

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, for the last 5 years I have been working with a bipartisan group of my colleagues to make it illegal to continue the barbaric practice of game bird and illegal dog fighting.

Unfortunately, these practices continue because the purveyors of them have settled on the tactic of having minimal sanctions, not having meaningful penalties in our statutes. Unfortunately, this takes on new urgency because it is not just the fighting and the violence and the illegal betting and other criminal activities. We are now finding, for instance, that viruses like bird flu can be spread through this vile trade.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the House Republican leadership to stand up to the dark, shadowy forces that allow these evil practices to continue. Allow the bill that has been cosponsored, bipartisan, 324 cosponsors, to be voted on, on a suspension calendar. In fact, it won't even take the 40 minutes we normally allocate, because I am quite confident that we don't find any of the apologists for this barbaric trade who would be willing to stand up in public to defend what they protect in the back rooms of Congress.

HEALTH INSURANCE FOR LIFE ACT (H.R. 5740)

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

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge the passage of legislation that I am cosponsoring with the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE).

The Health Insurance for Life Act provides extended health care coverage to individuals and families who need COBRA when they are in between jobs or waiting for their health insurance to begin at a new job.

Suburban families like those living in the Hudson Valley in New York encounter a job change an average of seven times. Workers need assurances that their health insurance remains as transferable and uncomplicated as possible when job changes occur.

COBRA provides the safety net that parents and children need to maintain affordable health insurance, but under current law there are time limitations on how long families can use COBRA. H.R. 5740 removes COBRA's time limits and ensures that families in need of extended COBRA coverage cannot be charged unreasonable premiums.

This Congress must continue developing new ways to protect the underinsured and uninsured in New York and throughout our country. Passage of our bill ensures that time is on the side of families and children who rely on COBRA for their health insurance.

PROPERLY PREPARING OUR MILITARY

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

Mr. SNYDER. Personnel in our military, Mr. Speaker, must be properly equipped and trained in order to be ready for the unforeseen wars of the future. Even General Schoomaker, the Chief of Staff of the Army, though readiness levels are classified, has publicly expressed concern regarding the unacceptable readiness levels of our U.S.-based units. Not enough equipment, not enough money, not enough time for proper training for our wonderful troops.

We can do better, Mr. Speaker. America must do better so we can be the safe, secure country we want to be.

PRESERVING THE CIA PROGRAM

(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, this week we will consider legislation to authorize military tribunals for the prosecution of suspected terrorists and clarify Common Article 3 of the Geneva Convention.

Strenuous interrogation is vital in our efforts to win the global war on terrorism. The CIA program has produced intelligence that has saved countless lives. KSM, the mastermind of 9/11, was arrested as a result of information developed from the program.

The clarification of Common Article 3 will preserve the CIA interrogation program. As a JAG officer for 28 years, I support providing definitions. We do not want to leave our men and women vulnerable to prosecution under vague international law.

I commend Chairman DUNCAN HUNTER for reaching a good bargain with President Bush and the Senate. I look forward to voting in favor of the Military Commissions Act and advancing our efforts to win the global war on terrorism to protect American families.

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

IT'S TIME THE DO-NOTHING CONGRESS ACTUALLY DO SOMETHING FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, when I landed here in Washington, I received a phone call almost immediately from my brother-in-law in St. Louis who said somewhat jokingly, "I sure hope you will do something for America this week." And all I could think about was, "I do, too." Because, unfortunately, we are not doing much for America.

We should not leave this town this week without passing legislation to implement the 9/11 Commission's recommendations so we can make our Nation safer. Congress shouldn't leave without raising the minimum wage for

6.6 million Americans who haven't seen a raise in 9 years. We shouldn't leave without rolling back the \$12 billion in tax breaks that were showered on big oil companies last year.

The history books are not going to be kind to this Congress. With a 25 percent approval rating, it seems to me that one way to raise it would be to do something.

NATIONAL SEAFOOD MONTH

(Mr. BROWN of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in 1990, Congress designated October as National Seafood Month. This month-long celebration highlights the importance of seafood as part of a healthy diet. National Seafood Month also honors and celebrates the many contributions of the seafood and fishing industries and recognizes the multiple ways in which industry professionals serve our Nation's economy and continues to spur economic growth.

The First Congressional District of South Carolina, which I represent, has over 75 percent of the South Carolina coastline. Many of my constituents are hardworking shrimpers and fishermen, and I appreciate all the hard work to supply us with good quality seafood.

As the popularity of seafood continues to grow, National Seafood Month offers a unique way to remind consumers of the way the industry helps meet the needs in providing healthy and delicious seafood products year round. Creating a greater awareness among consumers is essential in the efforts to spread the positive message that seafood is a delicious and nutritious source of protein in the American diet.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring House Resolution 479 which supports the goals and ideals of National Seafood Month.

IRAQ

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the President says he looks to the generals on how to prosecute the war in Iraq. Yesterday, two generals from the Army and a Marine colonel who had all served in Iraq called for the resignation of the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Rumsfeld.

The President has repeatedly claimed he listens to the military. Well, General John Batiste told an oversight hearing that Rumsfeld and others in the Bush White House "did not tell the American people the truth for fear of losing support for the war in Iraq."

The generals have spoken, Mr. President. Your Defense Secretary misled us into combat with disastrous consequences. Rumsfeld has failed our soldiers and the American people. He just