

could be no dissent in the jury's decision and therefore believed that they had to give in to the majority opinion of guilt. Still, the judge refused to overturn the verdict.

Mr. Speaker, the extraordinary details surrounding the prosecution of this case assures that justice has not been served. For the sake of the agents and their families and for the sake of the American people who they were working to protect, I encourage the President to review the facts of this case as soon as possible. In addition to the 250,000 petitions that have been collected on behalf of the agents, the American people and Members of Congress should encourage the President to review this case. I hope that the Members of Congress and the American people will call the White House and ask the President to immediately reverse this injustice by pardoning these two innocent men.

#### STATE OF THE UNION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Ms. SOLIS. Last November, the American people demanded a dramatic change at home and abroad. Now in the majority, Democrats in Congress are delivering on that promise. With the State of the Union address to be held tonight, President Bush can demonstrate that he has listened to the American public and is ready to work with the Congress on these priorities. On critical issues from Iraq to energy independence, it is time to take America in a new direction.

On security and Iraq. President Bush likes to make promises in the State of the Union addresses, he just doesn't always keep those promises. The President has promised the American people to strengthen America's security. Unfortunately, his policies have made the world more dangerous and America less safe. Now he wants to escalate the war in Iraq over the overwhelming opposition of the American public and many of his own generals. Unfortunately, President Bush's plan to escalate the war in Iraq will not bring success in Iraq or make America safer. It will receive an up-or-down vote in both chambers of Congress. We will always put our troops first, and that means holding the President accountable for those changes that he wants to provide.

Democrats have a plan for success that will make America safer and bring our troops home. Shifting the principal mission of our forces from combat to training, logistics, force protection and activities to counter terrorism; beginning the phased deployment of our forces in the income tax 4 to 6 months; and implementing an aggressive diplomatic strategy both within the region and beyond to help the Iraqis achieve a sustainable political settlement, including amending their constitution.

On economic security. Last November, the American people demanded real results to improve their everyday lives and strengthen middle-class families. Today, President Bush has the opportunity to talk about a change of action there and work in a bipartisan way with those of us that are here serving in the House.

In its first 100 hours, the House of Representatives succeeded in passing legislation to raise the minimum wage, expand Federal funding for stem cell research, implement recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission, require negotiations for lower prescription drug costs, make college more affordable for many, many families, and end subsidies for Big Oil to invest in clean renewable energy. These 100-hour bills are just the beginning. The new Congress will do more to take America in a new direction.

On health care. President Bush's health insurance proposal is a tax hike on the middle class of our country. It will do little to help the uninsured and will undermine the health insurance of those lucky enough to have it already. In the same year that President Bush is once again submitting a budget making his tax cuts permanent—tax cuts that go overwhelmingly to the richest Americans—he is proposing to shift more of the cost of health care onto working families. Under President Bush's leadership, the Nation's health insurance crisis has actually worsened, costs are up and the number of uninsured Americans has grown. This latest proposal is another step in the wrong direction.

On energy independence. Key to our national security and our economic security is energy independence. Last year in the State of the Union address by the President, he declared that we were addicted to oil. One week later in his annual budget, he shortchanged the development of alternative fuels and technologies needed to make America energy independent. As you know, Democrats are already putting America on a path to energy independence by cutting huge subsidies to Big Oil and investing in the alternative fuels and technologies needed to protect our national security, our economy and our environment. The science of global warming and its impact is overwhelming, as you know. The American public understands the urgency of the problem. We want to work with President Bush in a bipartisan fashion but we can't wait for him to put science before special interests.

Democrats will listen to what President Bush has to say today and we hope he will listen to the American public. It is time for all of us to work together for a new direction for all Americans.

#### THE INFORMED CHOICE ACT, H.R.

223

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Janu-

ary 4, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday there was a pro-life rally here in Washington, DC. In fact, the 22nd annual rally. I thought I would take a moment and talk about some of the innovations involved with ultrasound equipment which is very beneficial for women who are pregnant who wish to look at the fetus.

Recently, my colleagues, National Geographic presented a 2-hour program charting the fetal development of several mammals with the use of new generation ultrasound imagery. Physicians created a stunning portrait of a mammal in utero, but just imagine the reaction of parents today when viewing a 3-D fetal snapshot of their unborn son or daughter smiling back at them.

Professor Stuart Campbell, one of the world's leading experts in obstetrics, believes that ever improving imagery, particularly moving from 3-D to 4-D scanning, which are inching closer and closer to actually displaying real-time movements, represents the tip of the iceberg for fetal behavior study.

As with these amazing images, ultrasound technology provides parents-to-be with a window into the womb which can result in a stronger parent-child bond, better prenatal treatment and also supply doctors with obviously an advanced understanding of fetal development and behavior.

Today's ultrasound equipment is better than ever and the technology will improve even better over time. Such images allow physicians to readily identify critical health problems such as spina bifida, heart complications, neural tube defects, and genetic syndromes. Ultrasound imagery brings many benefits to women, their unborn children and, of course, to our health care system in general. Continued research, breakthrough developments, and preventative care could save millions of dollars.

Public health advocates know that access to early, high-quality prenatal care is key to maternal and newborn health. Therefore, this prenatal care should include ultrasound equipment. Sonograms can diagnose serious complications that can be easily avoided if discovered early on during a pregnancy. Four-dimensional imaging shows objects in 3-D moving close to real time. Doctors have long known that fetuses move, but the physical behavior revealed by these scans is expanding upon their knowledge exponentially. The possibilities of improving the health of women and their unborn children are endless.

Mr. Speaker, these advanced ultrasound images can give women an opportunity for better prenatal health and decrease risks during pregnancy not only for themselves but obviously for their unborn child. Unfortunately, there are a lot of women today that cannot afford access to this critical medical service. These underprivileged

women do not have the option of safeguarding their health and prenatal well-being. Therefore, I have introduced the Informed Choice Act, H.R. 223. This legislation authorizes Health and Human Services to establish simple grants for not-for-profit and community-based health clinics to purchase ultrasound equipment. The centers that purchase these machines will be able to provide free examinations to women who are unable to obtain access to this critical care. That is, women that are poor. Each year, these pregnancy centers serve hundreds of thousands of women, ranging from girls barely in their teens to women in their mid to late thirties. Many of these women are among the poorest of the poor. For them, the free care that they receive is an essential lifeline. Access to ultrasound equipment is clearly one of the best things that this Congress can do to promote women's health and prenatal care.

Women understand the importance of ultrasound equipment. A recent poll confirms this. In order to provide women in crisis pregnancies with sufficient prenatal care and the full scope of information about their pregnancy, I urge my colleagues today to cosponsor my legislation. It is clear that these women view ultrasounds as an essential resource, a resource for women who are faced with unplanned pregnancies struggling with that prime decision. Additionally, the Focus on the Family organization found that an overwhelming 84 percent of women surveyed decide against abortion after viewing an ultrasound of their unborn baby.

Women have a right to know what is going on during their pregnancy. These ultrasound images, specifically with the 3-D and 4-D technology, depict fetuses beyond 24 weeks sucking their thumbs, sticking their tongues out and even making emotional faces.

So again, my colleagues, I urge you to join me in protecting the health of women and their unborn children by cosponsoring the Informed Choice Act, H.R. 223. This bill is about giving vulnerable women the information they need about their pregnancy and making this critical technology available to all Americans.

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#### WHEN THEY COME HOME: MEETING THE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF OUR TROOPS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. TIM MURPHY) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, over 17 percent of soldiers returning from Iraq, higher than any other measured military conflict, meet the criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD. Predeployment mental health screening, availability of treatment, perception toward treat-

ment and public attitudes of the soldiers' actions all affect the vulnerability and prognosis for this disorder.

PTSD is a severe anxiety disorder that develops after a traumatic event involving physical danger. It is also called "shell shock" or "battle fatigue" in other wars and is particularly prevalent among soldiers who have experienced wartime combat. Symptoms can include insomnia, irritability, inability to concentrate, panic, terror, dread, despair, grief and include daytime recollections, traumatic nightmares or combat flashbacks. Most persons exposed to severe trauma do not develop symptoms. Onset can be immediate but more commonly occurs from a few months to years after the event.

Currently, the Department of Defense provides mental health services for 180 days following discharge and the VA offers its health care services, including mental health, to veterans at no cost for 2 years following discharge. Afterwards, veterans may continue to receive mental health treatment but are subject to copayments.

Unit support while still deployed helps reduce symptom risk. Once soldiers return home these supports end, but ongoing support is essential to reduce the risk, from families, friends, veterans, the VA and our society as a whole. Many with early symptoms of PTSD, however, isolate from social contact and do not benefit from these supports.

In the current war in Iraq, unlike Vietnam, society as a whole is generally able to separate support for the soldier from support for the war. However, as criticism for the war increases and the public questions the purpose and outcome of this war, a significant question remains as to the impact upon the soldier's mental health of these expressions of doubt. For those at risk for PTSD and since hopelessness may raise the risk, society's comments of the situation may increase the soldier's sense of personal blame and lead the soldiers to question if they did their job well. Or they may develop a sense of worthlessness and guilt that their fellow soldiers lost their lives for a cause that was not supported by the country. Further research must be done to explore this link, but it also raises an important issue. Not only is there a concern for a stigma for the war action itself but also getting help. The majority of soldiers who need treatment for PTSD and mental health symptoms do not seek help for fear of being seen as weak, for fear of being treated differently by their commander, or fear of future harm to their career.

Pictures, commentary and news coverage of this war affects not only recent combat veterans but extends to those of prior wars. A survey of 70 Vietnam veterans stated that 57 percent reported flashbacks after watching reports about this war on television, and almost half faced sleep disorders.

Mr. Speaker, there is a need for specialized military mental health serv-

ices. As of May last year, of the 5 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan soldiers who may have been at risk, only 22 percent sought help from mental health providers. The rest sought help from primary care doctors, many without mental health training.

The National Defense Authorization Act of last year created the defense task force on mental health. Within a year, they are to submit a report to us with a long-term plan to improve the effectiveness for Armed Forces who have experienced multiple deployments. But Congress can improve the Department of Defense referral process for mental health evaluations by psychiatrists/psychologists to better meet the needs of our troops. As chronic PTSD symptoms can continue for years, the VA should extend the 2-year universal coverage period for mental health services for our Nation's soldiers when they return from active duty and combat. And we need to study the effects of the 24-hour media exposure on the occurrence of PTSD symptoms upon returning veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. Congress can also increase public awareness of PTSD to reduce the stigma for returning veterans and for them to take advantage of mental health services at the VA.

Working together, we can ensure that none of our Nation's veterans suffering with PTSD are left behind, but above all as Members of Congress we have to make sure that the things we do and say respond to the caveat to first do no harm.

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#### DELEGATE VOTING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the time and the opportunity to talk with my colleagues about an issue that is of tremendous importance to us. It is certainly one that I have heard from from my constituents in Tennessee's Seventh Congressional District. They are quite concerned about this. It seems that all of a sudden last week, outside of regular order, outside of the normal committee process, an old idea resurfaced and came before this body in the form of a piece of legislation that is not going through regular order, is not going through the committee process. And I had many constituents who were quite concerned about this, and how could a bill that is important to us, important to our Nation, important to our structure and our way of governing come before us without people being aware? This issue is the issue of delegate voting. We are going to hear more about this today and tomorrow. Then the Democrat majority is going to push this to the floor for a vote so that they can circumvent what is the constitutional underpinning of this great Nation.