

cities have passed resolutions endorsing a Department of Peace, and 74 Members of the House have signed on to the bill. More and more, Americans want a compassionate, focused, organized approach to dealing with the violence in our communities, to dealing with domestic violence, spousal abuse, child abuse and other types of violence. The Department of Peace represents the end of fear and the beginning of hope for a new Nation and a new world.

OUR BATTLE FOR THE BORDER

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, more news from the front. Our battle for the border continues, and so does the hypocrisy from El Presidente Generalissimo Fox. So intent on tearing down American barriers, he is more intent on building his own, and he has taken millions of U.S. taxpayer dollars to do it.

For years, Fox has taken American money as part of Operation BusBound, a joint U.S.-Mexican venture, to send illegal immigrants coming from Central America, going to Fox's southern border, and he wants to send them back home. But he wails when we, the United States, use our own money for our own southern borders, securing it with our troops who aren't even carrying weapons.

However, Guatemalans, trying to illegally enter Mexico, just trying to take jobs Mexicans won't do, are reportedly met at the border with machete-wielding farmers and armed Mexican military. The old sly Fox is trying to protect his hen house while continuing to illegally enter ours.

Why is the United States helping to protect the borders of other Nations while lacking the moral will to protect our own? This ought not to be, but, Mr. Speaker, that is just the way it is.

MINIMUM WAGE AND RISING PRICES

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, over the last 9 years gas prices have doubled; college prices are up 38 percent; food prices, up 20 percent; housing, up 25 percent; and health care costs, up a whopping 75 percent. But the minimum wage hasn't budged over that period of time.

Over the last 5 years, we have had a singular focus in this House on raising revenue for those families for whom these numbers really don't mean much, because they have so much disposable income. But for people on the minimum wage, it means they have to decide between putting food on the table or insuring their own children. They have to work a week just to fill their tank with gas.

That's not right, and isn't it time that the Republican Party stop block-

ing the Democrat's attempts to raise the minimum wage and recognize that it is the working class families who are providing the underpinning of this economy? Let's increase the minimum wage. It is the right thing to do.

BORDER SECURITY

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the comments of my friend from Virginia, and perhaps at a later time, he can elaborate on what he said at a town hall meeting recently where he was quoted as saying he looked forward to earmarking the heck out of future spending bills, should his party take control.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to talk about the border security hearings we held last week in California and Texas. I attended the hearing in California and noted with interest the comments of Sheriff Rick Flores of Webb County, Texas, who said in response to our questions that the first goal of this government, and our first priority, should be enforcement of the law and enforcement of our borders.

Mr. Speaker, that is a clear message. The American people likewise want to see enforcement first, no tricks, no triggers, no amnesty, enforcing existing laws and closing loopholes to reaffirm that our great Republic is, in fact, a nation of laws.

RAISING CONCERNS ABOUT THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, in July of 2001, a few months after President Bush took office, gas was \$1.33 a gallon. Five years later, July 2006, it has more than doubled to \$3.00, and in places like Chicago, it is as high as \$3.40 a gallon.

But this is not the only place where the administration has failed middle-class families. Since 2000, the cost of health care has increased 73 percent to \$11,000 for a family of four. The cost of tuition at a 4-year public college has increased 38 percent since 2001 and, at the same time, average weekly earnings have declined by 1 percent in America.

So while costs spiral out of control, middle-class families have less money in their pockets. That is not exactly what I would call a record of achievement. Yet today, the President said the economy is strong and getting stronger. The American people know that such statements are wrong and getting wronger. The President's statements show how out of touch he is with the struggles and challenges American families face today.

Mr. Speaker, all is not well on Main Street. It is high time that Washington and this Congress took action. It is

time for a new direction. It is time for a change.

SENATE IMMIGRATION BILL RESTRICTS POLICE

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, the Washington Times reported today that a Senate immigration bill, the Kennedy bill, would prohibit State and local police from helping Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials combat illegal immigration. The Senate bill bars State and local police from detaining aliens simply for being in the U.S. illegally. Police could arrest the aliens only if they commit certain additional violations of Federal immigration law.

So the Senate bill wants to base our national security on get-out-of-jail-free cards and second chances? Let me remind you, Mr. Speaker, that four of the September 11 hijackers committed immigration violations and had been stopped by State and local police before the attacks on our Nation. Just 2 days before September 11, one hijacker, who had overstayed his visa, was stopped and given a \$270 speeding ticket. That was later found in his rented car in the Newark airport just a couple of days after September 11.

Mr. Speaker, those who don't learn from their mistakes are destined to repeat them. The Kennedy bill in the Senate does just that.

EYE-POPPING FIGURES FOR EXTENDING MEDICARE PART D ENROLLMENT

(Mr. BISHOP of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, eye-popping figures in the new GAO report just made the case for extending the Medicare part D enrollment deadline a great deal more compelling.

Exhibit A, insurance providers failed to answer phone calls accurately in response to 70 percent of the questions asked by seniors about their benefit.

Exhibit B, call centers underestimated out-of-pocket costs seniors have to pay by thousands of dollars.

Exhibit C, like the insurance providers, Medicare operators often answered questions incorrectly according to an earlier GAO report.

You would figure the extra \$400 billion added to the initial price tag of the Medicare bill that the CMS actuaries didn't want to tell us about would at least buy seniors some peace of mind. Instead, part D continues to confuse and frustrate the seniors who, through no fault of their own, have a 3-in-10 chance of receiving the right information about their options.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to help extend the enrollment deadline, repeal the sign-up

penalty, and repeal the provision locking seniors into a plan for a year once they sign up, so that they won't have to pay for the consequences of a bad bill for the rest of their lives.

NORTH KOREAN MISSILE LAUNCH

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on America's birthday, North Korean leader Kim Jong Il thought it was wise to fire six ballistic missiles. The international community condemned these launches, and Kim Jong Il responded by firing an additional missile on July 5.

Having been to North Korea in 2003, I can tell you that their government does nothing for its people and uses blackmail as its primary foreign policy tool. Kim Jong Il and some of our opponents on the other side of the aisle believe that if North Korea fires missiles that it should be rewarded with direct talks and various forms of assistance. I don't believe in blackmail or rewarding bad behavior.

As President Bush has said recently about Kim Jong Il, he can verifiably get rid of his weapons programs, stop testing rockets, and there is a way forward to help his people. The choice is his to make.

Our military and intelligence professionals, along with our allies in this region, will continue to keep a close watch on North Korea. I have confidence in their abilities.

But let us not forget the 37,000 servicemembers and their families currently stationed in South Korea. I thank them for what they do and wish them continued safety in such close proximity to a despotic and unstable self-appointed leader.

CONTROL OF OUR BORDERS

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

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I couldn't agree more with my colleague from Arizona when he says the number one priority is control of our borders. I find it interesting that my colleague from Texas says that it is the President of Mexico's fault. The fact is, over the last 5 years, the Republicans in the Bush administration and in this House have refused to properly fund border security programs. Today we are seeing the results.

Mr. Speaker, with the proposal that President Bush made for massive amnesty and other programs to allow people to come into this country, it has just encouraged the difficult situation. But the bottom line remains, we must get control of our borders, and to do that we have to fund it.

Over and over again, the Republicans on the Appropriations Committee and

in this House have refused to provide adequate resources so we can do the job. It is time that we get the job done.

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ILLEGAL ENTRY

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to invite the Senate to join the House in debating how we are going to address illegal entry into this country. We are hearing from our colleagues today reporting back on the hearings that we are holding around the country, talking with sheriffs, talking with Border Patrol, talking to people on the ground.

We are hearing the same thing: stop illegal crossings. It is time. Get this problem under control.

Mr. Speaker, in this environment every State is a border State and every town is a border town. Meanwhile, the other body holds hearings talking about everything under the sun related to immigration except the actual process by which people come into this country illegally.

Until our colleagues across the Capitol are willing to admit illegal entry is the problem, we are going to continue seeing a debate that goes nowhere. We should address the problem. Illegal entry is the biggest problem, and then take on the next angle of the issue, and do it in an orderly process.

That is what our House leadership is saying, and they are right on the issue.

RAISE MINIMUM WAGE TODAY

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans have a chance to give more than 6 million Americans a much-deserved pay raise. Would you believe that the minimum wage has not been increased in 9 years? It is the second longest amount of time that hardworking Americans have had to go without a pay raise, resulting in the hourly wage being at its lowest level in 50 years.

House Democrats want to expand economic opportunity for all Americans. We want to increase the minimum wage from \$5.15 an hour to \$7.25. It is only fair. These workers play by the rules every day. All they want in return is to make a living wage.

Do my Republican colleagues really believe that \$5.15 an hour is still a living wage? House Republicans claim that the only people who make the minimum wage are teenagers. Wrong.

Mr. Speaker, 75 percent of minimum wage workers are either the sole or one of two breadwinners in the family. House Republicans also like to claim that if we increase the minimum wage,

jobs will be lost. Wrong again. Today in the States that mandate a higher minimum wage, job growth has actually gotten higher. No more excuses.

CRACKING DOWN ON ONLINE PREDATORS

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of legislation that could protect innocent children across our great Nation. H.R. 5319, the Deleting Online Predators Act, introduced by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK), gives parents, teachers and school officials new tools in their effort to protect our children from online sexual predators.

Just this week back in my district in Tavares, Florida, prosecutors are picking a jury to try the case of John Couey, the man accused of raping and killing 9-year-old Jessica Lunsford.

Sexual predators like John Couey not only stalk our children on the playground and at the mall, but also over the Internet on Web sites like MySpace.com.

I commend the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for bringing attention to these Internet predators and thank the Energy and Commerce Committee for holding hearings on this bill.

ENERGY SOLUTIONS NEEDED

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, all summer the American people have been facing record prices every time they go to the gas pump. Some have cut vacation plans, others are pinching their monthly paychecks attempting to make ends meet. Washington should be acting to pass a comprehensive energy package that relieves pain at the pump and reduces our dependence on foreign oil.

Unfortunately, House Republicans have refused to act on any substantial energy legislation this year. How bad do things have to get before House Republicans are finally willing to act? Instead of actually coming up with real solutions, House Republicans prefer the status quo. They refuse to act because of their cozy relationship with Big Oil and see no problem with the \$16 billion in profit the three largest oil companies reported during the first quarter of the year.

Mr. Speaker, while House Republicans are content with the status quo, Democrats are ready to take America in a new direction. We will stand up to Big Oil and protect consumers from price gouging.