide in the shadows. But this House stepped up and said we are going to stop the bleeding. And we passed, what has it been, almost 8 months ago, passed a bill that said enough is enough. We are putting resources on the border and we are going to put a stop to it.

And this House is going to stand firm to hold the border secure of the United States for who? For the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud and very humbled that I have colleagues such as my colleagues that are here tonight that are going to speak to you to tell you that we have done our duty for the people of America. And when we see that we have given them the extra income, we have given them the freedom of their time, we have allowed people to invest, and maybe they can give up that second job, so they can go to the ball park, take vacations, have a life with their families, which we treasure so greatly in this country.

Mr. Speaker, that is what it is all about. It is all about the people of the United States. And it is all about the people's House remembering the people. As Mrs. BLACKBURN said, tomorrow we are going to go home. I get home every weekend, and most of the Members of the House do that, because we want to be with the folks that sent us up here.

We want to know where they are shopping, what they are spending, how much their milk costs, not the milk in Washington. We want to be able to say they are our neighbors, because that is what we are up here for, to represent our neighbors. And I think we have a proud record that we can go back to our neighbors on and say we have given you a better life.

Life is better today as the result of the people's House, the House of Representatives. I am honored that I have the opportunity to serve that House. I am honored to be with the colleagues that are here tonight, and all of my colleagues, especially my Republican colleague on this side of the aisle who never throw up the obstructions that we face from the other side, but always try to do what is right for the people.

Energy, the other issues that the people are so concerned about, we have got a solution not rhetoric. And we are moving forward as Mrs. BLACKBURN said.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Tennessee, my mother's home State, and say that I am very, very pleased to tell and report to you today that the people's House still firmly stands for the people of the United States. With that I yield back.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas. As he said, tax relief works and the actions taken by this body in 2001 and in 2003 going ahead and moving forward again and addressing and extending those tax

reductions, finding AMT relief, looking at dividends for our senior citizens, all of that works. America works well when Americans are in charge.

The free enterprise system works well when small businesses and individuals who have the dream of owning and running that business have the capital to invest and get out there and work very hard to make those dreams come true for them, for their families.

As I said earlier, our budget that we have passed puts us on the path to deficit reduction. This is the second year in a row that we have passed a budget that reduces what we are spending. You know, Mr. Speaker, there are some on the left that prefer to talk about something called PAYGO. And they like to say, well, we need to enact PAYGO.

And as our citizens hear this over the weekend, I hope they will know that that means that they are going to raise your taxes as needed to cover Government spending.

Now, in Tennessee, we feel like that government is never going to get enough of your money. Their appetite for your money always grows. Government is never going to get enough money to cover everything that they would like to spend, because the bureaucracy, this huge great big out-of-control bureaucracy that is a monument, a monument built by the Democrats, a monument to them here in this town.

They like to keep the control. They like to keep your cash. They think they have the first right of refusal on your paycheck. And we think that the citizens have that right of first refusal. You know, Ronald Reagan said that we do not have a revenue problem, we have a spending problem. And that is exactly right.

And that is why we have taken the actions we have taken in our budget. I commend Chairman NUSSLE and the Budget Committee for the work that they have done on those efforts.

You know I have mentioned that bureaucracy. We all know that we have three branches of Government. We have the legislative, the executive, and the judicial branch. But, Mr. Speaker, it should come as no surprise what we have seen happen over the past 2 or 3 decades is this great big bureaucracy.

That is very difficult when they have to respond to you. All of us get frustrated when you call, you dial a number, and you get put on hold. They tell you to push a button and wait. You have nameless, faceless, unidentified bureaucrats that are making decisions for our constituents and our citizens.

They feel as if they know best, because they feel like they are in control, that they are outside of the oversight, that they do not need to answer the questions that we ask on behalf of the citizens. A lot of us have gotten really frustrated. We have watched that bureaucracy. We watched it during Katrina. We have been watching it for years. And as some of my constituents

say, whether it is the IRS, the EPA, or OSHA, sometimes you just cannot get them to respond to you.

So one of the things that we are focusing on is working to be certain that that bureaucracy gets right-sized. We have heard of it in the corporate world for years. Right-sizing, retooling, reorganizing, looking for efficiencies.

It seems like it is done the world over. We see corporations do it. We see small business do it. We see families do it. We see local and state governments do it but not the Federal Government. That bureaucracy thinks it can just grow on auto pilot.

Why? Because they think they can come in and get first right of refusal on your paycheck. We have decided that it is time to tackle that. We have worked on this through the past couple of budgets. We have worked diligently. And when we come back from our Memorial Day break, Mr. Speaker, we are going to put some attention on spring-cleaning week.

We have got some CPAs in this body. And they are going to be leading this effort. At this time, I would like to yield to one of those CPAs, Representative CONAWAY from Texas who is going to be helping to lead this effort.

He has a bill which I will have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, it is just one of my favorite bills that has been filed here in this House this year. In his legislation, he says that if you want to start a new program, you have got to find one to take off the books, one that has outlived its usefulness.

As I have led the effort for our task force on waste, fraud and abuse, it has been a joy to work with Mr. CONAWAY and hear his ideas on how we can get Government to develop those best practices and go through the process of reducing its size and becoming more efficient and more responsive to the taxpayer.

At this time I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY).

□ 2300

Mr. CONAWAY. I thank the gentlewoman for the opportunity to talk tonight. I thank her for hosting this time and my other colleagues who have spoken.

Let me set the framework for why it is important that we are doing what we are doing. I have six grandchildren and a seventh one on the way. And you look at a CBO study, a Congressional Budget Office study, you look at an Office of Management and Budget study, you look at the GAO, Government Accountability Office study, every single one of those studies shows a pretty frightening picture for the next 50 years.

My oldest grandson will be, in 2050, 45 years from now, he will be where we are. It will be his responsibility and his world to live, kind of where we are right now. And if you believe these three sets of estimates, which they are very credible, it would show that left unchecked this Federal Government

will consume half the gross domestic product of this country.

There has never been a free market enterprise anywhere in history where the central government can take half and you and I can take the other half and continue to prosper, continue to grow, continue to have a standard of living that grows with the other half. It just does not work.

We are currently at about 20 percent of GDP, and in my way of thinking, that is the gag threshold. We are about where we can be and still maintain healthy opportunities for the rest of the world. I want those opportunities for my grandchildren. It is incumbent upon us. We received those from our parents and grandparents, and I think to do anything less is particularly unworthy of us.

David Walker who heads up the GAO told us this morning in a meeting that the financial statements of the Federal Government this year will show unfunded liabilities of some \$50 trillion. That is a combination of hard debt that gets talked a lot about in this body with Treasury bills and notes and a few bonds that are out there and the debt that is owed to Social Security. But the unfunded promises to Social Security, the unfunded promises to Medicare and Medicaid, the various unfunded responsibilities that we add up, add to constantly in this body, represent about \$50 trillion. And that is a staggering amount of money.

We are going to have to hit this on a lot of fronts in order to adjust our way of doing things and to trim this growth in this Federal Government. It is going to require some budgetary reform: things like sunset review process; things like line item veto or enhanced rescission powers for the President. That will be helpful. We also have to address the automatic programs, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid. Those programs continue to grow automatically every year unless we do something, take some positive action.

We took a little bit of positive action last year with the Deficit Reduction Act in which we trimmed about \$37 billion out of that growth. It was a Herculean effort. If you listen to the rhetoric on both sides, quite frankly we bragged a little bit too much and in contrast the other side screamed and hollered and predicted gloom and doom way too much because that \$36 billion if you look at the growth rates and you put it on a line chart, you could barely distinguish the before and after lines on that chart. It was \$36 billion, and we bragged about it; but it was a very modest, at best, attempt at doing what we all collectively know that we have got to do, to make some hard choices.

My bill would help us begin to make priority choices for new programs. We do a very terrible job of setting priorities with existing spending. Katrina relief versus food stamps. The war fight versus whatever. We just don't do that very well. Have a hard time saying no. But it seems like we ought to begin to

practice saying no or practice setting priorities on new programs. And I appreciate you bragging on that bill.

You mentioned spring cleaning. We are also going to start a thing called Project Dave. Project Dave comes from the movie "Dave" in which a surrogate President is brought in because the President has had some sort of stroke of some sort and he is a look alike, somebody who looks exactly like the President. He comes in and he is a rookie. He does not know all the things that you cannot do in the Federal Government. And he begins to kind of grow into his job. He is in a budget meeting or hearing and he brings some commonsense kind of background to the table and begins to whack programs. Of course the bureaucrats, the executive branch folks are saying, you cannot do that. He said, why not? I am the President. So he begins to cut spending all over the place.

So we have got a list, the President has given us a list of about 150 programs that he wants to see cut that have out lived their usefulness. One of them that comes to mind is the job bank that the Labor Department continues to run, an Internet job bank. We spend about \$15 million a year on maintaining an Internet job bank. Anybody who has looked for a job knows that there are huge resources, private sector resources for there for Internet job banks. Why would we continue to run one ourselves?

Let's take that \$15 million and leave it with the taxpayers or reduce the deficit. All the kinds of good things that will happen.

I am looking forward to working with the gentlewoman in this spring cleaning that ought to go about helping to shine some spotlights on things that we should not be doing, things that really are not the role of this Federal Government. It is going to be difficult, as I mentioned how hard it was to pass the Deficit Reduction Act, but that is the kind of hard work this Republican group can do.

Let me finish off by saying that I am not a doom and gloom person. The glass is always half full. I drive my staff and family crazy because I am so optimistic. We can fix these problems. These are not beyond us. This is not rocket science. It is straight-up budgeting. If you have a revenue problem and a spending problem causing the deficit, we are fixing the revenue side. It is just fine. It is percolating along just fine.

We simply have a spending problem. We have to begin to say no. So I am very optimistic that this Republican-led House, this Republican-led Senate and a President in the White House that we can make major strides in addressing this very critical issue. That is not an over-statement. This body takes over-statement and hyperbole and puffing to an art form.

I tell people that the single greatest threat that we face to our way of life is not al Qaeda. It is not the terrorists.

They will not change our way of life. They may hurt some of us. But we will get them in the end. The single biggest threat to our way of life, to my grandchildren's way of life, is the growth in Federal Government, the growth in spending. That does have the capacity to change our way of life. And it will take some tough decisions on our part to get this done, and we owe it to my grandkids and your grandchildren if you have them to get that work done.

I appreciate being able to pitch in on this tonight.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentleman from Texas for his wisdom and expertise and he is so right. We are doing this and we are taking these steps. And you know, as the gentleman said, there are going to be some things that are not rocket science. It is just that, you know, it is like Ronald Reagan said, when you have a Federal Government program, there is nothing so close to eternal life on Earth as a Federal Government program. And it is very difficult to get those programs cut down, but we are up to this task. We have been working on this. We are ready to move full steam ahead. And we want to invite the American people to work with us when they know where there is waste, fraud, and abuse where we should be rooting something out. They should contact us, talk to us, let us know what their suggestions are.

This is going to be not those glamorous big front-page bills that you see passed. This is working on the process of government. This is working on the operations of government. It is time for us to roll our sleeves up and get to work. And we are looking forward to our summer of spring cleaning and working on making certain that people are aware where programs have out-lived their usefulness, where there are redundancies.

We have 342 different economic programs in this country in this Federal Government, and it is time to begin to streamline that, so that our local governments do a better job of utilizing those resources. And we are doing this, addressing all the programs, addressing our entitlement spending because we want to be certain that America stays free.

We are trustees of a wonderful, wonderful legacy. It is a legacy of sacrifice. It is a legacy of service. It is a legacy that the men and women in uniform have fought for and the freedom in this Nation is worth preserving. And we are looking forward to beginning to work on those processes of government and reducing the size of the Federal Government.

I want to turn our attention this evening now back toward the immigration issue where we began our conversation, and spend a little bit of time as we focus this and the concern that this body has, because of our love for this Nation, because of our respect for the men and women who are fighting to keep us free, because of our concern for what we see happening on our

southern border and, yes, on our northern border too, and because of what we know takes place every day with illegal entry as individuals break the law, as they enter this country.

Mr. Speaker, you know, it is so interesting, there are laws on the books for prosecution, for penalty, for those that illegally enter your car, your home, your business, and your country. And how interesting, how interesting that we are choosing to say to those that illegally enter the country, we are going to consider to let you stay. How very interesting that we have some that support that.

As I said earlier, amnesty is something I do not support. I have never supported it, and I continue to stand solidly against it. I have two of my colleagues with me for this discussion, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER); and I am going to yield to the gentleman from Texas Mr. CARTER for a couple of more comments on immigration and then, Mr. Speaker, I will yield the balance of the time to Mr. ROHRBACHER from California.

The gentleman from Texas.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, we have an old saying around the courthouse, the definition of insanity is to keep doing the same thing and expect different results. We have tried a bill just like the one that the Senate sent over to us. It is headed our way that they just passed back in 1986. And President Reagan, a man who never lacked in the courage to speak the truth, called it what it was, an amnesty bill. That amnesty bill resulted in 15 million additional illegal immigrants coming into the United States. It was a plum that said, come on up here, boys, the water is fine.

Now, why in the world would we ever think that the same exact program would bring any different results? I join my colleagues, both of my colleagues here in totally opposing amnesty. Amnesty is not a solution to this problem. It is the problem. I take the position and I think most of the Members of this House take the position as I mentioned that we have got to stop the bleeding at the American border.

The other night I went into detail about the criminal activity that is going on on our southern border. I am sure we got problems on our northern border too, but I only live about 130 miles from our southern border so I have firsthand knowledge of what is going on on the southern border.

I have visited that border. I have seen the drug dealers that are crossing in waves, bringing evil that I spent 20 years on the bench fighting. The biggest drug pipeline in the world runs up I-35 right through the middle of my district. I have seen the night vision pictures of troops of drug dealers hauling large satchels of illegal substances across our southern border. These are not folks coming over here for work. These are folks coming over here for evil.

We have got to secure that southern border and all of our borders. If we cannot protect our own sovereignty, Mr. Speaker, we are having a hard time arguing we are a sovereign Nation. So our sovereignty is important enough for us to take our time and plug the hole and make our life safe for the American citizens. And then my position is at that point in time these other issues that we are discussing is, address them sensibly, take the time to examine all the options and fix all that is broken in our immigration policy from top to bottom; and believe me, Mr. Speaker, in my district, background checks on people wanting to come into this country legally, we are now working on those backgrounds checks from 1999 and 2000.

We are going to have a real interesting crisis when we dump 15 million people into a background check program. That is just one of the little things we need to take our time and figure out.

So I am going to join, I guess the colloquy with my friends here and we will talk about all of this. Mr. ROHRABACHER, I have heard him. He is passionate on this subject, and I am looking forward to his passion. But most importantly the thing we want to say is to the American people, we haven't forgotten you. We hear you. We hear you.

I just got off the phone less than an hour ago to one of my folks back in Williamson County and the other counties I have in the 31st Congressional District of Texas.

□ 2315

They are united like a solid front for border security only. Our people that live on the battle line know where the battle is.

One individual, out of his own pocket, has sent out the phone number of every senator in the United States Senate to every voter in my district, paid for it himself, just to tell them to call the Senate and tell them what they thought of the Senate bill. That is passion for this war that we are fighting to protect the sovereignty of our Nation.

So, as we are getting passionate, we are passionate because the people are passionate, and I am just glad to be able to step up here with my colleagues and tell you that we have not forgotten you. We know the American citizens' concern is from Maine to California, from Texas to Minnesota. You have told us, we listen.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas, and we always have such interesting conversations because within my 7th District of Tennessee I have Williamson County, Tennessee, and it is so interesting because my constituents, whether they are in Shelby County or Chester County or Henderson County or Montgomery County or Williamson County, they are saying secure the border first, secure the border; no amnesty

at all whatsoever in any way, shape or form.

Mr. CARTER. Exactly.
Mrs. BLACKBURN. Enforcement must be dealt with, and employer responsibilities must be addressed, but the first thing first and foremost is securing that border.

What I hear from them is, let us do it right the first time, let us go in here and let us do this right.

Mr. Speaker, I love the fact that my constituents love this country and really take seriously the responsibility of protecting this country, of embracing the freedoms and the opportunity that this country holds. That is a blessing in my life, and I am so grateful that they have that love of this country.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. INGALLS of South Carolina). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) is recognized for the remaining time until midnight.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues for opening up this discussion on illegal immigration.

We heard a few moments ago another one of our colleagues describe Federal spending that is basically out of control at this moment as the single greatest danger to our way of life. I would suggest that one of the reasons that Federal spending is out of control is because illegal immigration is out of control, and we will never have the spending of the Federal Government under control until we stop the massive influx of illegal immigrants into our country.

Yes, al Qaeda is a threat; yes, Communist China is a threat. But I would suggest that the greatest threat that is clear and present in its danger to the American people is that of the massive influx of illegal immigrants into our society, an invasion, if you will, of America by foreigners who are coming here against our will.

The Senate passed an immigration bill earlier today. The fact that they passed an immigration bill reflects the fact that the American people are now aware of the dangers posed by this incredible influx of illegal immigrants into our country. Yet, we have our government passing legislation like that of the United States Senate, which will in the end do nothing but make this situation worse.

The bill that passed the United States Senate is a travesty. It is a cruel hoax on the American people, using the title "Immigration" to let people think that something is being done that will in some way curb this massive influx of millions of foreigners into our country. It will not. It will make the situation worse, and any rational analysis of that bill will lead to that conclusion.

Sixty-one senators voted for that bill in the United States Senate; thirty-six

voted against it. Of those who were opposing it, all but four of them were Democrats. Yes, four Democrats basically opposed the bill. All the rest were in favor. The majority of Republicans then actually opposed the bill coming out of the Republican-controlled Senate.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the massive influx of illegal immigrants into our country has been no accident. In fact, those people who passed the Senate bill today, many of them are personally responsible for this travesty, this horrible threat to America.

It is, instead, this massive influx of illegals into our country, not an accident but a result of an intentional strategy on the part of America's political elite like those in the United States Senate, to have illegals come into our country in this great number.

Why is that the policy of the United States Government not to do anything to stop this influx? That is their policy. It is because the business community wants cheap labor. It is also because the movers and shakers of the liberal left in this country, consistent with their Tammany Hall traditions want more political pawns who are dependent upon government programs, and a massive influx of illegals into this country fit that billet very well.

So you have very powerful economic interests wanting cheap labor, and so they want to exploit these poor immigrants pouring into our country. You have got the liberal left that is trying to exploit them politically. These are powerful forces which are reflected in the votes in this body and in the United States Senate.

Well, these people got what they wanted. These are people that over the years have been deciding what policies we would have or not have, and they got exactly what they wanted.

Bear Stearns estimates there are now between 15 and 20 million illegals in this country, in our country, 15 to 20 million people who should not be here and are not here legally. Well, the downside of this folly is becoming ever more evident.

In education, we hear about overcrowding. We hear about the decline of quality in our schools. Well, the States are spending \$7.4 billion annually to provide a kindergarten through 12th grade education to illegal immigrants. Without school-age illegal immigrants and the children of illegal immigrants, school enrollment would not have risen at all in the past decade. Our limited education dollars are being expended not for our own children's benefit but for the children of foreigners who have come here illegally. That is a crime against our own youth, spending billions of dollars which should be spent for their education instead going to the children of people who have come here illegally.

Our health care system is also under siege. Illegal immigrants account for 43 percent of those without health insurance in our country. So, at least \$9 billion of our scarce health care dollars