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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. KAGEN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 13, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVE KAGEN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 25 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate extend beyond 9:50 a.m.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) for 5 minutes.

TURKISH THREATS TO U.S.—GENOCIDE RESOLUTION

Mr. PALLONE. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise this morning to share my concerns regarding the Turkish government's threats to retaliate against our country if the U.S. Congress adopts a resolution affirming the Armenian genocide. These shocking threats have been issued in response to the recent introduction of the Armenian genocide resolution, H. Res. 106. This measure seeks to affirm the U.S. record on the Armenian genocide by recognizing it as a historical fact. It also praises the American record of opposition to this tragedy which is marked by courageous diplomatic protests and unprecedented American relief efforts for the survivors of this crime.

Senior Turkish government officials have warned that if Congress ever considers this resolution, they will cut off supply access for our forces serving in Iraq. In fact, Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul told Vice President DICK CHENEY that the U.S. must, and I quote, calculate the costs of losing Turkey.

Such a brazen threat to interfere in U.S. military operations is absolutely unacceptable. I am outraged that the Turkish government would put the lives of soldiers at risk in the pursuit of its desperate campaign to deny the systematic slaughter of 1.5 million Armenians. This extremist behavior is known as blackmail in my book and it should be publicly and forcefully rejected as such. Clearly, Turkey is no friend of the United States.

As an American, I am deeply offended that another country is seeking to dictate where our Nation stands on core moral issues. Especially a country that claims to embrace democracy, yet has a longstanding history of abusing minorities, intellectuals and the principle of freedom of expression. As a Member of Congress, it is extremely troubling that a foreign government is meddling in our Nation's legislative process through threats and intimidation. This is the most dramatic intervention of a foreign government in U.S. congressional affairs and it has been going on for much too long.

Mr. Speaker, senior Bush administration officials, rather than outright rejecting these outrageous intimations by the Turkish government, are passing them on to Members of Congress as justification for not supporting the Armenian genocide resolution. The Bush administration is showing no courage on this issue, instead giving Turkey a free pass on their efforts to deliberately reject the truth. They seem to go to any lengths, including having soldiers call into their Representatives in fear of their lives, to deny the Armenian genocide simply because Turkey demands that they do so.

Mr. Speaker, the Armenian genocide resolution already has 175 cosponsors. I am certain that if Members of this House were given the opportunity to vote on this resolution, we would pass it overwhelmingly. Congress should be allowed to reaffirm what we all believe and know to be fact, and that is that genocide was orchestrated by the Ottoman Empire in 1915 to exterminate its Armenian citizens.

Reaffirming the Armenian genocide is a matter of conscience. It is my hope that this Congress will rebuke any warnings against the United States by Turkey and consider legislation on the Armenian genocide.

IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, apparently we are going to start today on debate of a resolution, the meat of which simply indicates, Resolved by the House of Representatives that Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect the members of the United States Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably in Iraq; and Congress disapproves of the decision of President George W. Bush announced on January

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10, 2007 to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the record has been clear. The new commander for Iraq, General Petraeus, has had hearings and has now been confirmed unanimously by the Senate. The outgoing commander of Iraq, General Casey, has had hearings and has now been confirmed as the new chief of the United States Army unanimously. Both commanders and their subordinate commanders have indicated that these additional troops are needed.

We hear talk that we are supporting our troops, but basically the message to the troops is, Yes, with our lips we say we support you but with all of our actions we say, We don't believe a word you say. We don't think you know what you're talking about. We don't want to give you what you say is necessary to protect yourselves and to win the day in Iraq.

There are no proposed solutions in the resolution that we will debate this week, no proposed fixes, nothing proposed to help anybody. It just says, We disapprove, we don't agree with the generals, the commanders, those who are in the theater, those that have come from the theater who are on active duty.

Now, you will always have some retired generals and commanders who are not happy that they are retired and who will take their pot shots, but here again there are no new solutions, no new efforts in Iraq. The Democratic Party does not propose to change anything. So this resolution, I guess, could be more properly categorized as stay the course, stiffen the enemy, start our collapse, because when you say to the world and to all of our enemies, We don't believe our commanders, we don't believe they know what they're talking about, we don't believe they know what they need, we're not going to have any new solutions, what you are doing to the enemy, you are stiffening their resolve. Materials that have been found in Iraq have indicated just that, that the Americans don't have the stomach, they ran from Vietnam, they didn't keep their commitments to the people of South Vietnam. Even after the Paris Accord, they did not keep their commitment. The new larger Democratic Congress in 1975 even cut off all the funds and millions of people in Southeast Asia lost their lives. In 1979 while I was stationed at Fort Benning, we were attacked. It was an act of war. And we did nothing. We begged to have our hostages returned. We did nothing. And those are the kind of things that the enemy goes back to in saying, we don't have the stomach to do this. In 1983 when our barracks was bombed in Beirut, we withdrew. In 1993 when the World Trade Center was attacked, we did virtually nothing on the international front. Then throughout the nineties, the attack of the USS Cole, Mozambique, Somalia, Africa, time and again, time and again we showed we didn't have the resolve. This must be the time we stand firm, tell our enemy, We will defeat you, we have nothing but solutions. This resolution, the stay the course, stiffen the enemy, start our collapse resolution, is not the way to go. I hope our fellow Members of this House will do the right thing. We will try something new. We will try to help the troops. We will give them what they ask. The Democratic stay the course, stiffen the enemy and start our collapse resolution is not a solution.

IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION

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

Mr. HALL of New York. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Indeed, as my colleague from across the aisle says, there are many of us, citizens and Members of this House, who do not believe our Commander in Chief, and we have good reason not to believe him. I wish it were not so.

After President Bush announced his escalation of the war, I said that he owed the American people an honest explanation as to why he thinks this surge will succeed when previous efforts have failed. Unfortunately, the President decided to stay the course and to begin the escalation before either House of Congress had a chance to consider it. Instead of providing a new comprehensive strategy to turn the tide in Iraq, President Bush offered the same tired rhetoric. Rather than engage in an important discussion with the American people, his loyalists prevented the Senate from debating this crucial matter.

Fortunately for us, such obstruction will not occur in this Chamber and the House will begin to take up this important debate this week. As a new Member of the House, I feel it is my responsibility to ask serious questions of our President who refuses to take this institution seriously. I ask my colleagues to join with me, to not try to score cheap political points but to push this administration and its supporters in Congress for real change in the direction of our Iraq policy. Our men and women in uniform, who have done everything that has been asked of them, deserve no less.

So I ask the President why this Congress should support his proposal to send 20,000 more troops into harm's way when his own former Iraq commander, General Abizaid, said it is not needed? Why should we support it when the Prime Minister of Iraq has himself expressed no support? And why should we support it when the American people have shown that they actively oppose the President's policy towards Iraq?

From the very outset, this administration has been wrong at every step of this war.

The administration led us into an unnecessary war with flawed or manipulated intelligence. Wrong.

This administration went to war without enough troops to win the peace. Wrong.

This administration gave no-bid contracts to its friends and political allies, locking out other countries who might have helped us and indeed locking out the Iraqis. Wrong.

President Bush stood on the deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln on May 1, 2003 and said, ''Major combat operations in Iraq have ended. In the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed.'' Wrong.

This administration literally took piles of cash, flying pallets of millions of dollars from the U.S. mint to Baghdad, into a war zone, and lost billions of dollars of taxpayer money. Wrong.

Now this administration wants us to blindly place our faith and the lives of 20,000 more of our troops in an Iraqi government that has failed to meet every security obligation it has pledged. Sadly, once again, this President is wrong. And no amount of presidential wrongs is going to make the situation in Iraq right.

Last fall's National Intelligence Estimate concluded that the President's policy in Iraq is creating more terrorists than it is eliminating. Nothing in this policy will change that. Three thousand one hundred twenty-four American service men's and women's lives have been lost in Iraq as of yesterday. Three thousand one hundred twenty-five will not make it right.

It is time for a new strategy in Iraq. It is time to start to bring our brave men and women who have fought so courageously back home. By turning Iraq over to the Iraqis, we will force their government to fight for their own security. Al Qaeda in Iraq will lose their mission and be less likely to inflame the Sunni-Shiite conflict. And Iran and Syria will have to work for calm rather than sit in the shadows and stir the insurgency.

Mr. President, it is time for a new path for the United States and Iraq. This nonbinding resolution reflects the will of the American people. It is an important first step but only a first step. I look forward to working with my colleagues as we seek to untangle this disaster the administration has brought upon us all. Together, we can begin to repeal this tragic blunder and undo the damage done to our military, to our country, and to our standing in the world.

IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION

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

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I think we must be debating two different resolutions here

today. I just heard my colleague from across the aisle talk about a new plan. Of course, I guess that fits in with the smoke-and-mirror 110th Congress about a new plan. Well, if you don't want to increase the troop size, which the undemocratic majority evidently does not want to do with this resolution, and you don't want to stop the funding, then what do you want to do? You want to stay the course. I think the American people said in the election, we don't want to stay the course.

I think that our military leaders, we hear this resolution when the other side talks about it, they talk about supporting our troops. And I am sure General Petraeus is confused to get approved unanimously in the Senate and hear this resolution about supporting our troops and yet we don't want to follow what he has said we need to do. General Casey agrees with this and he has been confirmed to a new position. And so how can we tell our men and women in the field that, Hey, look, we support you, but don't listen to what your commanders have to say. We've got something different. We're going to micromanage the war from Washington.

A lot of the people that are going to be voting on this resolution have never been to Iraq. They have never been to Afghanistan. They have never seen some of the situations that our young men and women are put in for freedom-loving people all over this world. I don't know how they could actually vote on it if they have never been, but I guess they will. Because they are trying to paint a picture of having your cake and eating it, too. We support our troops but, look, we don't want to change our way of what we're doing. We don't want to try to help you with more troops, to try to help you save your life over there and securing these areas that you risked your life in going in to take, knock the enemy out, and then have to leave and let the enemy come back in and be even stronger. What kind of message does that send?

This is not about President Bush, because I think President Bush has tried every way, Mr. Speaker, he knows how to make this a successful campaign in Iraq and Afghanistan, and he continues to come up with new ideas through the help and the advice of his military commanders to win this war on terror. This is a global war on terror. Some people from the other side seem to believe that if we pull out of Iraq that the Iraqi people are going to go back to tending sheep and herding goats. That is not what is going to happen. If we pull out of Iraq, what is going to happen is you are going to see more bloodshed than we have seen in a long time in this world, and it is going to be the innocent Iraqi people who stuck their finger in that purple ink and went and voted for the first time in their life that are going to be the ones to suffer, the ones that said, we believe in freedom, we believe in governing ourselves, we support the coalition forces here because we believe that they're coming to free us from this tyrant that we have been under. Those are the ones that are going to die. Those are the ones that are going to suffer the most. Those are the Iraqis that are losing their lives today because they want freedom.

Our men and women in uniform, those blessed souls that are in Iraq and Afghanistan and are losing their lives, they volunteered to put their lives in harm's way not only to protect our freedom in this country, not only to protect this Republic that we have but to spread freedom and democracy all across the world to every human being that loves freedom and liberty. These brave men and women need our support. They need our encouragement. But what they don't need is a smoke-and-mirror resolution that is done for political reasons and because of political promises made on a campaign trail. They don't need that. They need real encouragement and support from this Congress. Let's do something to give them that and not do things that strengthens the enemy, discourages our troops and really and truly, I believe, goes against the Constitution. When we all took the oath of office, we made an oath to the Constitution, not to anybody else. Let's uphold that. Let's respect our Commander in Chief and the generals in the field.

IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is interesting listening to the Republican fog machine starting to churn out its smoke surrounding the resolution that we are going to be discussing this week. I listened to my friends from Texas and from Georgia talking about the innocent people that are going to suffer under the approaches that we are talking about. Well, it is interesting that polls show that the people in Iraq, the majority of them, think it's all right for the insurgents to shoot and kill our soldiers. They are not just fighting us. They are also fighting each other. The discussion this week is going to be the first honest and direct opportunity to start redirecting the course here.

Stay the course? My Lord, that is not remotely what we are talking about here. Anybody who has watched what the Democrats have done for the first month that they have been in power realize that we are setting in motion a foundation to do what should have been done from the outset: to regain the power of the purse, to be able to deal with oversight which has been completely abandoned by my Republican friends over the last 5 years, and start developing the policy framework that is going to be necessary to deal with the disaster that has been created in Iraq. The increase in troops, the over 20,000 that we will be talking about this week, was not the first choice of the military and indeed the masterminds that President Bush turned to for this surge theory did not talk about 20,000 or 25,000. They wanted far more troops. They have stripped this down.

I heard my friend from Texas disparage the retired generals and admirals who have come forward to deal with their deep concern about the flawed strategy and implementation of the Iraq campaign. These are men and women who have proven their dedication to this country, who in many cases have been in far more battles than all the people in Congress combined, who don't have anything to win or lose by not speaking their mind. If you go back and check the record with what they have said, with what has happened in Iraq, I'll take those retired commanders every time. The fact is they've been right, and if the President and Congress had listened to them, we wouldn't be in the middle of the mess that we're in now.

I served in this body when President Clinton took steps to stop the genocide in the Balkans, and I watched the Republicans on the other side of the aisle be unable to figure out whether they supported the President, they were opposed to the President, or they wanted to change the policy. Go back and look at the former majority leader, Tom DeLay, who just couldn't figure out what to do in the Balkans but he sure knew that he wasn't going to support the Commander in Chief.

What the Democrats are doing now is laying a foundation that should have been done from the outset. We have had over 50 oversight hearings now, in the first month, more meaningful oversight than in the last 5 years of the Republicans who just couldn't bring people in to find out what happened to the billions of dollars in cash that is now unaccounted for. In committee after committee, the American people are finally getting to what should have happened years ago in terms of meaningful oversight. This is what the Truman Commission did during World War II. The Republicans would have no part of it, and now the American people are seeing for themselves. We will soon see in the appropriations process that Congress is regaining the power of the purse to make sure that the money will be spent properly.

There is no reason to not have troops that are deployed with a guarantee that they will have the equipment that they need. It was a travesty what men and women from my State were subjected to, being sent over to Iraq in a war of choice without being properly equipped. Under the Democratic watch, we are going to make sure that that is not going to happen.

Last but not least, by having a simple debate on whether or not this Congress approves of this escalation, we

are going to establish a baseline. I suggest that this baseline is not only going to have overwhelming Democratic support, but we are going to find dozens of Republicans on the other side of the aisle who, when finally given a choice, are going to make a clear stand with us. It's just the beginning, it's long overdue, and it's exactly what the American people, what our troops and the Iraqi people deserve.

ON THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET AND DEBT

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in just a few minutes, we will begin to debate House Concurrent Resolution 63. The American people are ready for this debate, and finally the time has now come, and we will decide and recommend whether or not the President should escalate our troop strength in Iraq. I look forward to this debate.

But this morning, Mr. Speaker, I want to use my time to talk about the fiscal crisis that we have in America. You know, Mr. Speaker, in my speeches to constituents throughout the First District of North Carolina, I always make a point to talk about the fiscal crisis that we are facing in this country, the fiscal crisis that the Republicans have created over the last 5 years. You know, Mr. Speaker, when I tell them that we have unprecedented deficits that have resulted in $8.6 trillion in debt, and when I tell them that we spend $2 billion a week in Iraq, $8 billion per month, and yes, $100 billion per year, but only spend $90 billion in funding education in this country, they are absolutely shocked.

And now, Mr. Speaker, the President's 2008 budget will raise our debt by more than $1 trillion over the next 5 years. This proposed budget that we received last week from President Bush would make tax cuts for the wealthy permanent while cutting vital programs that are important to middle-class families.

To help pay for the nearly $2 trillion in tax cuts over the next 10 years, the budget substantially cuts Medicare and Medicaid, creating uncertainty for millions of seniors and low-income families who get their health insurance through these programs. The President's budget also shortchanges veterans' programs, cutting veterans' health care by $3.5 billion over 5 years and providing less than veterans service organizations say is needed to meet the growing needs of our veterans, including those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, congressional Democrats have repeatedly, repeatedly expressed the desire to work constructively with the administration to restore fiscal responsibility to the Federal budget consistent with our Nation's priorities. However, this budget that we received last week is marked by a disappointing dedication to the failed policies of the past rather than a commitment to a new course. Fortunately for the American people, Democrats will now produce an alternative that will be fiscally responsible and meet the demands of our great Nation.

IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION

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

Mr. COHEN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, you like I am a freshman in this body and today we will begin the debate on one of the most important topics that this Congress has debated and that is America's involvement in the Middle East and Iraq and eventually in Afghanistan in dealing with the whole terrorist situation.

I have been in this House, Mr. Speaker, and listened to the Republicans and listened to the Democrats and the Democrats, of which I am a member, have talked about protecting the troops and opposing the President's surge, which is really an escalation, and the Republicans have come in here today and said that we need to in essence stay the course, we need to put in more troops and we're doing wrong by opposing the President's escalation or surge.

Mr. Speaker, from what I have heard from the American people, the American people realize this war has been a failure, that American men and women are dying, and dying for what purpose? For the purpose theoretically of trying to bring democracy to Iraq where the people in Iraq don't even want us to be there, where the Iraqi government is almost nonexistent, where calling what is going on in Iraq a civil war is almost a misnomer, for a civil war connotes a nation and there really is not a nation in Iraq. The ministries are not working. The government is not working. Many of the people in Iraq of the highest caliber have left Iraq and gotten out of what is a zone where there have been tens of thousands of Iraqis die. What the people across the aisle talk about in bringing democracy to these people, in bringing democracy to these people we have killed tens of thousands of Iraqis, we have destroyed their nation, and we have put casualties among tens of thousands of Iraqis. What a price to pay to bring democracy to a country, to destroy the country.

Mr. SKELTON, who will bring forth the Democratic response, has said that this, quote-unquote, surge is 100,000 troops too few and 3 years too late. I don't have anybody in this House I respect more on this position than the head of the Armed Forces Committee, Mr. SKELTON from Missouri.

The fact is this war was started under false pretenses and much of that information has come out lately. Many of the people who voted to give the President the power to go into Iraq did so under facts, or appearance of facts that were given the American people and this Congress that were false. I remember being at home and watching on television when the President addressed this Congress and talked about Osama bin Laden and talked about what he said were connections between Iraq and 9/11 and it made everybody feel like if you were a red-blooded American, you wanted to do something about Iraq because they had destroyed the Twin Towers, they had killed 2,000 people, Americans and others, and put a devastation in this world that we hadn't seen except in movies.

Well, that information given us was false. There wasn't a connection between Iraq and 9/11. We went to war for reasons that are still not quite clear and known, and this United States of America went to war against a country that was not at war with us and we were an aggressor nation. This is something we shouldn't have done. It is not about cut and run, as the people on the Republican side say, but it is, as President Clinton says often, it is about stop and think. And when you stop and think, do you support the troops by continuing to send them in harm's way?

Mr. Speaker, I am a prizefight fan and one of my favorite fighters was Floyd Patterson. At one time Floyd Patterson fought Muhammad Ali and Muhammad Ali was just whooping him and whooping him and whooping him. And his trainers kept putting him back in the ring and Floyd kept going in there and trying to fight. But Floyd Patterson didn't belong in the ring with Muhammad Ali. He could beat a lot of fighters, but he couldn't beat Muhammad Ali. He was in the wrong fight at the wrong time and he just got beat and beat and beat. And what a good trainer would do is throw in the towel, and say, We quit. It's a technical knockout. We'll fight another day. We'll figure out a new way to fight Muhammad Ali maybe or maybe that's just somebody we can't fight. It just wasn't our fight.

To support our troops isn't to continue to send more troops into Iraq and have more American men and women die and more American men and women come back as casualties and be in veterans hospitals but is to get them out of a war they can't win and out of a situation where all they are is fodder for a civil war, where Iraqis are killing Iraqis and Iraqis are killing Americans and whether the Americans are there or not, the Iraqis are going to have their civil war and there is going to be bloodshed. The only issue left, Mr. Speaker, is how much American blood will be spilled on this foreign soil on a foreign policy folly that is somewhat

akin to Napoleon's entries into Russia, to Hitler's entries into Russia and in the Danish countries' efforts to go into Russia. There are certain places you can't go and you can't win, and after 4½ years this country should know it. To put more troops there, to waste more blood, and to give up more lives is simply wrong. To support our troops is to bring them home.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this time. I hope that not more American men and women will lose their blood or lose their limbs in what is an impossible war. We need to bring America home, bring our resources home, and bring our troops home.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 35 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

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

Lord God, giver of all good gifts, endow this Nation with moral integrity. Help us to grow in virtue and in vision, that America may truly be a leader in the community of nations. Use us to create Your kingdom here on earth, a kingdom of goodness and truth, a kingdom of peace and justice, a sign of Your presence dwelling here on earth, active in Your people, and a great blessing for the rest of the world.

We ask this, trusting in Your Holy Name, both 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 her approval thereof.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota 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.

IRAQ RESOLUTION SUPPORTS OUR TROOPS BY OPPOSING THE PRESIDENT'S TROOP ESCALATION

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

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, this week the House will have an opportunity to truly support our troops by having a substantial debate here on the House floor about the President's latest proposal for a troop escalation in Iraq. Some of my Republican colleagues will say that such a debate undermines our troops' efforts in Iraq. Nothing could be further from the truth.

How can this Congress stand on the sidelines when the President has been told by his generals, by an independent commission created by the old Republican Congress, by the American people, and by both Democrats and Republicans in the new Congress that this plan will not work? How can this Congress stand on the sidelines while our troops continue to serve as referees in a situation that even our own intelligence agencies say is worse than a civil war?

Madam Speaker, the resolution we will begin to debate today has the well-being of our troops first. First and foremost, we support them. We support them by saying enough is enough with the bad planning. The President should not send more troops to Iraq for the simple reason that it will not make any difference on a deteriorating situation on the ground.

THE UNGRATEFUL NATION?

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, as we begin the debate on Iraq today, I have received input from Brian in Humble, Texas. He says, ''I am a veteran of Vietnam. My father is a veteran of World War II, Korea and Vietnam. I have four brothers that are veterans, and my oldest son is serving his fourth tour of duty in Iraq. If winning in Iraq takes more resources, it is far better than the alternatives. You owe the young men and women, and yes, my son in harm's way, your total support.''

The cost of our security does not come without a price. The alternatives, the loss of American freedoms and security and leaving Iraq before our duty is done, is not the option. If more troops are needed, then it is our duty to supply them.

What message does this Nation send its heroes deep within the belly of combat to tell them no troops are coming to their aid? This leaves those left behind stranded without the resources in front of a deadly enemy.

Mr. Speaker, the words of this veteran, whose family holds a proud history of service to America, are wise words. This Nation owes its gratitude and support to its U.S. soldiers fighting to protect our interests; otherwise, we will be judged to be the ungrateful Nation.

And that's just the way it is.

PRESIDENT DOES NOT PRIORITIZE ISSUES IMPORTANT TO MIDDLE CLASS AMERICANS

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, for 6 years, Americans have felt left behind by this administration and a Republican Congress that did not prioritize issues important to many Americans. With the November elections, we had hoped that President Bush would get the message that Americans wanted change. Unfortunately, the President's budget, in my opinion, is no different than many of the budgets of his last 6 years; it leaves too many people behind.

Six years ago, the President vowed to leave no child left behind, but his budget underfunds our schools by $15 billion. How can the President hold schools accountable when he refuses to give them the funding necessary to make those improvements?

The President's budget will also force States to eliminate health care coverage for children because he refuses to provide enough money to the SCHIP program to cover more than 9 million kids now enrolled in the program. At a time when 1 million more Americans are joining the ranks of the uninsured every year, do we really want to take health care coverage away from the most vulnerable populations, the children and low-income parents?

Mr. Speaker, the President's priorities are different than ours, and our budget will look significantly different.

O'HARE AIRPORT

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

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, the security at O'Hare Airport is not what it should be. Reports over the weekend showed 3,700 security badges have not been returned from former employees no longer allowed to work at the airfield. Many of the badges had not been canceled and would permit anyone access to an aircraft.

According to CBS TV, several of the employees involved had previous arrest records and convictions for nonmajor crimes. Reports also indicated that several doors at O'Hare did not even have ID scanners, allowing anyone who appeared to be official to enter the airfield.

The Department of Homeland Security, the Transportation Security Agency and Federal law enforcement officers that I have met with have all promised action. While they can levy fines on the contractors involved, the penalties should be increased.

Later this month, I will introduce legislation levying a fine of $10,000 per day for an airport security badge that is not canceled for an employee that was fired. That should get their attention and help make the world's busiest airport more secure.

PRESIDENT'S PROPOSED BUDGET AND DEBT

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

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the President's proposed budget is another step down the long road of fiscal irresponsibility.

While this administration's budget claims to reach balance in 2012, in reality, it actually will remain in the red all along those years. After all, over the last 6 years, the Bush administration's fiscal policies have posted the highest deficits in our Nation's history.

The administration has squandered the budget surplus it inherited, transforming $5.6 trillion projected surplus into a $2.8 trillion deficit over the same period, completely losing focus of what we need to do in America.

Even with this continued deficit, the budget still hurts American families. It proposes substantial cuts to Medicare and Medicaid both. What does this out-of-whack budget really fund? The President's tax cuts for the wealthy, of course.

Mr. Speaker, the President has put forth another budget that raises our national debt while cutting vital programs to Americans. His priorities haven't changed. Fortunately, the leadership in this Congress has changed.

CONGRESSIONAL INACTION JEOPARDIZES UNION COUNTY ROADS

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

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. The failure of Congress to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act amounts to a breach of faith to more than 600 forested counties and 4,400 school districts across our country.

For Union County, Oregon, this means a third of the road department employees no longer will have a job, other county services will be cut, and another rural school district is left behind.

Last night, County Commissioner Colleen MacLeod was making the 8-hour, 616-mile round trip from her home in Union County to the State capital in Salem, where she and other commissioners around Oregon were meeting to discuss how a county declares bankruptcy. Commissioner MacLeod says, ''County governments, all they want is to be able to work for themselves, and the Federal Government needs to let us. We just want to be able to work in the woods.''

Traveling with the commissioner was the Union County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, Judy Loudermilk, who says, ''What affects one area in a rural community affects us all. Loss of these funds is devastating.''

My colleagues, Congress must keep the Federal Government's promise to timbered communities. Pass H.R. 17 and do it now.

NEED FOR DEBATE ABOUT PRESIDENT'S TROOP ESCALATION PLAN

(Ms. SHEA-PORTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, President Bush's plan to escalate the war in Iraq will not bring success in Iraq or make America more secure. It faces significant bipartisan opposition in both Chambers of Congress, and the plan is opposed by a majority of people in our country.

The American people rightfully want to know where their leaders stand on this critical issue, and the House is prepared to act. Unfortunately, on the other side of the Capitol, Senate Republicans blocked debate on this critical issue, and the House is prepared to do it now.

While Senate Republicans cut and ran from this most important issue, over the next 4 days this House will debate, and then on Friday vote on a resolution on the President's plan to escalate the war.

Mr. Speaker, House Democrats will ask the tough questions about the President's new strategy and continue to insist on a new direction, while always putting our troops first.

The days of rubber-stamping the President's war plans are over. And starting today, this House is going to have an important debate on the President's troop escalation plan.

DEMOCRATS' NEW DIRECTION IS NOT NEW

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

Mr. MCHENRY. After months of campaigning against ''Stay the Course,'' the Democrats are proposing just that, a stay-the-course resolution here on the House floor. Their Iraq resolution does not have the force of law, and in fact, this nonbinding resolution is simply a mealy-mouth attempt to appease their Democrat leftist base.

Democrats have held 52 hearings on Iraq since taking control of Congress. So let me get this right. The Democrats have held 52 hearings so they can show one resolution on the House floor that has no bearing on the President's policy, does not have the force of law, does not advocate the withdrawal of troops, and does nothing except have a tantrum here on the House floor. So please explain this new direction, Madam Speaker. This is not a new direction, it is political posturing of the worst kind.

Madam Speaker, where is your plan? Where is your plan for victory in Iraq? Where is your plan for success and national security?

WE MUST UNDERSTAND IRANIAN CULTURE

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

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I am very, very concerned. President Bush initially wanted the authority in the October 16, 2002 Act of War to use force to restore peace and security in the region, not just Iraq.

We rejected that. The Congress of the United States, Mr. Speaker, rejected that and said no. The exercise of the authority granted in the resolution, read the resolution, is conditioned on the President certifying that war in Iraq would not harm the war on terrorism. We will make a point of that over the next 3 days.

Iran has an oppressive economy. We must understand Iranian culture in order not to make the same mistakes we made in Iraq. Ethnically, Iranians are of Indo-European descent and have no kinship to their neighbors in the Middle East. Their language is Indo-European, with grammar and structure similar to classical Latin. They do not identify with Arabs.

We do not understand the Middle East. We made that mistake once, we should not make that mistake again.

SILLY POLITICS AND SILLY RESOLUTIONS

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, if the troops in Baghdad were watching what we were doing today, they would be outraged; but when you are in harm's way, you don't exactly sit around and watch C–SPAN and silly politicians with silly resolutions.

Here is what the Democrats are up to. Dearest troops, we support you, but your mission is in the tank. We don't support your mission. Americans are dying, the situation is dire, but we are not going to send more reinforcements. You are on your own.

But wait. The majority party still wants to play backseat driver. This is nothing but a nonbinding resolution, fit for the Democrat club back home, but when you are the U.S. Congress in the majority party, you have the right to pass laws, real laws affecting real people.

If you have an alternative plan, introduce it. Get out of the back seat. November 7th put your hands on the steering wheel with the President. You

can now help drive the direction of policy, national policy in Iraq. This is a silly resolution. I recommend a ''no'' vote.

IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION

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

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, the American people and both Democrat and Republican Members of Congress are demanding a new direction in Iraq.

It is long past time for Congress to debate whether or not the President's latest troop escalation will actually change the situation on the ground in Iraq. This is a debate that Congress must have. We will all have 5 minutes to explain to our constituents and to the American people and to our troops why we either support the President's strategy or why we think it is time for a new direction.

This is the first time since the war began that every Member of the House will have 5 minutes to speak about the situation in Iraq. The last time Congress was allowed so much time for a debate on the war was during the lead-up to the first gulf war back in the 1990s.

Mr. Speaker, every single one of us in this House supports the efforts our troops are making in Iraq. Some believe the best way to support them is to allow the President to conduct the war in any way he sees fit, without question. I believe it is our job in Congress to ask the tough questions, and that is what we are doing this week.

□ 1015

AMERICA NEEDS A BALANCED BUDGET

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

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring legislation, H.J. Res. 21, which would add a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution. The amendment sets the financially responsible goal of balancing the budget by the year 2012.

Currently, the national debt is $8.6 trillion. Each taxpayer's share of that debt is almost $29,000. In fiscal year 2006, over $400 billion of taxpayers' money was spent on interest payments to the holders of the national debt.

Last year the interest paid on the national debt was the third largest expense of the Federal budget. The debt is increasing by over $1 billion every day. Our economy is ready for us to set this important priority.

Last year alone Federal revenues increased 11.8 percent. Receipts this year have grown by 8 percent so far in the first quarter compared to last year in that first quarter. Forty-nine out of 50 States, including my home State of Florida, currently have a balanced budget. It is time that we follow the lead there and balance the budget for the country.

AMERICA'S GROWING TRADE DEFICIT

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, our Nation needs a course correction in our foreign policy, and we are being given the chance by the Democratic leadership this week to debate it fully, as we should have when that resolution was first debated in this House.

Our country needs many course corrections, including on the economy. President Bush's trade policy has clearly failed, as his foreign policy has, as American workers and American businesses find we are losing more jobs to imports again. The confirmed numbers for 2006 released today show that the annual trade deficit in 2006 doubled since this President took office.

In fact, for 2006 the trade deficit equaled $763.6 billion and broke the prior year's trade deficit by adding another 6 percent more deficit from 2005's level of $716 billion.

Five straight years of record deficits have left millions more Americans with displaced jobs, outsourced jobs, unemployment across regions of this country, and putting our financial future in the hands of foreign creditors such as China and Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Speaker, to grant renewed fast track authority to this President would be a serious mistake and irresponsible. This administration needs a course correction by this Congress, both in foreign policy and in domestic economic policy.

AMERICA NEEDS A COURSE CORRECTION IN INTERNATIONAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I want to agree with my colleague from Ohio that we need a course correction in international and domestic policy.

As Congress prepares to debate a nonbinding resolution on Iraq, this administration is already on its way to the next war against Iran. We are losing our democracy to war and to debt. We are borrowing money from China, from Korea and Japan to fight a war in Baghdad and to prepare for war against Iran.

Meanwhile here at home, there are so many people that lack access to adequate health care, who do not have money for housing or education. We do not have money for job creation, but we have money for war. It is time to stand up for the American people. It is time for Congress to assume its full power under the Constitution. It is time to impose some discipline on this administration. It is time for Congress to truly be a coequal branch of government and to do the work for the American people.

BOTH PARTIES SUPPORT TROOPS EVEN THOUGH WE VOICE OPPOSITION TO BUSH PLAN

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, Congress has a responsibility to the American people and to our troops bravely serving our Nation in Iraq to debate the President's plan to send 21,500 more troops to Iraq.

Today this House will begin debate on a bipartisan resolution supporting our troops and voicing disapproval with the President's plan. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, it really concerns me that some of the Republicans on the other side this morning talked about this debate as silly and tried to trivialize a debate that involves our troops who are fighting, some of whom are dying in Iraq.

Our own intelligence agencies released a report earlier this month saying that the war in Iraq is not a civil war, it is worse, with numerous groups killing each other to gain the upper hand. Four times before, the President has sent thousands of additional troops to Iraq, and each time the situation on the ground either remained the same or grew even more dangerous. Could that be why our generals concluded, before being let go by this President, that sending more troops to Iraq simply will not help the situation?

Mr. Speaker, Congress needs to ask the tough questions this week so we can begin taking our Iraq strategy in a new direction.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. CON. RES. 63, IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 157 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 157

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 63) disapproving of the decision of the President announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq. The concurrent resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution to final adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except: (1) debate not beyond midnight on Tuesday, February 13, 2007, equally divided and controlled by the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader or their designees; (2) debate not beyond midnight on Wednesday, February 14, 2007, equally divided and controlled by the Majority Leader and the Minority

Leader or their designees; (3) 12 hours of debate commencing on Thursday, February 15, 2007, equally divided and controlled by the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader or their designees; and (4) one motion to recommit which may not contain instructions.

SEC. 2. During consideration of House Concurrent Resolution 63 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding any other provision of this resolution, on each demand of the Majority Leader or his designee after consultation with the Minority Leader, it shall be in order at any time to debate the concurrent resolution for an additional hour equally divided and controlled by the Majority Leader and Minority Leader or their designees.

SEC. 3. During consideration of House Concurrent Resolution 63 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the concurrent resolution to a time designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEINER). The gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

For the purpose of debate only, I am pleased to yield the customary 30 minutes to my colleague from California (Mr. DREIER). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

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

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 157 provides for comprehensive consideration of H. Con. Res. 63. It provides all of the Members of this House with 3 full days of debate on this important matter. It is a momentous day for us, Mr. Speaker.

This is the debate that many of us have yearned for for at least 4 years, and our constituents have long suffered the lack of this debate. Every Member who wishes to speak on the resolution will have the opportunity to do so.

The rule also, in addition to the time in the rule, allows the majority leader at any time, after consultation with the minority leader, to extend the debate when necessary.

On January 10, President Bush announced an escalation of the Iraq war that will put as many as 50,000 more of our men and women in harm's way. Why 50,000 and not 20,000? Because the number of support groups who have to be there to support the troops adds up to nearly 50,000.

This body owes them an explanation for why at this moment in history the sacrifice is justified. Democrats and Republicans alike are determined to defend our Nation from harm and are wholly committed to supporting and protecting the members of our Armed Forces. But numerous military officials of the highest ranks, like General Colin Powell, General John Abizaid, and many, many others, have expressed a strong belief that increasing the number of combat troops in Iraq will not improve the situation in the country.

Two-thirds of the American people believe that further escalating the war is the wrong path to follow. This morning, 67 percent of them polled said we should get out at once. Even respected Members in the House and the Senate have been quick to state publicly that they oppose any troop escalation.

Republican Representative STEVE LATOURETTE best explained this broad bipartisan opposition to the President's plan. Like many Americans, he recently said, I desperately want America to succeed in Iraq and I would welcome a fresh approach, but this is not a fresh approach. This is more of the same.

For 4 years, through the deaths of 3,126 American service people and nearly 60,000 Iraqi civilians and 25 to 30,000 grievously wounded, through the forced dislocation of millions of Iraqi families, through numerous troop escalations, and $379 billion appropriated by this Congress, through unbearable strain stretching our National Guard and Army Reserve, their members, and their families to the breaking point, more of the same has never worked.

As of last June, only 25 percent of the Iraqis had clean water to drink. The oil production has fallen by nearly half since the war began. The unemployment rate in Iraq as of December ranged between 25 and 40 percent.

Sixty-seven more innocent civilians were killed just yesterday in yet another bombing. Eighty-four of our troops were killed last month. Forty-one have been killed in the last 2 weeks alone. My district has suffered six casualties since 2005, and 140 men and women from my State of New York have been killed so far in Iraq.

Every piece of evidence suggests that the strategy currently employed by this administration is failing in Iraq. The only argument being used to support an escalation of the war would be one of trust. If we just give the President one more chance, we are told, things will be different.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the American people and the military leaders who know what war really is and a broad majority of this Congress are tired of giving this administration one more chance and have no reason to give it our trust.

The Pentagon Inspector General recently reported that statements made by Under Secretary of Defense Douglas Feith, during the runup to war, were ''inconsistent with the consensus in the intelligence community and drew conclusions that were not fully supported by available intelligence.''

Mr. Feith joins the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, Secretary Rumsfeld, Secretary Rice, and many others who made statements which simply misled us into war. So why should we trust the administration's assessments of Iraq?

Why should we trust the President to give the new troops that he wants to send the protection that they need to come back home unharmed? Despite all the President's rhetoric in support of our Armed Forces, a second Pentagon report released at the end of January bluntly states that for years in Iraq and Afghanistan ''servicemembers experienced a shortage of force protection equipment and were not always equipped to effectively complete their mission.''

In fact, the report speaks of soldiers having to trade off Kevlar vests because there were not enough for each of them. This is what is happening today, Mr. Speaker. We were aware when we first went into the war that we were ill prepared, but 4 years later it is no better.

The Washington Post noted just yesterday that many Humvees still do not have the armor needed to protect them from the bombs that are killing and injuring 70 percent of our troops abroad.

□ 1030

While our troops have gone unprotected, corruption exploitation and incompetence has squandered billions of dollars and allowed vital reconstruction projects to be handed to well-connected companies that failed to fulfill their duties. Unbid contracts proliferate. Despite it all, for years the administration treated accountability as if it were a dirty word.

And why should we expect that without a radical change, of course, that things will suddenly improve?

Mr. Speaker, changing a broken course in Iraq is not going to demoralize our troops or abandon them. Frankly, they must wonder what it is we have been doing here all along. To the contrary, it is the only way to support the troops.

Changing a broken course will not provide our enemies with encouragement either. If our strategy is not working, then why would we help our enemies by resolutely adhering to the failing plan?

Now, that is a question that needs to be asked again. If our strategy is not working, why would we help our enemy by resolutely adhering to the failing plan?

Democrats are insisting on a new level of accountability in Congress, calling 52 hearings since January 4. But we also need a new course in Iraq. We need to oppose this escalation and stubborn adherence to a failing strategy.

We need to shift our focus and footprint in the region and to accept what so many observers have known for years: The conflict in Iraq will only be solved politically, not militarily.

As strongly as I feel on this matter, Mr. Speaker, I recognize that many of my colleagues in the House have a different perspective.

What is needed is a serious discussion conducted by serious people. The first step of such a discussion is a focused, clear and full debate on the question of the escalation itself. We need an unambiguous up-or-down vote on the escalation. We are keeping this rule and

this bill so straightforward in order to best achieve that result.

I want to emphasize that this is the first step, and Congress will have many opportunities during discussions of the supplemental funding request, for example, to debate the numerous dimensions of this war and to present new ways forward.

But we must first know where we stand. Our goal this week is to establish whether Congress disagrees or agrees with the President's current approach to Iraq. If the answer is no, then we will have the basis for forcing the President to work in a bipartisan way with us to change that approach.

The obvious truth is that a failure to achieve such a change will seal the fate of this war as one of the greatest blunders in America's history.

I urge a ''yes'' vote on the previous question and on the rule.

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my appreciation to my distinguished colleague, the gentlewoman from Rochester, New York, the distinguished Chair of the Committee on Rules. And I appreciate having the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I might consume.

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this rule and the underlying resolution. This rule lays out a bad process, and the underlying legislation lays out bad policy.

This rule silences any meaningful debate on the floor by denying both Republicans and Democrats the right to offer any amendments or any substitute whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, the Democratic leadership has attempted to mask this denial of real debate by providing us with 36 hours of floor time. But this nearly unprecedented amount of time is really little more than a joke; 36 hours of debate, without any opportunity whatsoever to voice dissent with a substitute, amounts to nothing more than 36 hours of talk. The American people want and deserve a real and meaningful debate, not empty gestures that show utter disregard for an honest and open discussion on this issue.

Why can't we have a discussion that explores real options and real solutions?

The reason is very clear, Mr. Speaker. Our Democratic colleagues have none.

It was bad enough when we addressed issues like stem cell research and minimum wage without any transparency or openness whatsoever. We have dealt with several important issues in a complete vacuum. But now, our Democratic colleagues are running roughshod over our national security, what is clearly the number one priority that we as a Federal Government, as federally elected officials, address.

We know, Mr. Speaker, that the war on terror and policy in Iraq is very clearly the single most important issue that will be addressed by the 110th Congress. It clearly ranked very high on the list of issues voters cared about most in last November's election. The American people are concerned about this war, and they want to know that their elected officials are developing a sound and effective policy.

So what have the Democrats offered us? What is the substance of their proposal in a nonbinding resolution that denies the troops the numbers that they need to succeed? In other words, their proposal is, in fact, meaningless as legislation, and it is disastrous as a policy.

Mr. Speaker, it is an admission of defeat. And it is a vote of no confidence in our troops. Like it or not, it is a vote of no confidence in our troops. Why? Because it does not provide our troops what they need to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, we are all opposed to the status quo in Iraq. And the President stood right here when he delivered his State of the Union message and made it very clear. He wants this war to be over, and he wants it to be won.

We all know about the tremendous challenges that our men and women are facing over in Iraq. We all know that. We hear it regularly from our constituents, the families, and we hear it directly from the men and women who are serving. We all feel very deeply about the enormity of the sacrifice that so many have made in service to their country. And we know that they look to their Commander in Chief for a strategy for victory.

The President has put forth his strategy, Mr. Speaker. With the advice and close consultation of our generals in the field, he has called for a surge in troop levels in order to give our Armed Forces the support that they need.

Why, again is he doing this? So that he can give our men and women in uniform, our troops, the support that they need so that they can succeed.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is our role as a Congress to thoroughly vet the President's proposal to ensure that we develop an effective policy for moving forward. With this resolution, the Democrats have ignored our constitutional role. They have not held a single hearing on this resolution. They have called not one expert witness to testify for the record on the merits of this resolution. All that they offer is a knee-jerk reaction against anything that the President says. Again, anything that the President says is wrong in the eyes of so many of our colleagues.

Obviously, we, Mr. Speaker, cannot be a rubber stamp for the executive branch, the second branch of government. But neither can we afford, neither can we forfeit our duty as a deliberative body to fully explore the plan that has been put forward and to craft sound public policy as it relates to this.

Mr. Speaker, in the absence of any deliberation, the Democrats have concocted a resolution that simply does, as I say, concede defeat. To the American people, it admits the Democratic leadership is devoid of ideas. And to the troops, it admits that they have no faith in their mission, no faith in the troops' mission whatsoever, because they need this sound strategy that has been put into effect so that we can, in fact, attain victory and they can be successful.

What is worse, it tries to shroud their lack of faith in our military with platitudes about supporting our troops. You can't claim support for our troops without supporting their mission, Mr. Speaker. Again, you cannot claim to support our troops without supporting their mission. It is an outrage that they would deny our men and women in harm's way the traditional and additional support that they need to succeed.

Now, Mr. Speaker, yesterday afternoon I had an opportunity to talk with one of my constituents, a former marine called Ed Blecksmith. Very tragically, 2 years ago this past November, his son, J.P. was killed in one of the most famous battles in the war in Iraq, the battle of Fallujah. Mr. Blecksmith implored me to support a policy of victory. He said that his son's death will have been in vain if we do not complete our mission. He made that very clear to me. Again, we got into this battle to win, and victory is, in fact, the only option. That is from the father of a man who was tragically killed in Iraq.

And I know that we are going to hear a wide range of views over the next 36 hours that have come forward from different families. And, of course, our hearts go out to them. But I will say that this proud former marine does not want his son to have died in vain, and he is insistent that we do all that we can to ensure that we complete this mission.

Mr. Speaker, the war in Iraq, like all wars, has been very long, very difficult and very painful. It has come at a very high price, and we all know that it has taken its toll on the American people.

But, Mr. Speaker, we go to war to win. We go to war with a mission, and we dishonor the lives of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, if we, in fact, abandon that mission.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution offers no hope to the troops, and it offers no hope to the people of this country who want to see the conflict in Iraq resolved so that our troops can come home to their families.

Mr. Speaker, they deserve better. We have a duty to offer them something better. We have a duty to pursue nothing less than victory.

I urge my colleagues to reject this rule, reject this resolution, and, instead, work together to fulfill our constitutional responsibility as effective legislators.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN).

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by first thanking my colleagues, TOM LANTOS, IKE SKELTON and WALTER JONES for working together in a bipartisan way to create this very simple, straightforward and clear resolution. Their work will allow this House to have a full and fair debate and, at the end of this week, have a clear up-or-down vote on whether or not we support or oppose the President's plan to escalate this war in Iraq.

I also want to thank all my colleagues on the Rules Committee for a very thoughtful and productive debate last night.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are way ahead of the politicians in Washington on this issue. They want this war ended, and they want our troops to come home. Any Member of this House who has been home recently knows that the questions are increasing, the concern is growing, and the patience is running out.

The American people are tired of the bickering and partisan posturing. They are also tired of people trying to muddy the waters and confuse the issue. They want their leaders to be less concerned with saving political face and more concerned with saving lives.

It is my hope that at the end of this debate, the House will send a strong bipartisan message to the President of the United States that it is time to change course in Iraq.

I hope that the President will listen and will take the opportunity to sit down with us, roll up his sleeves and do the hard but necessary work of bringing this tragic war to an end.

If he does not, if he continues to ignore the will of the Congress and of the American people, then we will have no choice but to go beyond nonbinding resolutions.

Mr. Speaker, Members like me, who believe it is time to exercise the power of the purse, will get that opportunity when we take up the President's supplemental appropriations request and the fiscal year 2008 defense bills.

The best way to support our troops is to bring them home safely to their families. The best way to protect them is to begin their immediate, safe and orderly withdrawal from Iraq.

But this week we are focused, rightly in my opinion, on the narrow and important question of whether we support the President's desire to escalate the war.

The irony is that Members of this House will be given more time to debate this nonbinding resolution than they were given by the previous majority on the question of authorizing the war itself.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a meaningless exercise, which is what some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have said. For the first time in 4 years, the people's House will be on record opposing the President's policy in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are watching. They want to know where each Member stands on the issue of escalating the war in Iraq. That is the issue before us today. That is the only issue we shall be debating. It is what the American people want to know, and it is what the President of the United States needs to hear.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I have the distinct honor of yielding 5 minutes to my very distinguished colleague from Miami, Mr. DIAZ-BALART.

□ 1045

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, my dear friend from California, for the time.

Mr. Speaker, after the debate in the Rules Committee last night where I hoped, and I made clear that it was my hope, that there would be an opportunity for the minority to present an alternative to this debate in the form of an alternative motion, an amendment, it was disappointing that that was not made possible. So now we are faced with a resolution before us that we cannot seek to amend with regard to that extraordinarily serious problem facing the United States of America: the crisis in Iraq.

Iraq presents the United States, Mr. Speaker, as the leader of the free world, with very difficult options, tough options. None of the options before us are simple nor easy. Clearly, as in every war in history, mistakes have been made. I believe, for example, that we should have learned the lessons from a neighbor of Iraq, from the creation in the 20th century of the Turkish state, modern Turkish state, by Ataturk, the father of that state, where the ability of religious parties, for example, to insert themselves into the political process was significantly limited. I think we could have done things such as that.

I admit, we all must admit, that mistakes have been made. But, Mr. Speaker, as the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset said: ''Man is man plus his circumstances,'' and our circumstances in Iraq today constitute our options.

What are our options? One option is partition. I do not believe that it is reasonable nor appropriate nor acceptable to very important realities in the region and factors in the region, I don't think that is a reasonable alternative. Another alternative is to withdraw before the situation is stabilized, before the democratically elected government in Iraq is stable. That is an option.

I happen to believe that the resolution before us, in effect, says this is the beginning of withdrawal. That is what the resolution says in effect. Melt it down. The resolution states this is the beginning of withdrawal, despite the fact that the situation in Iraq by the democratically elected government has not been stabilized.

So what will occur if we withdraw prematurely? Ethnic cleansing on a massive scale; obviously, the collapse of the current government; the creation of an ideal vacuum in power, a power vacuum for international terrorism. We would see the creation of terrorist camps that would dwarf what we saw in Afghanistan before 9/11. Inevitably a surge in influence and the projection of power by the Iranian dictatorship. That uncontrolled projection of power in its quest to acquire, by the way, a nuclear weapon, that uncontrolled projection of power by Iran may very possibly lead to a regional war, Mr. Speaker, because the reality of the matter is that that region of the world cannot permit the uncontrolled projection of power by the Iranian dictatorship.

Now, the withdrawal could be, as I have stated, either announced and immediate or announced and phased. The reality of the matter is what the new congressional majority is bringing to the floor today is an announcement of withdrawal irrespective of what the situation may be on the ground in Iraq.

Another alternative, Mr. Speaker, is the President of the United States' attempt to stabilize the situation, to provide sufficient order, sufficient absence of chaos, for the government of Iraq to survive, for the sake not only of Iraq but of our national security. That is an option the President of the United States is trying to convert into a reality for the sake of our national security.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the options before us are not difficult. The resolution before us constitutes the wrong message at the wrong time in the wrong manner.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI).

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York for yielding me the time and for her outstanding leadership on our committee.

Mr. Speaker, this debate is long overdue. There is no issue more serious or more urgent. The American people said loud and clear in the last election that they consider bringing this war to a close to be the singular imperative of their leaders. Yet rather than beginning to bring the troops home, the President has proposed escalating this conflict.

The American people deserve to know where their elected representatives stand on this, the most critical issue at this moment in history. This week the people will get their answer.

Mr. Speaker, here is where I stand: I opposed this war from the beginning, and I support several responsible proposals to bring this war to a close. I believe the President's proposed escalation would be a tragic mistake. It will most likely result in an increase in violence while only postponing the hard political choices the Iraqi people must make. It will also increase the strain on a military that is already stretched to the breaking point.

Mr. Speaker, it is critically important to make clear that Iraq has spiraled into civil war because of the failure of this country's political leadership, not our troops. Our brave men

and women in uniform have done everything that has been asked of them. The real tragedy is how ill served they have been by their political leadership.

I have heard firsthand from many families in Sacramento the impact this has had on their lives. Linda, a concerned mother, told me about her son, Nicholas, who serves as an Army sergeant in the 82nd Airborne in Germany. Shortly, he will be returning to Iraq for his third tour. And there are some 30 soldiers in the Sacramento area who have died in this war. I have met several times with members of the National Guard and Reserve and their families. Every Member knows what I am talking about. We have all done it. We all know the pain.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, this administration has failed to meet the most basic requirements of responsible leadership. As a result, it has abdicated any claim to deference from this Chamber on this war and has certainly relinquished the moral authority to send men and women into this catastrophe.

Undoubtedly, this Chamber will need to take more forceful action if we are to bring this war to a conclusion. But today is an important first step.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and to oppose this gravely mistaken proposal to escalate the war.

Mr. Speaker, this debate is long overdue. There is no issue more serious . . . or more urgent. The American People sent a message in the last election. That message was that they consider bringing this war to a close to be the singular imperative of their leaders.

Yet rather than beginning to bring troops home, the President has proposed escalating this conflict . . . sending tens of thousands of additional troops to Iraq.

Rather than change direction . . . they would instead continue down our current, disastrous path . . . only at a faster pace and with more human life placed in harm's way.

This week, every Member of the House of Representatives will have an opportunity to let their constituents know where they stand on the President's proposed escalation. That is only right.

The American people deserve to know where their elective representatives stand on this, the most critical issue at this moment of our history.

Mr. Speaker, here's where I stand. I opposed this war from the beginning, and I support several responsible proposals to bring this war to a close.

I believe the President's proposed escalation would be a tragic mistake. His stubborn insistence on pursuing the present course has been rejected by our military leaders . . . the independent Iraq study group . . . and a strong majority of the public. And with good reason.

This escalation will most likely result in an increase in violence while only postponing the hard political choices the Iraqi people must make.

Escalation of this conflict will also increase the strain on a military that is already stretched to the breaking point.

Mr. Speaker, it is critically important to make clear that Iraq has spiraled into civil war because of the failure of this country's political leadership . . . not our troops.

Our brave men and women in uniform have done everything that has been asked of them. They courageously put their lives on the line every day for us.

The real tragedy is how ill-served our men and women in uniform have been by their political leadership.

I have heard firsthand from many families in Sacramento about the impact this has had on their lives.

In 2005, I spoke with a group of women whose husbands were serving in the National Guard in Iraq.

One woman told me she bought her husband a Kevlar vest before he deployed . . . something all too many families were doing for their loved ones because the military wasn't providing it. Imagine the stress . . . sending a loved one into danger without the confidence that he would be given the needed equipment for protection.

And I have heard countless stories about the hardships being created by the multiple tours this conflict has demanded.

Linda, a concerned mother from Sacramento, told me about her son, Nicholas, who serves as an Army sergeant in the 82nd Airborne in Germany. He lives on-base with his wife and two children, ages four and five. Another child is on the way.

Nicholas recently learned that he was going to have to return to Iraq for his third tour.

Linda wrote me and said that his family . . . and I'm quoting . . . ". . . will be all alone in Germany when he leaves and each time he has gone, the children have terrible nightmares and anger issues because they do not understand the long separations."

Another Sacramento couple that wrote me are the proud parents of three Army soldiers . . . one is currently serving his second tour in Iraq . . . the other two have already completed two tours in Iraq. They ask . . . will their sons be asked to go back a third time?

My friend Richard Beach served as a chaplain in the U.S. Army Reserves in Iraq. Richard served in Iraq early in the conflict, and realized that four years since he went there, many of his fellow reservists are still serving there.

Richard shared with me a note he sent to some of his fellow members of the 114th. He wrote . . . and I quote . . . "I remember four years ago we were getting ready for our trip to Fort Lewis and then on to Iraq. I hope as the fourth anniversary of the war comes up you are all in good health and living life to the fullest. I too pray that soon this war will end, and we will stop sending our soldiers off to war."

Four years later . . . and still many of the same soldiers and their families are making the same sacrifice. But that is the heartbreaking reality here.

There are some 30 soldiers in the Sacramento area who have died in this war. I've met several times with members of the National Guard and Reserve and their families. Every member knows what I am talking about. We've all done it. We all know the pain.

The notion of "shared sacrifice" is something that helped make this country great.

But with this administration . . . only our soldiers and their families share in the sacrifice.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that this country has tried troop increases before . . . to no avail. Sadly, this administration simply lacks credibility when arguing that this proposal will work.

As a result of this administration's failure to meet the most basic requirements of responsible leadership, it has abdicated any claim to deference from this chamber on this war . . . and it has certainly relinquished the moral authority to send additional men and women into this catastrophe.

Today's step is only a first step. Undoubtedly, this chamber will need to take more forceful action if we are to bring this war to a conclusion. But it is an important first step.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution . . . and to oppose this gravely mistaken proposal to escalate the war.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am happy to yield 5 minutes to a hardworking member of the Rules Committee, the gentleman from Pasco, Washington (Mr. HASTINGS).

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to House Resolution 157 and the underlying resolution.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation is engaged in a Global War on Terror, a war that we did not seek, but a war that was brought to our shores on September 11, 2001. Today, we fight an enemy without borders that is determined to destroy our Nation by any means necessary. An al Qaeda leader said that they have the right to ''kill 4 million Americans, 2 million of them children, and to exile twice as many and wound and cripple thousands.''

The President of Iran has called a world without America and Israel ''possible and feasible.''

It is also undeniable that Iraq is the central front on the war on terror. But you don't have to take my word for it, Mr. Speaker. The terrorists themselves have told us it is so. Al Qaeda's deputy leader has repeatedly said that Afghanistan and Iraq are the ''two most crucial fields'' in the Islamists' war. In a letter he said that expelling Americans from Iraq is the first step in expanding the jihad wave.

If this, Mr. Speaker, is what the terrorists are telling us, why should we not believe them?

As much as I wish that our troops were home, I recognize that arbitrary pulling out of Iraq would provide a sanctuary for terrorists and have serious consequences for our U.S. security. A self-sustaining government there is critical to our security here.

I share the frustration of all Americans who had hoped that the Iraqis would be protecting and governing themselves by now, but that simply is not the reality. Previous strategies to stabilize Iraq have not succeeded and things cannot continue as they have been. In order to succeed, Iraqis must step up and take responsibility for their own security. And under the new strategy, Mr. Speaker, announced last month, they will be held more accountable in the future.

Some say this new strategy is wrong; yet they fail to say what is right. They

call for an arbitrary pullout yet have not answered the question ''what then?'' They seek to cut off funding for our troops yet offer no plan for fighting terrorists.

Mr. Speaker, there is no easy answer. But simply declaring that we don't wish to be at war anymore does not make our enemies surrender. Withholding military personnel, failing to provide funds for our troops, or pulling out of Iraq with no plan to win the war on terror are simply not options. The consequence of failure is simply too dire. If we are defeated, Iraq will become a haven that our enemies will use to launch attacks against us. The Middle East will remain destabilized. Terrorists will fight us on our soil. And it will send a dangerous signal to countries like Iran, North Korea, and Syria, and embolden terrorists around the world.

The Baker-Hamilton Commission warned specifically against a precipitous withdrawal. They said: ''The near-term results would be a significant power vacuum, greater human suffering, regional destabilization, and a threat to the global economy. Al Qaeda would depict our withdrawal as a historic victory.''

So our challenge, Mr. Speaker, is to insist on victory and not accept defeat. So, accordingly, I will not vote to deny our troops the support they need to protect themselves and America.

The nonbinding resolution before us today is contradictory on supporting the troops. On the first page it says we will continue to support the troops in Iraq, but on the next page it expresses opposition to sending reinforcements that our military says are needed to support our troops currently on the ground.

Mr. Speaker, how can you support the troops but not the mission?

Let me say again that I will not vote to deny our troops the support they need to protect themselves and America. What I would vote for, if given the opportunity, is a plan that would have the force of law, that would set benchmarks to measure progress, that would ensure that funding for our troops is not cut off, and that would keep Congress fully apprised so that they can make informed decisions.

In closing, I would just say that we must not forget the sacrifice that our troops are making. They are fighting the enemy abroad so that we will not have to fight them here. The bottom line is that this is about America and our security and a set of enemies who have said again and again that their goal is to destroy us.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to oppose this closed rule and the underlying resolution.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH).

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, today we begin debate on the question of whether to escalate the war in Iraq.

The administration's policy on Iraq has failed. It failed yesterday, it is failing today, and it will fail tomorrow. These failures have left America weakened, not strengthened.

Today, we must chart a new course. We must end the war in Iraq.

Each one of us is immeasurably proud of the service of our troops. They answered the call to duty, and they have done their job.

□ 1100

I am particularly proud of our Vermont troops and our families. No State has sacrificed more per capita in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan than our State of Vermont. But while our men and women in uniform have done their jobs, the President's policies have failed this country and failed our troops, demonstrably and repeatedly.

Mr. Speaker, it is now our responsibility to chart a new direction; one that brings our troops home, restores diplomacy to foreign policy and improves the readiness of our military. And we start today. No more troops, no more phony intelligence, no more blank checks. We must end this war.

Top military commanders have made it clear that no amount of American military force can take the place of the political consensus required to end Iraq's civil war. We now face two questions: What is best for America and what is best for Iraq? And the answer to both questions is to end this war.

This resolution, Mr. Speaker, is just a beginning. The President has left us no choice. America must change the direction of the war. If the President won't, we will.

Today, we choose the path which offers us the best hope for success: escalating the military conflict, as the President proposes, or taking the first step in a new direction. To strengthen America, we must choose a new path. Top generals have said it, the bipartisan Iraq Study Group confirmed it, and the American people demand it.

Mr. Speaker, the troops have done their job. Now we must do our ours.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am very happy to yield 4 minutes to our colleague the gentleman from Dallas, Texas (Mr. SESSIONS).

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Los Angeles.

Mr. Speaker, we are here today as a result of the meeting in the Rules Committee last night where members of the Republican minority tried to speak about our desire to have more added to this ''simple resolution,'' as it is being called by the minority. And that it is, a simple resolution.

Mr. Speaker, we implored upon the committee to make in order more amendments which would specifically speak directly to the needs of trying to provide direction and to work with the President of the United States on where we are in Iraq. In fact, on March 15, 2006, Members of both parties from this body supported the creation of a bipartisan Iraq Study Group to review the situation on the ground and to propose strategies on a way to move forward.

For more than 8 months, the study group met with military officials, regional experts, academics, journalists and other high-level officials. This study group included James Baker and Lee Hamilton as cochairmen. It included Lawrence Eagleburger, Vernon Jordan, Ed Meese, Sandra Day O'Connor, Leon Panetta, William J. Perry, Charles S. Robb and Alan Simpson.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that the things which were embodied within this Iraq Study Group report, which came out this last December, embody the kinds of things that the President of the United States is attempting to do now in Iraq. The President stood before each and every one of us as we sat in this Chamber just a few weeks ago and he outlined very clearly the changes that are taking place and his willingness not only to work with this body, but willingness to be more specific.

I would like to read some of the things from the Iraq Study Group report that we will not be hearing as the voice of the United States Congress. That is, that the United States should work to ''provide political reassurance to the Iraqi Government in order to avoid its collapse and the disintegration of the country.''

America should ''fight al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations in Iraq using more special operations teams.''

We should ''train, equip and support the Iraqi security forces.''

And we should ''deter even more destructive interference in Iraq by Syria and Iran.''

But there is more. The ''more'' is ''We could, however, support a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad, or to speed up training to equip the mission.''

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is what this resolution, that is nonbinding, is all about is to politically neuter the President of the United States, and, I believe, our forces and our mission in Iraq. It is about trying to do something that is politics, rather than policy.

The Rules Committee last night heard from several of our colleagues, one of them SAM JOHNSON, who brought forth an amendment that would clarify that Congress and the American people support our troops and the funding for our Armed Forces that are serving in harm's way to make sure that we do not put that element at risk.

Our colleague from Virginia, FRANK WOLF, brought forth the things that I just spoke about. He brought to the Rules Committee the recommendations from the Iraq Study Group, with this emphasis on providing American commanders in Iraq with the strategic and tactical means to support this war. However, my colleagues on the Democratic side have decided that what they

want to do is they want to have this be all about politics and not about policy. They are after a simple answer.

Last night, the Rules Committee met—and after hours of testimony from members from both parties, the Democrat members of the Committee voted along party lines to shut out every opportunity for amendment to the Resolution that the House will be considering over the next 3 days.

Our colleague from Texas, SAM JOHNSON, brought an amendment that would have clarified that Congress and the American people support our troops and that funding for our armed forces serving bravely in harm's way will not be cut off or restricted in any way.

Our colleague from Virginia, FRANK WOLF, also brought to the Rules Committee a very comprehensive amendment that would have made clear that Congress supports the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group—with its emphasis on providing American commanders serving in Iraq with the strategic and tactical means that they need for success and accelerated cooperation with Iraqi leaders to meet specific goals—as the strategy for moving forward to success in Iraq.

A number of other members also spent a large part of their evening sitting in the Rules Committee, waiting to share their ideas about how to improve this resolution—however, unfortunately the 13 members of the Rules Committee are the only ones who will have the benefit of hearing and debating these good ideas, because none of them were given the opportunity to be considered and voted on by the House.

Instead, today we are on the floor with a completely closed process to debate a nonbinding resolution with no teeth and a serious logical flaw.

In 2 short paragraphs, without explicitly stating that funds will not be cut off from our troops serving in harm's way, the resolution asserts that Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect the members of Armed Forces who are serving in Iraq. This non-specific language is something that every member of this House clearly supports.

It also states that Congress disapproves of the President's plan to deploy 20,000 reinforcements to Iraq to bolster the mission and provide additional support to troops already serving on the ground.

This resolution gives no direction about how we should proceed in Iraq—instead, it settles for some generic language about supporting the troops without guaranteeing that Congress will continue to fund their efforts as they remain in harm's way—and it simply amounts to a vote for the status quo.

Mr. Speaker, this is a serious debate for serious people. We all understand that the cost of failure in Iraq is too great to bear—it would embolden radical Islamic terrorists and give them a base from which to train and attack America for generations.

But with this resolution my colleagues on the other side of the aisle provide the troops with nothing: no guarantees that we will continue to fund their heroic efforts; no guarantees that Congress will heed the advice of the Iraq Study group—which notes on page 73 of their report that it would "support a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad, or to speed up the training and equipping mission."

Nor does it provide the American people with a clear picture of our direction in Iraq—it merely says "no" to the only strategy for success which has been put forward.

Mr. Speaker, I think that Congress can do better than this nonbinding vote for the status quo in Iraq. I know that a number of my Republican colleagues tried to improve this legislation, but were denied the opportunity by the Democrat majority.

But I know that our troops serving in harm's way, and the American people deserve better than this simplistic resolution that provides no new ideas, outlines no strategy for victory, and makes no guarantee that we will continue to fund the efforts of our troops.

I am greatly disappointed in this resolution and the Democrat majority's efforts to prevent this body from considering amendments from thoughtful members to improve it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished Rules Chair.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to bring this debate to the floor of the Congress. I oppose escalation of the war in Iraq that is being pushed by President Bush and Vice President CHENEY. Their intention to send more young American men and women into what is largely a sectarian civil war is more of the same "stay the course" mentality.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Armed Services Committee, I am particularly concerned that the reckless Bush escalation will undermine our country's readiness and ability to address other global threats to our national security. Indeed, in recent testimony, the Marine Commandant and the Army Chief of Staff testified that America will run a strategic risk by implementing the escalation and staying on the same course in Iraq. The generals confirmed that if our personnel and equipment are tied up in Iraq, then our ability to handle future threats and contingencies is reduced.

For example, in my State of Florida, the National Guard does not have all of the equipment it needs to train and deploy soldiers. They are only 28 percent equipped.

President Bush in essence confirmed that the escalation will harm our Nation's readiness when he sent over his proposed 2008 budget last week. He requested an additional $235 billion for this war. That is on top of already $350 billion of taxpayer money. In effect, Bush's war in Iraq is swallowing the defense budget and our country's ability to prepare for any other threat to our national security.

The Bush plan also sacrifices health care for children and our seniors and investments in our own towns and neighborhoods, while continuing this war without end.

We will debate budgets and appropriations in the coming months, but after 4 years of war, over 3,100 deaths of Americans, $350 billion, and the Bush-Cheney failure to aggressively pursue a political solution, it is important that we have this debate in the House of Representatives this week. It is important for Members to go on record, and it is important to demand a new direction on behalf of the American people.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am happy to yield 3 minutes to a very hardworking former member of the Rules Committee, our good friend from Marietta, Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this rule and the underlying legislation.

We are about to begin 3 days of debate over the Democrats' nonbinding resolution, 3 days of debate over a resolution that is nothing more than a political statement against our President.

Considering that last month Democrats rammed six bills through this House in a mere 100 hours, I would say we have ample time this week to also debate a Republican alternative to this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, as you well know, last week one of the Democratic Members in this body repeatedly referred to us as the "Republic Party." I don't think, Mr. Speaker, that that Member was necessarily trying to pay us a compliment. But indeed he did, because this is a Republic, and we speak on behalf of 650,000 constituents.

But the Democrats have taken that away from us, Mr. Speaker. The Democratic leadership has shown us time and time again their pledge of an open and inclusive Congress amounts to nothing more than tired campaign rhetoric. So over and over the next 3 days, you will hear many Republican opinions and ideas, but you will see no Republican legislation.

Perhaps the Democratic leadership is afraid that a Republican alternative, like the bill introduced by a true American war hero, Sam Johnson of Texas, would force the Members to finally put their money where their mouths are and vote "yes" or "no" to cut funding for the troops. But instead, Mr. Speaker, the Democrats prefer to debate nonbinding resolutions that criticize the President's plan without offering any alternative or strategy for victory.

Mr. Speaker, we should be using the next 3 days to debate substantive legislation, not political attacks. This nonbinding resolution may have been crafted with the 2008 election in mind, but I implore my colleagues to look far beyond 2008 to the future of our Nation and this global war on terror. Don't play politics with the security of the United States of America. Don't play politics with possibly our last best chance to secure freedom for the Iraqi people on the greater stability in the Middle East.

Mr. Speaker, the Democrats have sometimes accused Republicans in this Congress of being "yes men" for the President. Well, I believe the Democrats are being "no men" for the President, blindly saying no to any plan he proposes, without considering the merits or what is best for the security of this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely unbelievable that the Democrats are proposing 3 days of debate on an issue as critically important as Iraq without any Republican input or alternative. The manner in which this debate will be carried out is an affront to the American people and to our troops. I ask my colleagues to join me in opposition to this shameful rule.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. SUTTON).

Ms. SUTTON. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, I support this rule on a clear and concise resolution that expresses the will of the American people. Our troops are brave and capable. They have fought overwhelming odds and in the face of incomprehensible difficulty. They have engaged in many acts of heroism. And this resolution makes it unequivocally clear that those of us who feel it incumbent to speak out in opposition to the President's escalation nonetheless continue to support our troops.

All of us and all Americans support our troops. They must have and we must provide that which they need for any mission which they are sent. But Congress also has a responsibility to provide oversight, to ensure that our brave and honorable troops are provided a mission based on realistic assessments and an achievable goal before we ask them to risk life and limb to implement it.

The President has asked Congress and the American people to support his plan to escalate our involvement in the war in Iraq by sending an additional 20,000 troops, and that doesn't count the additional 20,000 support personnel that will be part of the escalation.

This war is almost 4 years long now. Congress has not spoken as loudly and as clearly as its responsibility requires. As the Representative of the 13th District of Ohio, I cannot sit silent. I am opposed to the President's plan for escalation, and, as such, I fully support this rule and resolution.

The President's own military commanders and experts have advised against this course of action. My constituents and the American people have made their position known. People across this Nation voted for a change in direction in Iraq. The plan to escalate is directly contradictory to that call for change. It takes us further down the wrong path, getting us deeper and deeper with a policy that asks our military to accomplish the nonmilitary mission of creating a viable, unified government in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I support the rule and resolution.

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Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I understand that there is much more time on the other side, so I would like to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY).

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I take the floor today not as a Democrat or a Republican, but as an Iraq war veteran who was a captain with the 82nd Airborne Division in Baghdad. Three years ago I came home, but 19 of my fellow paratroopers did not.

I rise to give a voice to the hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvanians and veterans across the globe who are deeply troubled by the President's plan to escalate the number of American troops in Iraq.

I served in Baghdad from June 2003 to January 2004. I saw firsthand this administration's failed policies in Iraq.

In this new Congress, there are 49 new faces. I am proud that five of those 49 new faces are veterans. All five of those veterans are Democrats.

Today, I stand with my other military veterans, Sergeant Major TIM WALZ and Admiral JOE SESTAK. We stand together to tell this administration that we are against the escalation and to say with one voice that Congress will no longer be a blank check to the President's failed policies.

Mr. Speaker, the time for more troops was 4 years ago, but this President ignored the military experts like General Shinseki and General Zinni, who in 2003 called for more troops, several hundred thousand more troops, to secure Iraq.

Now, Mr. Speaker, our President is ignoring military leaders again, patriots like General Colin Powell, General Abizaid and the bipartisan Iraq Study Group who were clear: the President's plan to send more of our best and bravest to die refereeing a civil war in Iraq is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, it is a time for a new direction in Iraq. From my time serving with the 82nd Airborne Division in Iraq, it became clear that in order to succeed we must make it clear to the Iraqis that we are not going to be there forever. Yet 3 years after I left Iraq, Americans are still running convoys up and down Ambush Alley and securing Iraqi street corners.

Today I am proud to stand with my fellow veterans and support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, we often hear from our colleagues on the other side that the only way to support the troops is to blindly support the President.

Mr. Speaker, I ask anyone to look at Admiral JOE SESTAK, a man who was responsible for the safety and security of 15,000 sailors and marines, and tell him that he does not support the troops. I ask them to look at Sergeant TIM WALZ, a man who served his country for 24 years in the Minnesota National Guard as a noncommissioned officer, the backbone of our Army, and tell him he does not support our troops.

Mr. Speaker, we are the troops, and we oppose the President's escalation of troops.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 2 minutes to my very good friend, who is the progenitor of the Iraq Study Group, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF).

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, last night I testified before the Rules Committee asking that the Iraq Study Group report be made in order for debate today. The Iraq Study Group offers the way forward, a new approach, and is authored by former Secretary of State Baker and former chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Lee Hamilton. Yet there has been no vote allowed. The American people have been shut out with regard to having a vote on the Iraq Study Group report. You cannot pick and choose with regard to the Iraq Study Group.

Let me read you some of the comments that have been made by the members who served on the Iraq Study Group. Lee Hamilton, Jim Baker: ''There is no magic formula to solve the problems of Iraq. However, there are actions that can be taken to improve the situation.

''Our political leaders must build a bipartisan approach to bring a responsible conclusion to what is now a lengthy and costly war. Our country deserves a debate that prizes substance over rhetoric, and a policy that is adequately funded and sustainable.''

That is the Iraq Study Group. Members on both sides have said they support the Iraq Study Group, and yet there is no vote allowed on the Iraq Study Group.

''In this consensus report,'' Hamilton and Baker go on to say, ''the 10 members of the Iraq Study Group,'' bipartisan, five and five, ''present a new approach because we believe there is a better way forward.''

The better way forward, and the gentleman who just spoke mentioned the Iraq Study Group, is the Iraq Study Group, and yet the Rules Committee last night foreclosed a vote on the Iraq Study Group which is bipartisan.

Lee Hamilton, Jim Baker, Leon Panetta, Bill Perry, Ed Meese. Ed Meese's son is one of the colonels with General Petraeus. Leon Panetta, who served here in the Congress, but yet for some reason the American people are not to be given an opportunity whereby their Congress can vote on the Iraq Study Group.

There are good people on both sides. Every resolution should be in order. God bless you, what you are offering is fine, but give the country, give the American people, give us an opportunity to vote on the Iraq Study Group. You cannot pick and choose.

I urge a defeat of the resolution and urge that we allow this to be voted on whereby we can have a successful policy to bring this country together.

Mr. Speaker, I rise against this rule and against the underlying resolution.

I've been to Iraq three times since the United States sent Armed Forces there. I continue to be deeply concerned about the violence that continues to take the lives of U.S. personnel as well as innocent Iraqi citizens.

That's why, upon my return from my third trip in 2005, I worked to promote an independent, bipartisan review of ongoing operations in Iraq—what I called "fresh eyes on the target. "

I initiated the legislation authorizing and funding the Iraq Study Group, which was set up through the U.S. Institute of Peace. The 10-member group—5 Republicans and 5 Democrats—was led by cochairs James A. Baker III, the Nation's 61st Secretary of State and honorary chairman of the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University, and Lee H. Hamilton, our former colleague in this House and director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, who also cochaired the 9/11 Commission.

The other members of the study group included: Lawrence S. Eagleburger, former Secretary of State; Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., former advisor to President Clinton; Edwin Meese III, former Attorney General; Sandra Day O'Connor, retired Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court; Leon E. Panetta, former White House chief of staff for President Clinton; William J. Perry, former secretary of Defense; Charles S. Robb, former Governor and Senator of Virginia, and Alan K. Simpson, former Senator from Wyoming.

After more than 8 months of work, the panel presented its report last December 6. The Iraq Study Group was a truly bipartisan group who came together—like this body should be coming together—and offered the way forward in Iraq.

I believe the group's work provides an important framework to move forward in Iraq and on January 24 I introduced H. Con. Res. 45, expressing the sense of Congress that all the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group become the new baseline strategy for dealing with Iraq. That's the resolution we should be advancing today.

In my car coming to the Capitol this morning I heard a member of this body on a radio interview say he's voting for H. Con. Res. 63 because what we're looking for is a new solution for Iraq. We have that. It's the Iraq Study Group report. Look at the cover of the report—"The way forward—A new approach."

The Iraq situation has created a bitter divide in our country. We all want to see an end to the fighting in Iraq and stability there, as well as an end to violence perpetrated by terrorists around the world. I continue to pray for the protection of the American service men and women and civilians who are putting their lives on the line every day and also for their families here at home who continue to make tremendous sacrifices.

The Iraq Study Group met the test of developing a bipartisan consensus on how to succeed in Iraq. When our country is divided we are weak. When we are together we are strong.

I want to read from the letter penned by Secretary Baker and Congressman Hamilton as the prelude to the Iraq Study Group's recommendations:

> There is no magic formula to solve the problems of Iraq. However, there are actions that can be taken to improve the situation and protect American interests.
>
> Many Americans are dissatisfied, not just with the situation in Iraq but with the state of our political debate regarding Iraq. Our political leaders must build a bipartisan approach to bring a responsible conclusion to what is now a lengthy and costly war. Our country deserves a debate that prizes substance over rhetoric, and a policy that is adequately funded and sustainable. The President and Congress must work together. Our leaders must be candid and forthright with the American people in order to win their support.
>
> No one can guarantee that any course of action in Iraq at this point will stop sectarian warfare, growing violence, or a slide toward chaos. If current trends continue, the potential consequences are severe. Because of the role and responsibility of the United States in Iraq, and the commitments our government has made, the United States has special obligations. Our country must address as best it can Iraq's many problems. The United States has long-term relationships and interests at stake in the Middle East, and needs to stay engaged.
>
> In this consensus report, the ten members of the Iraq Study Group present a new approach because we believe there is a better way forward. All options have not been exhausted. We believe it is still possible to pursue different policies that can give Iraq an opportunity for a better future, combat terrorism, stabilize a critical region of the world, and protect America's credibility, interests, and values. Our report makes it clear that the Iraqi government and the Iraqi people also must act to achieve a stable and hopeful future.
>
> What we recommend in this report demands a tremendous amount of political will and cooperation by the executive and legislative branches of the U.S. government. It demands skillful implementation. It demands unity of effort by government agencies. And its success depends on the unity of the American people in a time of political polarization. Americans can and must enjoy the right of robust debate within a democracy. Yet U.S. foreign policy is doomed to failure—as is any course of action in Iraq—if it is not supported by a broad, sustained consensus. The aim of our report is to move our country toward such a consensus.

This last sentence is the essence of what we should be addressing this week. The recommendations of the Iraq Study Group provide the blueprint for a consensus. The work has been done. The recommendations have been made. Now is the time for implementation.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ).

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, today we will begin a long overdue debate about the President's troop escalation plan, and the Iraq war in general. I spoke earlier this morning, and I had the opportunity to address some of the conflict between the testimony of experts and this administration's wishful thinking in regard to this escalation.

What is said here on the floor of Congress, what is said by our experts and what is said by the administration matters. It matters because our troops will be asked to fulfill the mission that comes out of these discussions. Our debate on this resolution is about far more than expressing our disapproval for the President. We offer this debate in the hopes that it will shape the mission that our soldiers are asked to carry out, one that is based on facts and reality, not blind ideology.

I retired from the Army National Guard in the spring of 2005, and the unit I served with is now in Iraq. Many of these soldiers were kids that I taught in my high school classroom, that I coached on our football team. They joined my Guard unit, and I trained them. We deployed together in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, and now they are deployed again to Iraq.

As a 24-year veteran of the Army National Guard, I know that our soldiers are trained to fulfill the mission they are given, but having a mission that is achievable is the key to any military success.

The previous Republican Congress failed to hold the administration accountable for providing a mission that could succeed; and in so doing, they failed to support our troops.

Last week, I had the opportunity to speak with a field commander from the Minnesota National Guard serving in Iraq. He told me that our soldiers are performing magnificently, every minute of every hour of every day. That is not the issue at hand here. The issue at hand is providing a mission that can succeed.

Mr. Speaker, when we recess for our district work period next week, I will go home and look into the eyes of the families of these soldiers. These are the same families and the men and women who learned on cable television that they would be extended in their tour of duty. These are the same men and women who will face financial loss because many of them had the plan to return to their jobs after an 18-month deployment to work in agriculture and construction businesses, and now they will be delayed in their return. They will miss the critical season. They have been deployed for 2½ of the last 4 years.

Mr. Speaker, we can and must do better by our soldiers. The resolution we will debate today and that I am in support of is meant as a first step to giving them an achievable mission and a chance to return. Our soldiers are trained to fulfill their mission without question. We as civilian leaders have a duty to question it on their behalf.

For the past 4 years, this Republican-led Congress has failed in their duty. This resolution is about this Congress standing up and saying we will achieve our duty to the same level of excellence that our soldiers have.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire of my distinguished Chair of the Rules Committee how many speakers are remaining on the other side.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I have one remaining speaker. Is my colleague ready to close?

Mr. DREIER. One remaining speaker, then your close?

Ms. SLAUGHTER. That is right.

Mr. DREIER. Or you are prepared to close now?

Ms. SLAUGHTER. No, I have one remaining speaker.

Mr. DREIER. Then I will reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Do you have any further speakers?

Mr. DREIER. Here I am.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. All right. Why don't you go ahead then and we will have our speaker after you.

Mr. DREIER. I would like to close the debate on our side just before you close the debate on your side.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I have only got the one speaker. My understanding is if you want to close, you need to do it now.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentlewoman seek to close for her side?

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Yes. Mr. SESTAK will be my final speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. To the gentleman from California, Mr. SESTAK represents the close for the majority side.

The gentleman from California is recognized.

Mr. DREIER. I would encourage the gentleman to sit down so he can listen to my eloquence, and then I will look forward to hearing his.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California is recognized for 3 minutes.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, on the eve of the Civil War, that great philosopher John Stuart Mill wrote: ''War is an ugly thing but it is not the ugliest of things. The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which think nothing worth a war is worse.''

No one likes this war that we are in. As I said earlier, the President stood here just weeks ago, and in his State of the Union message he said, I wish very much that this war were over and that we had won. That is the goal. The goal is victory.

We need to make sure that our men and women in uniform, many of whom are paying the ultimate price every single day, as we look at the tragic loss of life, we need to make sure that they have everything necessary so that we can, as my constituent Ed Blecksmith, a father of a man who was killed 2 years ago last November in the battle of Fallujah, said, so that we can complete our mission.

Mr. Speaker, I believe very fervently that you cannot support our troops without supporting their mission. This resolution that is before us unfortunately undermines the ability of our troops to complete their mission.

We have had some very thoughtful proposals that have come forward. We just had Mr. WOLF stand here and talk about the opportunity that was denied him to have a vote on the very important bipartisan work of that Iraq Study Group. Much of what the Iraq Study Group has done has been already implemented by this administration, but there is more that needs to be done. Mr. WOLF was tragically denied an opportunity to even have a vote on whether or not we should support that bipartisan effort of the Iraq Study Group.

We also had testimony last night, Mr. Speaker, from a man who just yesterday marked the 34th anniversary from being freed after 7 years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam, our colleague from Dallas, Texas, Mr. JOHNSON. He was denied a chance to have a substitute that would simply say that we are not going to cut off funding for our troops.

Now, there are many who have argued, Mr. Speaker, that this resolution that we are going to consider in the next few days is simply a first step. It is a first step towards ultimately cutting off funding, and, Mr. Speaker, I think that would be wrong, and that is why I am urging defeat of the previous question. When we do that, we will be making in order, when we defeat the previous question, an opportunity for us to say that we will not cut off funding for our men and women in uniform.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge a vote against the previous question; and if by chance we fail on that, I urge a ''no'' vote on this rule, and I urge a ''no'' vote on the underlying resolution which does, in fact, undermine the goal of completing our mission and bringing our men and women home.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1130

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield the remainder of our time to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SESTAK).

Mr. SESTAK. Mr. Speaker, as this essential debate begins today, I am quite honored to be asked to make opening remarks at its beginning.

I served in our military for over three decades, entering during the Vietnam War and serving under Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush, Clinton, and our Commander in Chief today, President Bush. I had the honor of leading men and women in harm's way, the highest honor that our Nation can give to anyone; most recently in combat, over at Afghanistan and Iraq, where I commanded an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 ships and 15,000 sailors and marines.

Having worn the cloth of this Nation so long, I know that duty of choice, that the citizens of this great country have about the future course of this war in Iraq is not an unpatriotic one, nor is what anyone will say in the next few days unpatriotic.

If my 31 years in the military taught me anything, it was that we serve in this all-volunteer military to defend Americans' freedom to think as they please and to say what they think, even if they disagree with their leaders. A democracy is based on freedom of expression, and those who join the military do so to fight, if necessary, the wars which defend that freedom, hoping that our use will be to a wise end. And that is what concerns me about Iraq.

The continuing use of our national treasure in what is an inconclusive, open-ended involvement within a country with long-term benefits does not match what we need to reap. It is why I am opposed to a troop surge that doubles down on a bad military debt that has been tried already.

We need to apply our resources elsewhere in the world, where terrorists come from, including Osama bin Laden who is still on the loose, or emerging nations such as in the Western Pacific have growing political and economic interests and, therefore, influence that may challenge ours.

I do not think that my extensive military experience alone gives me license to disagree with our strategy in Iraq, but just being an American who has closely watched and thought about the trade-off and benefits for our future prosperity, interest, and values does.

Our military is a national treasure that should not be used recklessly, nor should it be hoarded like miser's gold. It is a vital resource if we are to continue to be a force for peace and prosperity, but throughout the world. And that is why I firmly believe in a planned end to our military engagement in Iraq within the next year as the primary catalyst for change in Iraq so their leaders are forced to accept the political and military responsibility for their country, with our diplomatic and economic help, and limited military support from outside Iraq, but within the region is best. It is for our Nation's greater security that I believe this, and why I cannot support a troop surge that strains our military readiness further and, more, our overall strategic security in a war that does not serve our Nation's greater interest in this world and our future.

The material previously referred to by Mr. DREIER is as follows:

AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 157 OFFERED BY REP. DREIER OF CALIFORNIA

(1) In section 1, insert ''and any amendment thereto'' after ''previous question shall be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution''.

(2) At the end of the resolution, add the following:

Sec. 4. Notwithstanding section 1, it shall be in order at any time to consider the amendment printed in section 5, if offered by Representative Sam Johnson of Texas or his designee, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, and shall be separately debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent.

Sec. 5. The amendment referred to in section 4 is as follows:

Strike all after the resolved clause and insert the following: ''That Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect and Congress will not cut off or restrict funding for members of the Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably in Iraq.''

(The information contained herein was provided by Democratic Minority on multiple occasions throughout the 109th Congress.)

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 Democratic 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 Democratic 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 definition of the previous question used in the Floor Procedures Manual published by the Rules Committee in the 109th Congress, (page 56). Here's how the Rules Committee described the rule using information form Congressional Quarterly's ''American Congressional Dictionary'': ''If the previous question is defeated, control of debate shifts to the leading opposition member (usually the minority Floor Manager) who then manages an hour of debate and may offer a germane amendment to the pending business.''

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 Democratic majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time has expired.

The question is on ordering the previous question on the resolution.

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

Mr. DREIER. 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. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and 9 of rule XX, the Chair will now put each question on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Suspending the rules and adopting H. Res. 122, by the yeas and nays;

Ordering the previous question on H. Res. 157, de novo vote;

Adoption of H. Res. 157, if ordered;

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 437, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066 AND SUPPORTING AND RECOGNIZING A NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 122.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 122, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 426, nays 0, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 95]

YEAS—426

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)

Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—8

Alexander
Cramer
Davis, Jo Ann
Hastert
Jefferson
Johnson (IL)
Norwood
Rush

□ 1202

Mrs. BONO and Mr. MOORE of Kansas changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING KAREN HAAS FOR HER SERVICE AS CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Speaker PELOSI for naming the first African American woman to be Clerk of the House of Representatives. And in doing so, I want to recognize the outstanding service of one Karen Haas.

Mr. Speaker, the reason I want to do this is because earlier on in her career, Karen and I both worked for then-Republican leader Bob Michel, and she was one of three or four people that ran the leader's office and did an extraordinary job. She then came to work for Speaker HASTERT and had the assignment of trying to find people who could keep this House under control. And because of her extraordinary skill and abilities, Speaker HASTERT appointed her Clerk of the House, which is an impossible job because she has to put up with all of us, and she also has to keep the House running.

She is an enormously talented woman and has done a great, great job for those of us who serve in the House. Tomorrow is her last day as Clerk of the House, and I thank all of you for giving her a standing ovation for a job well done.

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LAHOOD. Of course I will yield.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for rising, and I thank the gentleman for his remarks.

I said similar remarks, as the gentleman may know, last week. But I certainly want Karen to know, I want everybody in this House to know, that the opinions just expressed by Mr. LAHOOD reflect, I think, Karen, the opinions of everybody on this floor. You have done a wonderful job for the House of Representatives as an institution, a great job for your country, and we know you will be a great success in the future. And all of us stand ready to tell anybody who wants to know what an asset you have been to the House of Representatives.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. LAHOOD. I thank the majority leader.

Good luck, Karen. Thank you for doing a great job.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. CON. RES. 63, IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the de novo vote on ordering the previous question on House Resolution 157.

The Clerk read the title of 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 ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. DREIER. 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 227, noes 197, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 96]

AYES—227

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Kucinich
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Wilson (OH)
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NOES—197

Aderholt
Akin
Bachmann
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Cubin
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Jindal
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Paul
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster

Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Taylor
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—10

Alexander
Cramer
Davis, Jo Ann
Hastert
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (IL)
Murphy, Patrick
Norwood
Rush

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are reminded there are 2 minutes remaining on this vote.

□ 1214

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 96 on the previous question I was unavoidably detained at a closed Intelligence briefing. Mr. Speaker, if I had been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

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

Mr. DREIER. 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 232, noes 192, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 97]

AYES—232

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Kucinich
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Reyes
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Wilson (OH)
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NOES—192

Aderholt
Akin
Bachmann
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Cubin
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Emerson
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Jindal
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Taylor
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—10

Alexander
Cramer
Davis, Jo Ann
English (PA)
Hastert
Jefferson
Johnson (IL)
Kirk
Norwood
Rush

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are reminded that they have 2 minutes remaining on this vote.

□ 1223

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.

LINO PEREZ, JR. POST OFFICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 437.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 437, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 421, nays 0, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 98]

YEAS—421

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner

Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—13

Alexander
Bilbray
Braley (IA)
Cramer
Davis, Jo Ann
Grijalva
Hastert
Johnson (IL)
Norwood
Pryce (OH)
Rush
Sensenbrenner
Tancredo

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised that there are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1231

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and 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. JOHNSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I was unable to cast my votes on the following rollcall votes on February 13, 2007. Had I been present to vote, I would have voted as follows:

On rollcall No. 95—On the Motion to Suspend the Rules and pass H. Res. 122, Recognizing the significance of the 65th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and supporting the goals of the Japanese American, German American, and Italian American communities in a National Day of Remembrance, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall No. 96—On Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 157, the Rule providing for consideration of H. Con. Res. 63, disapproving of the decision of the President announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall No. 97—On Agreeing to H. Res. 157, the Rule providing for consideration of H. Con. Res. 63, disapproving of the decision of the President announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall No. 98—On the Motion to Suspend the Rules and pass H.R. 437, naming a post office after Lino Perez, Jr., I would have voted "aye."

IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the rule just recently adopted, I call up the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 63) disapproving of the decision of the President announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 63

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That—

(1) Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect the members of the United States Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably in Iraq; and

(2) Congress disapproves of the decision of President George W. Bush announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 157, debate shall extend not beyond midnight on Tuesday, February 13, 2007, or Wednesday, February 14, 2007, with 12 hours of debate commencing on Thursday, February 15, 2007, in each instance equally divided and controlled by the majority leader and minority leader or their designees.

Pursuant to section 2 of the resolution, on each demand of the majority leader or his designee after consultation with the minority leader, it shall be in order to debate the concurrent resolution for an additional hour, equally divided and controlled by the majority leader and minority leader or their designees.

The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) each will control 5 hours.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

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

Ladies and gentlemen of the House, we entered today and we will be, for the next 4 days, involved in the most serious of discussions.

It is a heavy responsibility for any Member of Congress to determine whether or not to send our people in harm's way for the purposes of defending freedom. We should consider that with great solemnity and with great care. The reason for the extensive period of debate is because we believe that all Members of Congress ought to have the opportunity to express their view.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the distinguished Speaker of this House, NANCY PELOSI of California.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman for yielding and the solemnity with which he introduced this debate.

My colleagues, in a few weeks the war in Iraq will enter its fifth year, causing thousands of deaths, tens of thousands of casualties, costing hundreds of billions of dollars, and damaging the standing of the United States in the international community. And there is no end in sight.

The American people have lost faith in President Bush's course of action in Iraq, and they are demanding a new direction.

On January 10, President Bush proposed deploying more than 20,000 additional combat troops to Iraq. This week we will debate his escalation.

In doing so, we must be mindful of the sacrifices our military personnel are being asked to make in this war and the toll it is taking on them, on their families, and on our veterans. Each one of us must determine, in a

manner worthy of their sacrifice, whether the President's proposal will make America safer, make our military stronger, and make the region more stable.

As this debate begins, let us be clear on one fundamental principle: we all support the troops.

In this bipartisan resolution that is before us today, it clearly states: ''Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect the members of the United States Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably in Iraq.'' We honor the service of our troops by asking the difficult questions about this war. As Republican Senator Robert Taft of Ohio said 2 weeks after Pearl Harbor: ''Criticism in a time of war is essential to the maintenance of any democratic government.''

And just 10 days ago, President Bush told House Democrats: ''I welcome debate in a time of war . . . I do not believe that if you don't happen to agree with me, you don't share the same sense of patriotism I do,'' the President said.

In the spirit of responsibility to our troops and the patriotism we all share, let us consider whether the President's escalation proposal will lessen the violence in Iraq and bring our troops home safely and soon.

From the standpoint of the military, the President's plan must be evaluated for its prospects for success. It is based on a judgment that the way out of Iraq lies in sending more troops in. Our experience in Iraq has proven just the opposite. Four previous troop escalations have resulted in escalating levels of violence.

And as with any military action, the President's plan must also be evaluated on the additional burdens it will place on our troops and military families who have already sacrificed so much, the impact it will have on the already dangerous state of our military readiness.

Our military has done everything they have been asked to do, and they have performed excellently. But in order to succeed in Iraq, there must be diplomatic and political initiatives.

There has been no sustained and effective effort to engage Iraq's neighbors diplomatically, and there has been no sustained and effective effort to engage Iraqi factions politically. The Iraqi Government has failed to honor promises made last year when the constitution was adopted by failing to propose amendments to include all sectors of Iraq in the civic life of the country. As a result, today we are confronted by little political accommodation, hardening sectarian divisions, ethnic cleansing by neighborhoods, and waves of refugees burdening neighboring countries.

After the Members of this body, this House of Representatives, have fully debated the President's escalation proposal, we will have a straight up-or-down vote. In a few days, and in fewer than 100 words, we will take our country in a new direction on Iraq. A vote of disapproval will set the stage for additional Iraq legislation which will be coming to the House floor.

Friday's vote will signal whether the House has heard the American people: no more blank checks for President Bush on Iraq. Our taxpayer dollars must go to protect our troops, to keep our promises to our veterans, and to provide for the safety of the American people.

In light of the facts, President Bush's escalation proposal will not make America safer, will not make our military stronger, and will not make the region more stable; and it will not have my support.

I urge my colleagues to support our troops and vote ''aye'' on the bipartisan Skelton-Lantos-Jones resolution before us today.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to our Republican leader, Mr. BOEHNER of Ohio.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, let me thank my colleague from Florida for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, today we begin an extended debate on a resolution criticizing the latest effort by American forces to win in Iraq.

There is no question that the war in Iraq has been difficult. All Americans are frustrated that we haven't seen more success and that we haven't seen it more quickly.

But war is never easy and almost never goes according to plan. Al Qaeda and their supporters in the region have been steadfast in their efforts to slow us down and frustrate our efforts to succeed. But because they cannot defeat Americans on the battlefield, al Qaeda and terrorist sympathizers around the world are trying to divide us here at home.

Over the next few days, we have an opportunity to show our enemies that we will not take the bait.

It is fitting that yesterday was President Abraham Lincoln's birthday. And not since the dark days of the Civil War has our homeland been a battlefield. Lincoln's leadership preserved the Union through a turbulent age that threatened to undo the American experiment. His belief in the promise of the United States, a promise enshrined in the Declaration of Independence that stated for the first time in history that all men are created equal, this is what drove him to pursue victory.

Surrounded by personal and political rivals, Lincoln could have given up. He could have recalled the Union forces and sent them home. But he didn't.

I think we need a similar commitment to victory today.

The battle in Iraq is about more than what happens there. This is one part of a much larger fight, a global fight against Islamic terrorists who have waged war on the United States and our allies. This is not a question of fighting for land or for treasure or for glory. We are fighting to rid the world of a radical and dangerous ideology. We are fighting to preserve and defend our sacred way of life. We are fighting to build a safer and more secure America, one where families can rear their children without the fear of terrorist attacks.

Lincoln famously said in 1858 that ''a house divided against itself cannot stand.'' I believe, as Lincoln did then, that we must choose sides on a very critical issue. Then it was whether we should abolish the evil institution of slavery. Today it is whether we will defeat the ideology that drives radical Islamic terrorism. Will we do what it takes to stand and fight for the future of our kids and theirs? Will we commit to defending the freedoms and liberties that we all cherish? Or will we retreat and leave the fight for another generation? These are the questions with historic implications that will be answered this week.

Many of my friends across the aisle think this is exactly what we should do, give up and leave. This nonbinding resolution is their first step towards abandoning Iraq by cutting off funding for our troops that are in harm's way.

And we know what al Qaeda thinks when America retreats from the battlefield. They think that we can't stomach a fight. This is why they haven't been afraid to strike us whenever and wherever they have had the opportunity to do so.

This war didn't start in Iraq. This war didn't start on 9/11. The war began with the Iran hostage taking in 1979, went on for well over a year. Then on October 23, 1983, the suicide attack on our Marine barracks in Beirut occurred, killing 241 American servicemen and injuring 60 others. On February 26, 1993, was the first World Trade Center bombing that killed six people and injured more than 1,000 others. On June 25, 1996, the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia were bombed, killing 20 and injuring some 372 others. On June 7, 1998, the Kenya embassy bombing killed 213 people and injured 5,000 more. And on June 7, 1998, the Tanzania embassy bombing killed 11 people and 68 others were injured. On October 12, 2000, the USS *Cole* was attacked; 17 American sailors killed, 39 other sailors injured.

We all know what happened on September 11, 2001, when 3,000 Americans died for no other reason than they were Americans.

Do we really believe that if we pack up now, if we abandon Iraq and leave the country in chaos, that our enemies are just going to lay down their arms and leave us alone?

□ 1245

For too long, world leaders responded to terrorism by retreating and just hoping for the best. In a post-9/11 world, this is no longer an option.

God forgive us that it took such a loss of life to open our eyes, but our eyes are open. We are engaged in a global war now for our very way of life.

Every drop of blood that has been spilt in defense of liberty and freedom, from the American Revolution to this very moment, is for nothing if we are unwilling to stand up and fight this threat.

We didn't start this war. They did. Now we have got a duty to finish it, and, for the sake of our kids and theirs, to win it.

The nonbinding resolution before us today criticizes the new strategy for succeeding in Iraq implemented by General Petraeus. It ''disapproves'' of the strategy before it even has a chance to begin. The general's goal is to stabilize the Iraqi democracy, deny the terrorists a safe haven and ensure stability in the region. It is a prudent strategy that puts the performance of the Iraqi Government front and center.

I can't guarantee that this plan is going to work. I hope it does. Republicans have put forward a complementary bill aimed at helping it succeed. But I again can guarantee you this: If we cut off our funding for the troops that are in the field and we abandon Iraq, as many supporters of this nonbinding resolution want to, the consequences of our failure will be catastrophic.

Last year, Osama bin Laden issued this warning to the United States regarding the war in Iraq. He said, ''I would like to tell you that the war is for you or for us to win. If we win, it means your defeat and disgrace forever.''

Now, think about this for a moment. Al Qaeda knows what the stakes are and it issued all of us a challenge. Now, tell me, what message does it send if we are afraid to meet that challenge? What message are we sending to North Korea, Iran, Venezuela and other enemies of freedom around the world? If we abandon Iraq, regional stability is going to be jeopardized. Iraq will become a fertile breeding ground for radical Islamic terrorists. Without a central government or other stabilizing force, Iraq's neighbors will be compelled to enter Iraq to protect their own interests. The consequences will be devastating and could easily lead to regional war.

If we abandon Iraq, the instability, coupled with the damning image of another American retreat, will embolden Iran and Islamic militants and endanger Israel. Iran's leaders and terrorist groups have made it clear of their intentions to wipe Israel off the map. We would be leaving a staunch ally in the Middle East with nothing but chaos and instability separating them from their greatest enemy.

If we abandon Iraq, those who seek weapons of mass destruction will know they have nothing to fear from a fearful America. Neither al Qaeda, North Korea or Iran are going to give up their quest for weapons of mass destruction if they know they are free to pursue these weapons, secure in the knowledge that America doesn't have the stomach to stop them. We will be leaving for our children, and theirs, a vastly more dangerous world.

During the Cold War, we took some small comfort in the idea of mutually assured destruction, that the Soviet Union wouldn't attack us because we could retaliate with equal devastation. There is no such comfort in a world where terrorist gangs roam free. It is the nature of our enemy to fight us wherever and whenever they can. Whether it is in Asia, in Africa or elsewhere, al Qaeda has supporters and sympathizers throughout the world. They have the ability to strike us at any time with their lethal force across the globe.

Right now, we are fighting them in Iraq. The battlefield is the most visible part in the global war against these terrorists, but it is but one part. If we leave, they will just follow us home. It is as simple as that. We cannot negotiate with them. We can't reason with them. Our one and only option is to defeat them. And this nonbinding measure before us today will only embolden them.

Now, it is important for this body to debate the important issues of our day. Last summer, the House held an extended debate on the war in Iraq and the global war on terror which gave all Members an opportunity to go on record. We worked closely with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle to draft the language of that resolution, and I believe that we had a productive debate.

What we are dealing with here today isn't even a resolution to debate the war itself. It is a nonbinding resolution attacking a single strategy in the prosecution of a much larger war. ''Nonbinding'' means nonleadership. It is not accountable, and I don't think it is the right message for our troops.

This is a political charade, lacking both the seriousness and the gravity of the issue that it is meant to represent. And, as I said before, the question before us today isn't actually in this resolution. I think it is much more fundamental. The question is, do we have the resolve necessary to defeat our terrorist enemies? Will we stand and fight for the future of our kids and theirs?

As President Eisenhower once said, ''History does not long entrust the care of freedom to the weak or the timid.'' Does Congress have the fortitude to do what needs to be done? Our soldiers do. The men and women of our military are the greatest force for freedom that the world has ever known. They are brave, they are committed and they can win this fight if we ask them to. I think the big question is, will we support them?

My colleagues, the world is watching. The question is, how will we respond?

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the balance of the time available to this side be jointly managed by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the chairman of the International Relations Committee.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEINER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5½ minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I speak today with a heavy heart. I am deeply saddened as I take the floor this afternoon; saddened because we find ourselves embroiled in a conflict in Iraq, a conflict that is involved with insurgents that we failed to acknowledge or recognize, a conflict that is overlaid by sectarian violence between the Shiite Muslims on the one hand and Sunni Muslims on the other.

Mr. Speaker, this is a great American tragedy. The mission of this Congress is to urge the change of course.

We are here today because of a series of irretrievable strategic mistakes. Let's understand the goal of this resolution: number one, to fully extend our support to those in the uniform of the United States. I have been on the Armed Services Committee now throughout the years, and more recently as its chairman, and I cannot tell you how proud I am of those who are in uniform, whether they be deployed in the Middle East or somewhere else in the globe or here in our country. We must let them know, and this resolution does let them know, that we fully support them, as well as their wonderful families.

The second part of this resolution deals with the Presidential decision to increase our troops by 21,500. However, it is not clear what support troops are needed. The Pentagon says 2,500 support troops. The Congressional Budget Office says 13,000 minimum. But whatever it is, we find ourselves not seeing a change in strategy, as was promised by the administration and the White House, but just another tactic that had been used before, an increase in troops. No more, no less. We are here to say that is not a good idea.

The series of irretrievable mistakes is a serious list: the skewed intelligence we received from the Defense Department Office of Special Plans; the postwar phase of conflict that did not have sufficient planning; not enough troops, as pointed out by General Eric Shinseki, the former Army Chief of Staff; allowing the uncontrolled looting and the breakdown of law early on after the occupation began; the dismissal of the Iraqi Army, rather than giving them a paycheck and a shovel or having them do security work that is important to the stability of that country; the deBathification, that put so many thousands of Iraqis out of business, out of work, including thousands of school teachers. The administration has consistently refused to adjust its overall strategy.

I take no pleasure in this, but it is a moment of ''I told you so.'' On September 4, 2002, and again on March 18, 2003, I sent letters to the White House

predicting some of the deadly outcomes we are experiencing today, and I warned against a jagged ending to the conflict. While there is a peacefully elected Iraqi Government, it is a government so divided along sectarian lines it has not been able to accomplish even the most basic steps needed for national reconciliation. And now we have the President's plan for a troop increase, which is a tactic that we do not approve.

The President's plan will embroil our troops even more deeply into the sectarian conflict. Put together hastily, it is insufficient as a requirement for success. Forty percent of all of the Army equipment of our country is either in Afghanistan or Iraq. The readiness of our troops is in peril. We are stretching the Army and the Marine Corps to the breaking point. That is where we are, and basically it is because of the conflict in Iraq.

Today is an opportunity for us to express our support for the troops and to say it is not a good idea to increase the troop level in Iraq because it has been tried unsuccessfully before.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), our Republican whip.

□ 1300

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this resolution. General Petraeus said a resolution like this would discourage the troops. The Secretary of Defense said a resolution like this would embolden the enemy. This Congress should be doing neither of those things.

What this resolution will not do is take a position on what we should do as we face the challenge of our generation.

President Johnson was criticized a generation ago and still today for choosing bombing sites in Vietnam. He was the Commander in Chief; yet he should have left those tactical choices to the military.

But his actions made imminently more sense than this. It is hard to imagine a group less capable of making tactical decisions about specific troop deployments than 535 Members of Congress.

The resolution today is about the exact number of troops. Will the one tomorrow or next week be a vote on which block in Baghdad to target or which car to stop?

And, of course, today what we debate is a tactic in the greater fight we are in. The new commanding general determined this surge is the right course of action. The Iraq Study Group was supportive of ''a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad or to speed up the training and equipping mission, if the U.S. commander in Iraq determines that such a step would be effective.''

Mr. Speaker, we can all agree that the current situation in Iraq cannot continue. That is why the President has advanced a new way forward.

Actions do have consequences, and this resolution the Democrats advance today is a vote for the status quo. It is a vote for the current strategy because it is a vote not to change that strategy. The current strategy is not working, and as a southwest Missourian told me yesterday, We are there. He went on to say, It really doesn't matter how we got there or what we thought. We are in a fight that won't stop if we leave.

The fact of the matter is that Congress does have the power to end the war if it has the political will to do so.

Almost 24 years ago, in November of 1983, the Congress voted to withdraw from Lebanon by March of 1984. Many of the proponents of this resolution voted then, who were Members of Congress then, voted to leave. They lost 153–274, but the message was sent, and we left anyway, and when we left, the myth of American weakness began to take hold in al Qaeda.

The language of this nonbinding resolution does not tackle the tough issues of war. It tries to have it both ways: disapproving the tactics but supporting the troops. It does not say we will fund the troops in the future or not fund the troops. It does not say we will supply the troops in the future or not supply the troops. This resolution just says enough not to say anything at all.

America should see this move for what it really is, a political first step to cutting off funding to the dangerous mission our troops face.

The truth is, we are in a war against a hostile and ferocious enemy that will stop at nothing. Imagine how this debate this week bolsters those radical terrorists whose sole goal is to destroy America because we disprove, as no society ever has, the dogma of religious totalitarianism that they use every day to recruit followers and funders and suicide bombers.

Our diversity, our ability to live together, and the prosperity and vitality that are the result have produced the enemies we face today. As long as we live as we do, they must be wrong.

This week, the Congress will send the signal to those enemies and to those who fight to protect us from them that America has the will and indeed the courage to continue fighting these Islamic totalitarians or that we do not take the consequences of failure seriously.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee (Mr. LANTOS).

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend for yielding.

I must begin by reacting to the two distinguished Republican speakers who preceded me. The distinguished Republican leader recited movingly and accurately terrorist outrages across the globe. Those terrorist outrages make the passage of our resolution all the more urgent and all the more imperative. We are not fighting terrorism in Iraq. We are attempting to referee a religiously based civil war which saps our strength and destroys our fabric as a society.

As to the distinguished Republican whip, may I say this resolution does not make tactical decisions. It reverses a mistaken course. The administration is recommending an acceleration of the wrong course. Our resolution reverses that course.

Mr. Speaker, it is too late to go back and make right all that has gone wrong in Iraq, and clearly carrying on with more of the same will do no good. But the administration has yet to learn that you cannot unscramble an omelet. Instead, it is trying to add to the mix another 21,500 men and women who deserve better than that.

In pursuing its policies in Iraq, the administration cannot unscramble and undo its many mistakes: buying into rogue and flawed intelligence; disbanding the Iraqi Army; conducting mindless and extreme de-Baathification; permitting the early looting and destruction and violence; allowing the growth of a government based on hate-filled sectarianism; allowing waste, fraud and abuse in the use of U.S. taxpayer funds; and on and on ad nauseam and ad infinitum.

While we all hope that the goal of a quiet and stable Iraq will be achieved under General Petraeus, I am deeply skeptical. It will be incredibly difficult, if not impossible. The place is just too much of a mess.

Our continued heavy presence in Iraq has not forced Iraqi leaders to take the requisite actions on power-sharing, resource-sharing, and national reconciliation. In fact, it has done the exact opposite. They have made minimal and cosmetic efforts in the knowledge that we will fill the gaps.

In the meantime, there are so many other fronts, globally and here at home, on which we might have made much more progress if we had not been fixated these last 4 years on Iraq. Domestic and foreign problems have festered while we invested blood and treasure in Iraq. As our Iraq problems have mounted, our commitment and ability to resolve other pressing issues have vanished.

Last November, the American people sent a loud and unmistakable message. With the announcement of an escalation of the war in Iraq, it is obvious that the administration did not get it. So we are trying one more time.

The resolution before the House is the second chance for this administration to hear a strong and clear message on Iraq, one it ignores at its peril and at ours as a country.

The majority of Congress wants de-escalation. The majority of the American people want de-escalation. Many Republicans throughout the Nation, and even our Republican colleagues in this Congress, want de-escalation. Poll numbers show that the Iraqi people want the United States to gradually withdraw, and Prime Minister al-

Maliki has indicated in virtually every way that he can that he, too, opposes the surge.

But the administration wants escalation. So it is going its own way, nearly alone.

There is a clear-cut policy difference here, Mr. Speaker. It is reflected simply and unambiguously in our resolution. Those of our colleagues who oppose escalation should vote for the resolution. Those of our colleagues who stand with the administration in supporting escalation should oppose it.

Along with 52 hearings on Iraq in the House and the Senate over the past 5 weeks, this resolution represents the first phase in a long overdue process of congressional oversight of the war in Iraq. It is not the last phase. Congress will be dealing with the Iraq issue for months to come, in fact, for as long as it takes to end this nightmare. But this simple resolution will establish the first marker. Those who want to draw down the U.S. presence will be on one side of that marker. Those who want to take further steps into the quagmire will be on the other.

Mr. Speaker, we are throwing our soldiers into the midst of a civil war, particularly those whom we are sending to Baghdad. It is utterly unrealistic and grossly unfair to expect soldiers straight out of Iowa, Alabama, or California to be able to differentiate between Iraqi Sunnis and Iraqi Shias, much less to be able to tell at a glance which of these groups are with us and which are against us. But that is exactly what we are asking them to do, and we are asking them to do it in an urban terrorist setting and to do it without any linguistic or cultural background.

The first sentence of the recent National Intelligence Estimate tells us everything we need to know on this issue: ''Iraqi society's growing polarization, the persistent weakness of the Iraqi security forces and the Iraqi state in general, and all sides' ready recourse to violence are collectively driving an increase in communal and insurgent violence and political extremism.''

Every day we read another article illustrating the impossibility of the situation into which we have inserted our brave men and women. One day, we read how the Iraqi Army is infested with militia members. Another day, we read that countless members of al-Sadr's violently anti-American Mahdi Army have actually been trained by U.S. soldiers unaware of the trainees' true affiliation. On yet another day, we read that U.S. soldiers cannot even tell their Iraqi counterparts the object of their joint military missions for fear that the mission will be compromised.

This weekend, we read an interview with a U.S. soldier who acknowledged that he had no idea whatsoever whether an arrest he witnessed by Iraqi security forces was justified or merely another instance of sectarian revenge.

Mr. Speaker, Iraq is a hall of mirrors, and the administration has utterly lost its way. More troops will not help. The United States wants Iraq to be a state based on the rule of law, but too many Iraqis prefer score-settling, chaos, and civil war. We cannot create a stable Iraq when the Iraqis themselves do not seem to want it.

Let us not leave our finest young men and women literally stranded in an Iraqi maze. Let us make this resolution the first step on their journey home. We must begin a reduction in force at the fastest responsible rate possible, consistent with the safety of our troops.

And then it will be time to rebuild our battered military and, just as importantly, rebuild the battered reputation of the United States.

For the sake of our troops and our national interests, I strongly support this resolution and urge all of my colleagues to do likewise.

□ 1315

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield to Mr. PUTNAM of Florida, the Republican Conference chairman, such time as he may consume.

Mr. PUTNAM. I thank my friend from Florida for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose this resolution because, unfortunately, it is anything but resolute. In one legislative breath it offers support for our troops, but then expresses disdain for the mission they have been asked to carry out. And then, I must admit I am surprised, after all the tough talk we heard from the other side, this is a rather toothless 97 words. The resolution does nothing to help win the war, but it doesn't do anything to help stop it either, which allows the majority to offer its support and withdraw it too.

Now, the majority has surely studied its constitutional law, and knows that the most direct way that it can affect current strategy is to cut off the funds necessary for winning this war. So why are we not having this week a real vote, a real up-or-down vote on funding our men and women in harm's way? Actually, the Congress has had one up-or-down vote, it was up only, when the Senate unanimously confirmed General David Petraeus as our commanding officer in Iraq. General Petraeus, who took over just last Saturday, literally wrote the book for the Army on counterinsurgency strategies. And now, after unanimous Senate approval and just days into his command, the House is prepared to pull the rug out from under him. If that is not a mixed message, then what is it, Mr. Speaker?

Indeed, it is a shame that the majority has brought to the floor such a narrow, nonbinding resolution that misses the bigger picture, because this is so much larger than what is going on in any given neighborhood in Baghdad.

It is easy enough to go back and list all the disappointments we have had in Iraq; it is easy enough to wring our hands about any one particular tactic. But it is like focusing on one jungle, on one atoll on the march to Tokyo over 60 years ago. The very nature of our enemy requires us to look at the bigger picture. The harsh reality we have encountered in 5½ years since militants attacked us on American soil is that its intricate web of terror is utterly global.

Today, al Qaeda operates in over 60 countries, with members in the hundreds and supporters in the hundreds of thousands and perhaps even millions. This is the case even after the tangible successes that we have had.

More than three-quarters of al Qaeda's known pre-9/11 leaders have been captured or killed, more than 4,000 suspected al Qaeda members arrested, and more than $140 million of its assets seized from over 1,400 different bank accounts worldwide. And after having accomplished all that, the majority would have us consider a resolution that puts us one day closer to handing militant Islamists a safe haven the size of California. And when ideological militants achieve their objectives, history tells us that they don't settle, that they only attempt to expand their reach even further. And that means following us home.

The consequences of failure in Iraq read like a far-fetched war game, but I assure you they are quite real: the inevitable incursion of Iranian and Syrian combatants into the country, the threat to peaceful Arab states, and the further emboldening of Hamas and Hezbollah.

So we have arrived at one of those muddy historical crossroads. Will we continue to take the fight to the enemy, or will we fall back and hope that the enemy does not follow us home? That question is one that we must continue to ask ourselves, even if it is much larger than the narrow scope of this resolution, this resolution that was born of what has become an overly politicized debate.

Time was, politics stopped at the water's edge; but no longer, it seems. A discussion of this nature should be about more than political labels and single tactical issues. It should be about the consequences for future generations.

The history of free peoples divides itself as neatly as it can into generations for a reason: because it aspires to celebrate the contributions made by that group of people who consciously join together to vanquish a common enemy. If we do not join together now to defeat this insidious foe, then it will almost certainly fall to our posterity do so. And they will have a much larger concern than any one troop deployment in any one city. They will be tasked with rebuilding the lasting damage that was done to America's resolve this week. They will look back upon this discussion and seek to understand what we were thinking when, with just 97 words, we considered shrinking from this critical moment.

The poet Robert Frost once wrote that, ''The best way out is always

through.'' We doggedly seek the way through. Success in Iraq, security for our allies, and everlasting victory for freedom. This week's discussion should be about the way through, not the way back.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan, a veteran of the Second World War, Mr. DINGELL.

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

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I wish I could rise in support for the administration's policy. I wish it made sense. I wish it was in the best interests of this country to support that policy.

It has been now 4 years since the first American soldier entered the deserts of Iraq, and about 4 years since the President has declared victory. Since then, more than 3,100 Americans have been killed, 24,000 and more have been wounded, and anywhere between 40,000 and 100,000 Iraqis have died.

You know, I am proud and grateful that I could have the privilege of serving my country and making some small offering to its success in time of war. I understand how important it is we support our troops there. They have done a magnificent job, and everyone in this Chamber, including this speaker, support them fully. It is regrettable, however, the leadership in Washington that has been less than stellar.

Unfortunately, the veracity of this administration and the respect in which it is held on these matters ranks somewhere around that great fantasist Baron Munchausen, the teller of fantastic tales.

I am against this plan, if it can be called such, because it is just more of the same policies and programs that have consistently failed for 4 years. I am against this surge because it will not make Americans safer, because it will put more American lives at risk, because it continues to neglect the battle in Afghanistan, and because it completely disregards the necessary diplomatic and political recommendations of the Iraqi Study Group.

Twenty-one thousand is too many to kill and too few to succeed. And, more importantly, that number is going to be sent over there away from the adventures that we are confronting in Afghanistan and the troubles that we are seeing in that place, and we are going to send people over there without adequate preparation, proper equipment, and training.

Vice President CHENEY has told us that insurgency is in the last throes. Mr. Speaker, the national Intelligence estimates said that fanatical terrorism has now, and I quote, ''metastasized and spread across the globe.''

At each possible turning point, the toppling of Saddam Hussein's statue, the dissolving of the Army, the creation of the Iraqi Constitution, the vote for the constitution, the Parliamentary elections, the capture of Saddam, the death of Zarqawi, the Bush administration has told us that victory is at hand. And yet the killing goes on and seems to have risen to new levels and new evidence of risk.

I don't believe that we can any more condone this long train of failure which has brought us so little success and such tremendous sacrifice in blooded treasure. It is time that we recognize that our troops are in the middle of a civil insurrection or a civil war. It is time that we recognize that we must turn this situation now over to the Iraqis. The matter will be decided by the Iraqis, not by us. It will not be decided militarily, but rather politically, by the people in the area, and not by Americans who are coming increasingly to be viewed as intruders and to be less liked and less supported.

I know that commentators and defenders of the administration will assert that Iraq is too important, too vital to our national interests to be debated or criticized. I happen to think the debate in this body on matters of great importance is the reason that we exist, and it is time that we speak on behalf of the American people to tell this administration: ''Find a new mechanism to prevail in this matter. Find a new way to spend our lives and treasure. Find a new way to see to it that we prevail and that we make this country safe,'' because it is clear that this is not going to happen with the current policy as exemplified by this administration.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution. I hope that the country will see to it that the President finally hears the message that his policies are failed, it is time to make changes, and that we have to do so in the interest of the United States and world peace.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield as much time as he may consume to Mr. HUNTER, the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution by the Democrat leadership sends a message to three parties: America's enemies, America's friends, and America's troops. And I think it is going to be received by friend and foe alike as the first sound of retreat in the world battle against extremists and terrorists.

Mr. Speaker, we are not stopping anything with this resolution. In fact, the Big Red One is already moving its first brigade toward Iraq; the 82nd Airborne, America's all-American division, is already in Iraq. In fact, the Second Brigade is already in their sector in Baghdad. As a matter of fact, in the Baghdad plan, which reinforcements are serving, all nine sectors now have American and Iraqi forces in place and operating. So you are not stopping anything; you are simply sending a message, and it is the wrong message. Because this Nation has been for the last 60 years involved in spreading freedom, and it is in America's interest to spread freedom. Nobody would say that it is in our interest or it is not in our interest, for example, to have a free Japan on that side of the Pacific, or to have a free El Salvador in our own hemisphere, or to have those nations which were behind the Iron Curtain, nations like Poland, now standing side by side with us in Iraq. It is in our interest to spread freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I have been here before. A lot of us have. I remember in the 1980s, when Ronald Reagan was standing up to the Russians in Europe and the USSR was ringing our allies in France and Germany with SS–20 missiles, and the President of the United States moved to offset those missiles with Pershing IIs and ground-launched cruise missiles, and you had from the left a call that this was going to start World War III. And you had pundits throughout this country, as a matter of fact somebody showed me an old headline the other day, ''Better Red Than Dead,'' which emanated from that debate and that action.

But we stood tough, we offset the Russians, we showed strength, and at some point the Russians picked up the phone and said, ''Can we talk?'' And when we talked, we talked about the disassembly of the Soviet Empire.

In our own hemisphere, when we went in and helped that fragile government in El Salvador and stood up a little shield around that government, we had people saying that is going to be the next Vietnam for the United States. Well, it wasn't a Vietnam for the United States, and Salvadorans are standing with Americans now in Iraq. In fact, I think we have got people who died of old age waiting anxiously for the next Vietnam.

Now we are in a different part of the world, and it is a tough mission, and moving freedom and spreading freedom in that part of the world is very, very difficult. And I would just say to my colleagues, my friends who have talked about the smooth road not taken, how we have made mistakes; if we just kept that Iraqi in place of Saddam Hussein's, somehow things would be better now. Saddam Hussein's army had 11,000 Sunni generals. Now, what are you going to do with an army with 11,000 Sunni generals whose mission is to stabilize a population which is in the majority Shiite?

□ 1330

A lot of people have said we should have had 200,000 to 300,000 troops in country. Now at the same time they would say we have got to put an Iraqi face on this occupation. How do you put an Iraqi face on the occupation with 200,000 or 300,000 Americans in country?

The facts are, there is no smooth road. This is a tough and difficult road. Our military planners have come up with a strategy. It involves nine sectors in Baghdad with Iraqi troops to the front and with backup American battalions behind them, mentoring them, giving them advice, and in many cases stiffening their spine.

Now, there is no guarantee of success. But this is a first time. I think we should check our history, and my friend, Mr. SKELTON, I think you should check our history and see if this Congress has ever, after a military operation is already in place, is already moving forward, the Big Red One is already moving out. The all-American division, the 82nd Airborne, already has troops in place in combat, in the city, that we retroactively say, you know, we don't support this. The only message that can possibly send to the rest of the world is a fractured message.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to end with a comment, with a quotation from Douglas MacArthur in his farewell speech at West Point. I thought it was appropriate for these times. He talks about the American soldier, and he says this, ''Their story is known to all of you. It is the story of the American man at arms. My estimate of him was formed on the battlefields many, many years ago, and has never changed. I regarded him then, as I regard him now, as one of the world's noblest figures; not only as one of the finest military characters, but also as one of the most stainless.

''His name and fame are the birthright of every American citizen. In his youth and strength, his love and loyalty, he gave all that mortality can give. He needs no eulogy from me, or from any other man. He has written his own history and written it in red on his enemy's breast.''

Mr. Speaker, our soldiers are engaged in combat right now. The worst disservice that we can give to them is to retroactively blast and degrade the mission that they are currently undertaking. There is no good role, there is no good purpose that is served by this.

So I would ask all my colleagues, let us get behind not only our troops, let us get behind their mission. Let us vote ''no'' on this resolution.

Mr. SKELTON. I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from New York, a Korean War veteran, recipient of the Purple Heart, recipient of the Bronze Star, Mr. RANGEL.

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

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I didn't come down here, my colleagues, to talk about General MacArthur, but I guess I knew of him better than anyone in this room.

General MacArthur was called out of Korea. He was the commander of the entire Armed Forces there, and left us in the Second Infantry Division completely surrounded by the Chinese in November of 1950. The last I remember, he was called back by the Commander in Chief, Harry Truman, for defying his direction. So with all due respect to the great late general, this is hardly a time to talk about what soldiers have to do when they defy authority.

I want to thank those who have given us an opportunity today to express ourselves under question of life and death. Very few people have this responsibility, yet those here in this House, you didn't get elected to do this, but today you have to decide whether or not you want this war to continue and how many people have to die before it is stopped.

You here talk about me supporting a draft, but I challenge anyone to tell me that their feelings about this war in Iraq would not be different if they thought that their loved ones, their family, their community, would be placed in harm's way.

Whether you are for or against the war, or no matter how you voted, when you see the casualties mounting up, when you visit the hospitals and see young dedicated people without their skulls, their faces, their legs, their arms, you don't have to know any of these kids to start crying. But if you have children and grandchildren, and your imagination allows you to believe that they would be included in the 21,000, and no matter how many times they go, there has to be a feeling that maybe this is the last chance I have, you have to have a different feeling if you are not dealing with someone else's children.

Now, people would say these kids want to fight. I mean, they are different from most kids. They volunteered. They want to do it.

It is strange how most of them sought the $40,000, $30,000, $20,000 bonus or sought educational benefits, or don't come from families that are affluent in this country. It is strange that you never heard the President of the United States or the Secretary of Defense ever make a plea to the patriotism of America to say, Give me your young, your able body, give me your patriots, we have a war to fight. You have never heard that.

Oh, no, we applaud those who enlisted, but there has never been a plea out there for America to make sacrifices. A country at war, and the President doesn't ask people to sacrifice anything.

Well, my son in the Marines got out of the Persian Gulf. He is out, and he too enjoyed the GI Bill. But recently I attended a funeral in my district of a young man who died in Iraq, and I have gone to others, and the family was outside, and they pled with me, please, Congressman, tell them our son was a hero. Please, Congressman RANGEL, we thank you that you are here, salute my son, please.

I have gone to these funerals before. Most of these young men and women were marines. So I was so used to seeing this blue uniform with the red stripe. The family actually walked me to the coffin, and my knees buckled. Why? Because as sensitive and as passionate I am about the loss of life, instead of seeing a brown-skinned Dominican in a marine outfit, I saw a soldier about 20 years old. I saw a soldier of about 20 years old in an Army uniform, not a Marine uniform. Guess what, he looked just like me.

I ask my colleagues to try to figure, if you were involved as an individual, as a kid, or your family was involved, that this great country and this great Constitution has given you the right, right in your hand, to determine who lives and who dies. You cannot make a mistake in supporting this resolution, it is not going to hurt our beloved warriors, it is going to help our country, it is going to help them, and it is going to make us proud one day to be able to say, when asked, What did you do when this was going on in the world, and your Congress was asked?

You would be able to say, There was a resolution. It may not have been a profile in courage, but I supported it, and I am proud that I did.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to Mr. KING of New York, the ranking member of the Homeland Security Committee.

Mr. KING of New York. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I also appreciate the opportunity to take part in this debate, which as my friend from New York (Mr. RANGEL) said, isn't this a historic debate? It is part of our job. It is our obligation. It is a legal obligation; it is a moral obligation to be heard on this most pressing issue of our time.

I would also add at the outset, when we have talked about those who died in Iraq, and all of us go to the wakes of those who were killed in our district. Just the other day, if we are talking about the quality of the type of person, where they come from and who was killed in Iraq, there was a young man who was actually in what used to be the heart of my district, very affluent area, Manhasset. He was a graduate of Duke University, all-American Lacrosse player, was offered a scholarship to law school, but he turned it down to go in as an enlisted man, as an Army Ranger.

He served two tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, and he was killed on his third tour of Iraq. His family was proud of what he did, what he accomplished, what he stood for. I think it doesn't really add to the level of debate to somehow be suggesting that those who go to Iraq because they cannot be anywhere else or somehow it is all driven by economic need, he was a young man with everything in front of him.

He had all the opportunity in the world, and he went, and he joined the Army, went in as an enlisted man, died as a sergeant, and he was on his third tour in Iraq. So I think it is important to put that in the RECORD. Also, I know there are any number of Members in this body who have had members of their families serving in Iraq.

I think if we are going to talk about the gentleman from New York who wants to bring back the draft, we can have that in a separate debate. But I don't think it should be part of this debate.

Now, when this debate was actually scheduled, I actually thought it would

serve a constructive purpose. But as I look at the resolutions being offered, if I could really, I guess, quote from Senator LIEBERMAN of Connecticut, rather than a resolution, it is really a resolution of irresolution.

It is inherently contradictory, because it pledges support to the troops but also at the same time washes its hands of what the troops are attempting to do. I have heard speaker after speaker get up here today and say the new policy cannot work. The new policy is more of the same. This is the President's policy. He hasn't gotten the message from the American people.

Well the fact is, this policy is strongly supported by the new commander in Iraq, General Petraeus. As was pointed out, the Senate unanimously approved the appointment of General Petraeus by a vote of 81–0. Now, for people to come here today and say this is an inherently flawed policy, this is a policy that cannot work, this is a policy that is doomed to failure, to me, after General Petraeus has said that he believes the policy can work, that he supports the policy, is to attack directly either the credibility or the competency of General Petraeus, and that is a terrible message to be sending to our troops.

Actions do have consequences. I don't doubt the good faith of anyone on either side of the aisle when it comes to supporting the troops. The fact is, often you have to think beyond what the actual words are saying and realize the consequences those words have. For instance, my good friend, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, who I have actually traveled to Iraq with in 2003, where we met with General Petraeus and others in Mosul and with others and troops in Baghdad, he said that Iraq is a mess, and we have to end the nightmare.

Does anyone really think by Americans pulling out the nightmare is going to end, that the Middle East will become stable if we leave? Certainly al Qaeda doesn't believe that. Certainly the mullahs in Iran don't believe that. And also our allies don't believe that.

Again, what are the consequences of our actions? Are we saying just draw down for the sake of drawing down? I heard the distinguished Speaker of the House of Representatives say our goal is to get our troops home.

Well, I would say our goal should be to have our troops come home after we have achieved a goal, a goal of at least a stable Iraq, an Iraq which is able to protect its borders against Iran, and an Iraq which is able to prevent al Qaeda from setting up a privileged sanctuary in Iraq, and an Iraq which is able to create a situation in the north where the Kurds and the Turks are not fighting with one another.

So these are all serious issues that have to be addressed. I regret to say this resolution does not address it in any way. If anything, it is a serious step backward.

Now, also we have heard that we have to listen to the polls. We have to listen to what public opinion has to be at any particular time. Well, if anyone wants to go back and look at the polls, in 1952, President Truman's popularity rating was 22 percent. War in Korea was amazingly unpopular, and yet today he is acknowledged as one of our greatest Presidents, and the war in Korea is looked upon as an absolutely indispensable step in the defeat of communism, because they drew the line in Asia at the 38th parallel.

I know my good friend Mr. RANGEL served in Korea, he was wounded in Korea, and he performed valiantly in Korea. That war now is looked upon as one of the linchpins of the Cold War strategy, which, again, brought down the Communist menace.

□ 1345

Also I tried to research this. I am not aware of any time in the entire history of our country where the United States Congress has adopted a resolution questioning a particular battlefield strategy.

Like him or not, and I certainly support him, but the President is our Commander in Chief. I said the same thing when President Clinton was our Commander in Chief, and I was serving in this body at that time when there was tremendous criticism directed at him.

But the fact is, the President, no matter where he or she happens to be from, is the Commander in Chief. And we are at war. It was a war that was authorized by this Congress. And we should not be, I do not believe, setting the precedent of adopting resolutions questioning specific strategies.

Should we have adopted a resolution in the winter of 1944, 1945, questioning President Roosevelt's strategy in allowing the intelligence failures that brought about the Battle of the Bulge? We can go step by step. Certainly President Lincoln, during the Civil War when strategies were changed throughout the war and finally resulted in a victory.

Also we have to realize that the war in Iraq is part of an overall war against Islamic terrorism. As the former chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, as ranking member of the Homeland Security Committee, certainly we see that this is an enemy which is overseas and it is here. It is an enemy which is plotting every day to find ways to attack us.

I know later the distinguished ranking member of the Intelligence Committee will also speak to this part of the issue. But the fact is, we do not live in vacuums. We cannot isolate battlefields and silos and say this is Iraq, this is Afghanistan, and this is the Twin Towers.

The fact is, we are talking about actions having consequences. And I have been very critical of the Republican Party for 1983 when I believe we precipitously withdrew from Beirut. That had consequences. I was in this body when we precipitously withdrew from Somalia. I was also in this body when the Twin Towers were attacked the first time in 1993 and we took no action, or Khobar Towers when a constituent of mine was killed in 1996. We took no action.

The USS *Cole* in 2000 when we took no action. In 1998 the attacks on the African embassies, where we took very limited action. All of those had consequences. In fact, now we see after September 11, 2001, we find the historical record where Osama bin Laden said that when we saw that the United States was willing to withdraw from Somalia, how that emboldened Islamic terrorists throughout the world, how that showed them that we did not have the staying power, we did not have the guts to stick it out.

Listen, those who are really putting it on the line, those who have the guts are the men and women of the battlefield in Iraq and Afghanistan. But also we as elected officials have to show some courage and not just give in to the zeitgeists, not just give in to the latest public opinion poll or to the latest election, because quite frankly we were not elected to win elections; we were elected to show leadership and to do what has to be done.

When future generations look back at this, will they really say that we helped the struggle against Islamic terrorism by pulling out of Iraq, by not continuing that fight? Does anyone really think that that will not embolden al Qaeda, that that will not embolden Iran? Can anyone honestly say that?

And so I believe that what disappoints me about this debate and this resolution is we are treating Iraq almost like it is a pinpoint. It is one issue standing by itself, and it is not. It is part of a mosaic; it is part of a worldwide struggle. As someone who lost more than 100 friends, neighbors, constituents on September 11, I have seen firsthand the evils of Islamic terrorism.

As ranking member on the Homeland Security Committee, I know how there are forces in this country who would take action against us. I know the connections between forces in this country and forces overseas. It is no secret. It should not cause us any confusion as to why al Qaeda wants us to lose in Iraq.

It should not cause us any confusion as to why al Qaeda encourages the enemy against us in Iraq, and in fact has al Qaeda in Iraq itself fighting against us.

So now we come to the question of, with our troops committed there, with this being an absolutely essential part of the war against terrorism, what do we do? I agree that there is a consensus that the current policy has not been successful. There have been successes, but the policy itself has not been fully successful.

That is true in almost every war in which America has been engaged. It was certainly true during World War II, it was certainly true during Korea, and even take a war like Kosovo, which is

probably almost as antiseptic as a war could be, even though every war when anyone's life is on the line is brutal and deadly.

But from a strategic point of view, we are talking about it should have been a simple war. We ended up bombing a Chinese embassy in Belgrade. So, I mean, mistakes are made. And for us to say because mistakes are made we should redeploy our troops, which really is a euphemism for withdrawal.

We are sending signals to the world. We are sending signals to our troops, we are sending signals to our allies, we are sending signals to our enemies. On the one hand if we are unanimously confirming General Petraeus who supports this policy, and on the other hand we are saying we know the policy cannot work and we are actually going for the first time in American history going on record opposing a particular strategic policy, then I would say, where are we getting this from?

People say that this is just the same policy as we have had all along. General Petraeus says it is not. And I do not believe it is. Can I guarantee the new policy will work? No, I cannot. But I have met with generals, I have met with military experts, and they give good reasons why it can work. And there are people of very good faith on the other side who say it will not work.

But as I look at this, our commander, who is looked upon as the expert in counterinsurgency, who is the general who has certainly achieved the most in Iraq, and anyone who has been to Mosul knows the job that he achieved there, if he says this policy should work, and can work, then I believe we have the moral obligation, we have the legal obligation, and we have the obligation to history and for our children and grandchildren that we not undercut General Petraeus, that we not tell our troops we do not have faith in their ability to carry out the mission which General Petraeus says can be carried out, and we do not embolden our enemies by saying just wait this out a few months, wait it out a few months and you will get it, wait us out a few months and we will pull out like we did in Beirut or Somalia.

We cannot allow that message to be sent. The burden is on us. And if we fail in this mission, and the mission I believe of standing with our troops, standing with our commander in the field, and standing with the policy that the overwhelming majority of Congress voted for in 2003, and also the pledge that all of us made on September 11, 2001, then we will have failed in our obligations as Members of the United States Congress and failed in our obligation to our oath of office to do what has to be done, which should be done, which is essential if we are going to win the war against Islamic terrorism.

Mr. SKELTON. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I find it rather interesting, Mr. Speaker, that those who oppose this simple, straightforward resolution tend to confuse a permissive war with a necessary war. The goals of the insurgents in Iraq are far different from the terrorists that had their genesis in Afghanistan. Let us not be confused between the two conflicts or their origins or those against whom we fight.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to a veteran of the Korean War, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank our chairman, Mr. SKELTON, and I stand proud today with my fellow veterans in the House of Representatives to register our opposition to the President's plan to escalate the war in Iraq and to show our support for our men and women in uniform.

Now, last November 7 the American people sent a clear message to Congress and the President: we must end the war in Iraq. Now after nearly 4 years of bloodshed, death and destruction, Congress is likely to go on record as opposing the plan for escalation of this war.

No longer will Congress stand by while the President wages a war that defies logic, common sense and human decency. This week we shall take a stand. This week, we tell this administration enough is enough, stop ignoring the American people, stop ignoring your generals. And by the way, I include to the gentleman from New York two speakers ago, General Colin Powell, no less agrees with us.

Stop ignoring the foreign policy experts. Stop wasting American lives and resources on this disastrous and unnecessary conflict. This week's debate on this resolution represents an important turning point in public dialogue about Iraq. And so I welcome it, but it is not enough. The escalation must be stopped, and we cannot let the momentum against the war subside after we deal with the escalation.

Our priority must remain ending the fighting and dying in Iraq. We must end the senseless deaths of servicemembers like marine Tarryl Hill of Southfield, Michigan, who only last Wednesday died when his vehicle drove over a bomb in Fallujah.

Tarryl Hill was 19 years old. He had joined the military to help finance his education to become a chemical engineer. I do not want to see one more promising life like his extinguished on the altar of this administration's arrogance. The loss of Tarryl's life brings to mind the bereavement of another patriot from Flint, Michigan, Lila Lipscomb, whose 26-year-old son, Michael, died in Iraq in April 2003, when his helicopter was shot down.

A member of a military family, Ms. Lipscomb initially believed President Bush when he told the Nation that war was necessary for our national security. But her son's letters from the front lines and his tragic death showed her that he should have never gone to Iraq.

I need to spend a little time explaining my opposition to the troop surge, which is simply even more of the same. This policy is going in precisely the opposite direction recommended by the generals who get transferred if they do not agree.

It would simply expose GIs to more intense door-to-door fighting, in the vain hope that in the meanwhile the Iraqis will miraculously reconcile with us still being in their country.

The real and underlying question is how we remove ourselves from this quagmire. As I have emphasized many times, our Constitution gives Congress the central role in decisions of war and peace. Last fall the American people spoke loudly with their votes. We should be here showing the voters that we heard them and that their trust was well placed.

The ultimate, unequivocal authority of the Congress is the power of the purse. And so we must use it. Supporters of the President's failed Iraq policy have argued that using Congress's spending power to end the war means that we do not support the troops. It is beyond absurd to suggest that those of us who favor ending funding for the war would simply abandon the troops in the field without equipment and the supplies they need.

Cliches about supporting the troops are not really about our service members' best interests. The true purpose of these accusations is to distract us from the fact that we are bogged down in an unwinnable war that threatens to drag on for years, if not decades. Keeping our troops out of harm's way, especially when war is unnecessary, is the best possible way to support them. The American people understand that marching ahead blindly into oblivion is no way to support our troops. That is why they have asked us to end this war.

Mr. Speaker, the administration continues to live under the illusion that it can salvage its reputation by achieving a military victory in Iraq, when it is clear that diplomacy is the most effective means at our disposal. The recent National Intelligence Estimate reflecting the collective judgment of U.S. intelligence agencies only confirms what we have seen in the daily headlines for almost a year. It concludes that the civil war has reached an intensity that is "self-sustaining" and that there are no Iraqi national leaders with the ability to stop it. No wonder the administration stalled completion of the NIE until after the election and the President's presentation of his latest proposal.

Most of the American people know that there is only one way to proceed in Iraq. We must begin the phased withdrawal of American troops in the next 4 to 6 months and conclude it within the year. Redeploying our Armed Forces does not mean "cutting and running." On the contrary, we suggest continued and extensive involvement in the region through renewed diplomacy, a regional conference and reconstruction that is free from fraud and abuse. This sensible path is the only one that can lead us to victory.

ANNOUNCING THE PASSING OF THE HONORABLE CHARLIE NORWOOD

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have been informed by House leaders that our colleague, Congressman CHARLIE NORWOOD, has passed away. I would

ask our colleagues to join me as we rise in a moment of silent prayer for CHARLIE.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues and visitors.

Congressman NORWOOD was a proud Vietnam veteran, and his service to our Nation will be sorely missed. Mr. DEAL will soon come to the floor to make a statement on behalf of his State's delegation.

With that, I would like to yield such time as he may consume to Mr. HOEKSTRA, the ranking member of the Intelligence Committee.

□ 1400

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, let's be clear of the purpose of today. We face a real test of what this House of Representatives stands for and who we, as Representatives, really are.

Do any of us really believe that the resolution in front of us today is a serious piece of legislation? Does it properly recognize all of America's military and other national security professionals who defend us day and night? What of the hundreds of folks in the Intelligence Community that are ignored in this resolution, who each and every day are working hand in hand with our Armed Forces trying to achieve success in Iraq?

Does this resolution discuss or force a debate on the really tough issues of who it is that hates America and others so much that they are willing to kill innocent men, women and children? Again, this resolution comes up short.

What is the threat, and how should America respond? That is the debate that we should be having on this floor. This resolution is all about staying the course. It says, Support our troops and don't engage in new tactics; just keep going down the same path. That is not good enough.

There are people who hate us enough to want to kill. I speak of militant Islam's hate for America, a hate that extends to others, including Muslims. And these militant Islamists kill, they kill violently and indiscriminately, but this resolution is silent on the threat that we face as a Nation, and it is silent on how we should respond.

Who are these radical Islamists, and what should America's response to this threat be? We face this on a global basis. What is America's response to jihadism? How will America win this war against this calculating enemy? And how will America lead the world once again in the face of such a ruthless threat?

The resolution that we are debating today simply asks, Do you support America's fighting men and women, and do you support or oppose a tactic in a battle that is only one front in the war with these military jihadists who are bent on the destruction of the infidel America and others around the world.

Let me say to my colleagues that I don't believe I am wrong in saying that this debate is really about whether or not America is a great Nation that leads in the face of difficulty. Nor do I believe that I am wrong to question what actually happens when this debate and vote are over. Have we really helped the American people understand the threat? What message do we send to our troops in harm's way? And what is it that the American public needs to understand so that it can better understand the challenges that we face? My own answer, Mr. Speaker, was that we need to understand the consequences of failure. We need to fully understand the nature of the threat that is posed now, and moreover in the future, if we fail in the larger war against militant Islam.

Mr. Speaker, let me outline some things about this very real threat to our very existence that needs to be known by the American public and, indeed, this body. This is not a global war on terror. I have never liked that term, I don't know why we keep using it. This is a global war with jihadists. We are not at war with a tactic, we are at war with a group of militant Islamists who hate us and who hate much of the rest of the world. What is a jihadist, other than someone or some group so full of hate that they are willing to kill?

I have a passion for understanding this threat. And thanks to a great deal of superb research done by many experts on the subject, in particular the author Mary Habeck, we have been enlightened as to who these individuals are, and perhaps also get an insight into the question of why do they hate, and why do they hate so much that they are willing to kill.

I can tell you that these militant Islamist jihadists are a fringe element of Islam who have very specific ideas about how to revive Islam, return Muslims to world power, and how to deal with their enemies. They are committed to a violent overthrow of the existing international system, and to its replacement by an all-encompassing Islamist state, the Caliphate.

Mr. Speaker, in studying this threat, this militant Islamic jihadist threat, we must also understand why Iraq is such an important element of their war against the West. This is where the letter from al Qaeda's number two leader, Zawahari, to the late al Zarqawi outlining the Islamic Caliphate that would stretch from Indonesia across the Middle East and Africa is instructive. In that letter, Zawahari outlines a four-stage plan to create this religious empire.

Stage one. ''Expel the Americans from Iraq.'' Expel them in defeat. I fear that this debate may be the first step in that process.

Stage two is to create an Islamic religious government in the old Mesopotamia, that is, Iraq, developing it and supporting it ''until it achieves the level of a Caliphate,'' until it fills the void stemming from the departure of the Americans.

Step three is to extend the jihad way to secular countries neighboring Iraq. The jihadists will attack heretic Muslims, as they define them.

And stage four is the clash with Israel, because Israel was established only to challenge any new Islamic entity.

Let's be clear about this. This jihad is about them. It is about their god, their religion, before it becomes anything about anyone or anything else. That's right, it is about them before it is about us.

The militant jihadists believe that Islam worked well for over a thousand years, spreading a true gospel, a unified society that followed the Shari'a, a law handed down by God. They believe that the modern world has forsaken that pure religious life, and they believe that only in a Caliphate governed by the Shari'a is the way to return to that pure life.

This is the world that they now want to recreate and force on the rest of the world. That is why they are fighting and that is why they are killing. They see today's world as one where unbelievers, the United States, Japan and others, dominate politically, culturally, militarily and economically. This directly assaults their religious beliefs, as in effect, much if not all of the world is controlled by unbelievers, unbelievers who must be destroyed, including secular Muslim states in the region.

To illustrate, let me quote from Osama bin Laden's Fatwa. Listen to what these people tell themselves and each other: ''There is no more important duty than pushing the American enemy out of the Holy Land, no other priority, except Belief, could be considered before it. There is no precondition for this duty, and the enemy should be fought with one's best abilities. If it is not possible to push back the enemy except by the collective movement of the Muslim people, then there is a duty on the Muslims to ignore the minor differences among themselves. Even the military personnel who are not practicing Islam are not exempted from the duty of jihad against the enemy.''

It should be clearly understood that a central tenet of jihadists' beliefs is the belief that God is one; he has no equals, he has no partners. This is important. If one believes that God is one and all that matters of rule giving or law making belongs to him, no human being, no government could make laws or alter the Shari'a laws of God. This would be, for all intents, setting oneself up to be the equal of God. Herein lies the problem that these militant Islamists have with the West and secular Muslim countries. This belief is applied equally to infidels and Muslim heretics.

The bottom line is that any government or order of law other than Shari'a is illegitimate. This belief, in their minds, justifies the killing of heretical

Muslims and non-Muslims alike. This is not recent thinking. A prominent early 20th century Egyptian Muslim ideologue named Hasan al Banna professed this point about Muslims and nonMuslim heretics. He stated, quote, we will not stop at this point, but we will pursue this evil force to its own land, invade its western heartland, and struggle to overcome it until all the world shouts the name of the Prophet and the teachings of Islam are spread throughout the world. All religion will be exclusively for Allah.

He went on to say that this violence would not be to avenge wrong suffered, nor to kill the unbelievers, but to save mankind from its many problems. Are we starting to get a picture of who the enemy may be? It is also important that jihadists' interpretation of Islam is they will reject any system of laws not based on Shari'a.

Democracy. Why do they hate us? Democracy, he claimed, is the ultimate expression of idolatry, giving reason for the hatred of Western values. This is about them, it is not about us.

Al Banna is not the only studied ideologue. Another name, Sayyid Qutb, wrote, ''Islam has a mandate to order the whole of human life, and that the Western idea of separation between religion and the rest of life is, quote, a hideous schizophrenia that would lead to the downfall of white civilization and therefore its replacement by Islam.''

Qutb maintained that political and religious ideology of the jihadist is derived directly from the Koranic argument that God, unique and without partner, is the only being of sovereignty. Therefore, the only role for national leaders is to implement God's laws. This gives the jihadists their belief that attacking secular or Muslim heretic societies is justified. Qutb basically justified all-out warfare on all of these societies.

Where does that leave us today? It leaves us with a discussion that should be much deeper than the resolution that is in front of us. The resolution in front of us is a shallow political document.

Let me return to Osama bin Laden's Fatwa against the West. Let me use his own words. In calling on all Muslims, he says, ''The explosions at Riyadh and Al-Khobar is a warning of this volcanic eruption emerging.''

To further his murderous goals, bin Laden then went on to outline the terrorist approach to his holy war to by saying, ''It must be obvious to you that due to the imbalance of power between our Armed Forces and the enemy forces, a suitable means of fighting must be adopted, i.e., using fast-moving light forces that work under complete secrecy; in other words, to initiate a guerrilla warfare where the sons of the nation, and not the military forces, take part in it. And as you know, it is wise, in the present circumstances, for the armed military forces not to be engaged in conventional fighting with the forces of the crusader enemy, unless a big advantage is likely to be achieved and great losses induced on the enemy side. That will help to expel the defeated enemy from the country.''

He goes on, ''Therefore, efforts should be concentrated on destroying, fighting and killing the enemy until, by the grace of Allah, it is completely defeated. The time will come, by the permission of Allah, when you will perform your decisive role so that the word of Allah will be supreme and the word of the infidels will be the inferior. You will hit with iron fists against the aggressors.''

The modern words of bin Laden alone do not adequately explain the current militant Islamic threat to the United States and its friends around the world. Again in their own words, this quote from a senior al Qaeda leader, quote, Islam became to be the only hope in jihad under the banner of Islam to become a solution for all of the enemies of America and of those weakened nations, even to the leftist and peace groups in the Christian world. Whoever follows the writings of some of the Western authors will find that some of them started to declare, through their writings, about the American tyranny, that there is no hope to face America other than through the armed Muslims. To the extent that in one of the demonstrations that included hundreds of thousands against globalization and war in Italy, the demonstrations carried a picture of bin Laden placing Che Guevara's hat on it, drawing him to be a Che Guevara look-alike. They wrote under his picture, ''anti-American.'' Through this action they expressed that the symbol of today's Islamic jihad is the only solution to face America.

□ 1415

Mr. Speaker, here is the true threat to America and the West: this militant Islamic jihad, a jihad that spans the globe, including attacks in Bali; in Spain; the United Kingdom; in the Philippines; in Kashmir; in Kenya; in Jordan; Israel; Nigeria; and, yes, in the United States and Iraq. What is not being discussed is this global problem, this threat to peace and stability everywhere in the world. Why, I ask, is the focus so keenly on Iraq as the problem, the only problem for us to debate? Iraq is not the problem. It is but one front in this larger war. The American people are not being well served by our leaders and the media that are solely focused on the conflict in Iraq. This is but a single front in a much larger war.

Mr. Speaker, let me close with these final thoughts about the militant Islamic threat we face not only in the front in Iraq but, indeed, around the world, including here in America.

There is a fundamental clash of civilizations at work here. There is a fundamental belief by the jihadis that Islam must expand to fill the entire world or else falsehood in its many guises will do so. This belief includes their facts that democracy, liberalism, human rights, personal freedoms, international law, international institutions are illegal, illegitimate, and sinful. Democracy, and in particular the United States democracy, is the focus of their wrath because it is considered the center of liberalism. This is not an enemy with whom we can negotiate. We must contain them and defeat them.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution before us does not address this threat, a real threat to our very existence. We are at war, and I fear we don't even know that we are under attack. This myopic resolution does not recognize or address that threat.

I urge my colleagues and the House to vote ''no'' on this resolution.

MOMENT OF SILENCE OBSERVED IN MEMORY OF THE HONORABLE CHARLIE NORWOOD

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that we recognize the Members of the Georgia delegation to make the sad commentary on Congressman NORWOOD's passing.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MORAN of Virginia). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman.

On behalf of my colleagues from the State of Georgia, it is with great sadness that I announce that our colleague CHARLIE NORWOOD passed away at approximately 12:45 today.

CHARLIE was a great Member of this body and a friend to all.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that this body observe a moment of silence in his memory.

Amen.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, once again my friends on the other side of the aisle are attempting to confuse the conflict in Iraq with the war against terrorists and has their genesis in Afghanistan, trying to put it all in one basket. That is not the case. Anybody can have their own opinion, but, Mr. Speaker, they may not have their own facts.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield 5 minutes to my colleague from California (Mr. THOMPSON), a gentleman who is a Vietnam combat veteran of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for recognizing me for time.

Mr. Speaker and Members, as a combat veteran, from the bottom of my heart, I say thank you to the brave men and women who have served in Iraq, each with great distinction.

Our troops have done an outstanding job. They have done all that has been asked of them and more. They have performed with the utmost professionalism, making all of us very proud.

Now, I believe it is past time that we start bringing these brave men and

women home. They should be home with their families, not in the middle of Iraq's civil war. Moreover, we shouldn't be sending more troops into Iraq's civil war. Some of our servicemembers have been on two, three, and even four tours of duty in Iraq already.

This escalation would put too much strain on our military and not just our troops. Much of our military's equipment is damaged. It will take years and billions of dollars to repair it and replace it. Nearly every Reserve and National Guard member has been mobilized. The escalation is in no one's best interest.

Two weeks ago I joined with my colleague PATRICK MURPHY from Pennsylvania, a decorated Army captain who served in Iraq, to introduce binding legislation to begin a phased redeployment of our troops out of Iraq. Our bill, which has already attracted 20 co-authors from both sides of the aisle and has a companion bill in the Senate, provides a practical and comprehensive strategy for ending our military involvement in Iraq. It sets a firm deadline for phased redeployment of our troops beginning May 1 with all combat brigades out by March 31 of 2008. It provides a concrete plan for shifting security responsibilities to where they belong: with the Iraqis.

I have visited with our troops in Iraq, and I have talked to those who have been training the Iraqi security forces. They have told me that the U.S. troops have finished their job and that Iraq needs to step up and start securing their country. Americans cannot continue to do it for them.

Our bill recognizes that the President's escalation plan is a continuation of his failed ''stay the course'' slogan and it would not allow the increase of troop levels without congressional approval.

Mr. Speaker, the United States cannot win the peace in Iraq. The Iraqis must be the ones to do that. Our bill recognizes this reality and creates a surge in diplomacy, not troops, by creating a special U.S. envoy that will help build relationships between Iraq and their neighbors. Our bill is a strategy for success in Iraq and is the best way to bring our brave men and women home as quickly and safely as possible.

While I strongly believe that today we should be debating and passing our binding solution, H.R. 787, I know that this week's debate is the first real debate we have had on Iraq in more than 4 years. In this week alone, we will more than quadruple the amount of time given to debate this war since it began.

Thank you, Speaker PELOSI, for bringing this important matter to the floor. This resolution is a critical step in getting our men and women out of this ugly mess, a full blown civil war in Iraq. I support today's resolution, which joins with the American people in sending the President a loud and clear message that escalation is not the answer. We need to focus on getting our troops out of Iraq as safely and quickly as possible and making sure that the Iraqis step up and assume the security responsibilities for their country.

I also rise to tell those who have served, those who are serving in Iraq today, and their proud families thank you. Your Nation thanks you for your great service to our country.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In this debate on Iraq, we must always be aware that the remarks are not to be confined only to the American people. Our words will be heard not just by our friends but by our enemies also. They are watching to see what America will do. No weakness of ours, no internal political struggle will go unnoticed.

The suicide bombers, the leaders of al Qaeda, the rulers of Iran, many others are listening, seeking encouragement for their fellow extremists, listening for signs of our defeat.

We know from many sources that al Qaeda, the terrorists in Iraq, and our enemies planning further attacks on us closely follow what is said and what is done in the United States and use that knowledge to help them calculate their next steps against us. They routinely cite statements by U.S. sources as validation of their strategy to defeat America.

Let me quote Muhammad Saadi, a senior leader of the Islamic jihad, who said that talk of withdrawal from Iraq makes him feel ''proud.'' He said: ''As Arabs and Muslims we feel proud, very proud from the great successes of the Iraqi resistance, this success that brought the big superpower of the world to discuss a possible withdrawal.''

They are looking for concessions of defeat, signs of weakness, and it is within this context that we embark on this debate today.

The question before us concerns not the past but the future. Where should our country go from here? We are not merely debating a resolution, but we are deliberating on our Nation's future.

The war in Iraq is but a part of a far larger struggle, a global struggle, the struggle against Islamic extremist militants. As in the Cold War, our current struggle is one of survival. The enemy does not mean merely to chase us away. The goal of the Islamic extremist radicals is to destroy us. If we run, they will pursue. If we cower, they will strike.

The choice before us is this: Do we fight and defeat the enemy, or do we retreat and surrender? We must not fool ourselves into believing that we can accommodate our enemies and thereby secure their cooperation. We should not believe that the enemies' demands are limited and reasonable and thus easily satisfied or that we can find safety by withdrawing from the world. This strategy has been tried in the past with catastrophic consequences.

Neville Chamberlain genuinely believed that he had brought ''peace in our time'' by washing his hands of what he believed to be an isolated dispute in what he termed ''a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing.'' That country was Czechoslovakia, and Chamberlain's well-intentioned efforts to withdraw Britain from the problems in that far-away region only ensured that an immensely larger threat was thereby unleashed.

The threat of Hitler did not appear suddenly out of a vacuum. The challenges that we face today thus have been building for many years.

We experienced the first attack on the World Trade Center in 1993. The destruction of our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the bombing of the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia in 1998, the attack on the USS *Cole* in 2000, and then most dramatically the attack on our Nation on 9/11.

As these attacks built over the years, we did little in response. Our enemies came to believe that they could strike us with impunity and that we would shrink from our responsibilities, from defending our interests, that we would not stand up for our very own survival. They felt safe in planning for larger attacks.

Now our fight is truly one of global proportions. Some may not want to believe it. The terrorists, however, are certain to believe it. As stated by senior al Qaeda leader al Zawahiri, '' . . . Jihad in Iraq requires several incremental goals. The first stage: expel the Americans from Iraq. The second stage: establish an Islamic authority or emirate, then develop it and support it until it achieves the level of a caliphate, over as much territory as you can, to spread its power in Iraq.''

He continues: ''The third stage: extend the jihad wave to the secular countries neighboring Iraq. The fourth stage: It may coincide with what came before, the clash with Israel, because Israel was established only to challenge any new Islamic entity.''

These are the words of al Zawahiri, not my words. And this al Qaeda leader went on to say: ''The whole world is an open field for us.''

What then are the consequences of a U.S. withdrawal and surrender? The terrorists, our mortal enemies, will have demonstrated that they have defeated us, the strongest power on Earth. They will have proven that our enemies only have to make the cost too high for us and that we will give up. The result would be an extraordinary boost to their morale and standing in the world, resulting from such a historic and momentous accomplishment on their part. They will become heroes in the minds of millions. They will be inundated with recruits, with financing, with support of all types.

□ 1430

And they will be eager to go after us.

A leader of the terrorist organization Islamic Jihad recently said of an American withdrawal from Iraq, ''There is no chance that the resistance will stop.'' He said an American withdrawal from Iraq would ''prove that resistance is the most important tool and that this tool works. The victory of the Iraqi revolution will mark an important step in the history of the region and in the attitude regarding the United States.''

These are his words, not mine.

We know that the terrorists would draw these conclusions because they have done so before when we recoiled in the face of terrorist attacks. In bin Laden's 1996 Declaration of Jihad and other statements, bin Laden repeatedly pointed to America's weakness being its low threshold for pain. As evidence, he pointed to the U.S. withdrawal from Somalia in 1993 because of casualties from attacks by al Qaeda and its allies.

Bin Laden said, ''When tens of your soldiers were killed in minor battles and one American pilot was dragged in the streets of Mogadishu, you left the area carrying disappointment, humiliation, defeat and your dead with you. The extent of your impotence and your weakness became very clear.''

These are bin Laden's words, not mine.

We witnessed the consequences of Somalia and the ensuing inaction. However, the implications for withdrawal and surrender in Iraq could be even greater. There would be an intensification of the violence.

As the National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq recently affirmed, ''If Coalition forces were withdrawn rapidly during the term of this estimate, we judge that this almost certainly would lead to a significant increase in the scale and scope of sectarian conflict in Iraq, intensify Sunni resistance to the Iraqi Government, and have adverse consequences for national reconciliation.''

Iraq would become, as one of my Democratic colleagues said in December of 2005, a ''snakepit for terrorists.''

Sunni Arabs throughout the Middle East would certainly view the resulting situation as a Shiite victory in Iraq and, in turn, as a win for the regime in Iran. Neighboring countries would likely seek to prevent Iranian domination of Iraq and the region by providing financial and other support, including potentially troops, to anti-Iranian factions.

It would be interpreted as a defeat of the U.S. and would thus strengthen rogue regimes in Syria and Iran. Iran would be free to expand its influence throughout the Middle East, including its long-term effort to dominate the Persian Gulf and the world's oil supply.

Iran's sponsorship of terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Hezbollah would likely increase, thereby ensuring the murder of countless civilians and a further destabilization of countries in the region and indeed beyond.

Let us not forget that Iran's proxy, Hezbollah, twice attacked in our own hemisphere, in Argentina, in the mid-1990s. Let us not forget that in 2002 a court case in the United States found that one of two men were convicted of financing Hezbollah of $2 million in illegal activity here in the United States and that last year an individual from Detroit was charged with supporting Hezbollah financially and was described by the United States Attorney in the case as a ''fighter, recruiter and a fundraiser.''

Let us not forget that Iran is a nation believed to be pursuing nuclear weapons, and thus leaving the region vulnerable to Iranian domination, and that would have grave consequences for the U.S. security priorities.

Surrendering Iraq over to the terrorists would erode the trust of the U.S. in that region and affect our critical regional interests in the entire neighborhood. Our allies, such as Kuwait, Jordan, Bahrain and Egypt may become reluctant to continue their cooperation with us, which currently includes providing access to their facilities, logistical support that we need to protect our interests in the region.

The damage would not be confined, however, to the Middle East. Our enemies would be encouraged to join forces in a coalition to directly challenge the United States and expand their efforts to undermine us and our allies.

It is already happening. Venezuela's strongman Hugo Chavez is openly forming an alliance with Iran, and recently called on Iran and Venezuela to join forces to ''finish off the U.S. empire,'' quoting him.

Let us consider the consequences of withdrawing and surrendering Iraq to Islamic militant extremists. As James Woolsey, the former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, has emphasized, ''We have to do our damndest to win this thing, in spite of the history of mistakes in tactics and strategy. The stakes are too high to do otherwise. The whirlwind we will reap if we lose means that we owe it to the world and to future generations to do everything humanly possible to avoid giving the Islamists the encouragement they will certainly obtain if they win.''

Mr. Speaker, this is not just an abstract policy discussion for me. This is a subject close to my heart. My stepson Doug and his wife Lindsay are both marine pilots who served in Iraq alongside many other brave Americans. They understand the consequences of defeat. They recognize the deadly enemy that we are facing.

Lindsay will soon be deployed to Afghanistan, in just a few weeks, where, depending on our actions in this Chamber this week, she could face a more deadly enemy. All of us, all of us long for a world in which the mortal challenge of Islamic militant extremism does not exist. But that world is a fantasy, and that is the world that this resolution seems to address.

Many times in our history we have met with great challenges, and many of them seemed insurmountable. And yet every time we rose to face them, and we prevailed. We are faced once again with an overwhelming challenge, that of Islamic militant extremists focused on our destruction and on world domination. There is no path backward, there is no retreat, because that will only bring disaster.

I am saddened that some in this Chamber have felt the need on this floor to characterize the decision of our young men and women to join the military as being motivated by money, by bonuses and by other financial benefits, rather than their patriotism.

My stepson Doug and my daughter-in-law Lindsay are both college graduates. Doug is a graduate of the University of Miami. Lindsay is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and has a master's in English. They have many, many opportunities they could have pursued. They chose to serve their country, because they and many others are patriots. They did not do it for bonuses. They did not do it for money.

Let us not just support our troops. Let us support their mission. And their mission is to defeat the Islamic extremists.

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

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, during his 20 years of service to this country, the gentleman to whom I am about to yield earned two Distinguished Flying Crosses, two Bronze Stars, the Soldiers Medal and other awards. A Vietnam combat veteran serving two tours as an assault helicopter pilot, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BOSWELL).

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

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for the time. I appreciate being part of this discussion today.

Mr. Speaker, I couldn't help but be somewhat taken by Mr. RANGEL's comments about the lack of urgency and the lack of sacrifice in our country because of what is going on with our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, and I can say to you, whoever is listening or watching, wherever you are, when I go through my communities, my towns, I sense the same thing. Where is the sense of urgency and where is the sense of sacrifice?

I will tell you where it is. When you go to see the troops off, to see their families, to see them, then you know where the sacrifice is. Then you know where the urgency is, to be there when they go back the second or third time, and, as some have said, the fourth.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, a resolution in support of our troops who are serving with distinction in Iraq, and opposing the President's call for escalating the troop levels in Iraq.

As a two-tour combat veteran of the Vietnam conflict, as Ike said, as an assault helicopter pilot, I, like many others in this body, know firsthand of the

everyday sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform serving in Iraq. And, I might add, if I could, I know the sacrifices of their spouses and children. Branded on me always will be the reminder of my children when I had to leave, and they wondered if their dad would come back. You can't forget that. And it is happening to our troops repeatedly. More than 3,100 have given the supreme sacrifice. Over 20,000 have been injured, many of them very severely.

This resolution recognizes our brave men and women for performing their mission to the best of their ability. All Members of this body, all Members of this body stand foursquare behind their efforts.

As one Member of Congress who voted in support of the Iraq war resolution in 2002, I recognize the pretext for going to war was based on faulty, misleading, misinformation. I cannot reverse that vote, but I can no longer acquiesce to a failed and tragic military exercise in Iraq.

Two months ago, Generals Casey and Abizaid stated they did not support the increase in U.S. troop levels in Iraq, and recently President Bush maintained that that military policy with regard to Iraq would be determined by our military leaders. However, last month, President Bush ignored his top military advisers and called for a 20,000-plus increase in U.S. troops in Iraq.

I and others have been pressing the administration to level with the American people on the status of the Iraqi Security Forces being trained and ready to defend their Nation. If the Iraqis are trained and ready, reportedly over 300,000, as we have been told, it is time to begin now a planned phased withdrawal of U.S. troops. Sending more U.S. troops to Iraq does nothing to enhance the Iraqis' training. It only places more U.S. forces into harm's way to become additional targets of the Iraqi civil war. This failed policy must stop. We can support our troops in the field and oppose this escalation of U.S. forces.

The sectarian civil war violence in Iraq is increasing, and U.S. troops are becoming an increasing target of the various tribes and factions. We cannot continue to place ourselves in the middle of this civil war. It is time to insist that the Iraqis resolve their own civil war. We must insist and allow the Iraqis to defend their own Nation. The Bush administration stated that Iraq Security Forces are trained and ready in sufficient numbers to do the job. Again, they stated over 300,000 trained and equipped.

Therefore, I believe now is the time to oppose any further escalation of U.S. troop levels and now begin the planned, phased withdrawal of U.S. forces. I regret today's resolution is nonbinding. We need to begin addressing this matter in real substantive legislation. I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution and to work in unison to bring our troops home.

Mr. Speaker, you know what we do best? You know what we do best? I will bet everybody who is paying attention intends to file their income tax April 15. We do best when we are under pressure to get it done.

I think it is time to say to Mr. Maliki, you know what? You have got your government in place. You have got your chance for democracy. It has been given to you. We went in there and Saddam is gone. He is history. You have got your chance. It is up to you. Now, you have got your problems, but you have got your government and it is in place. You have your problems, but you have to work them out. We cannot come in there and settle a civil war. And that is exactly what is going on.

□ 1445

We were, like you were there and I was with you in the White House, 14 months ago when they said to the President, the Vice President, Secretary Rumsfeld, Secretary Rice and General Pace, if you have got at that time, 14 months ago, if you have got over 200,000 troops trained, equipped and in field, then what is your plan to bring our troops home? And just like now, silence fell in the room.

Now, the claim is over 300,000 trained and equipped in the field and we are not bringing ours home. So we should say to Mr. Maliki, you have got to do it, pick something, whether it is oil fields or pick something and say starting next week or the week after you are responsible for their security because we are going to bring our troops out and bring them home and we are going to take them to Baghdad, put them on airplanes and fly them home. You have got to do it. It is yours to do and we hold you responsible to do it.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire about the time that has been consumed and the time remaining on each side, please.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) has used 1 hour, 3 minutes, having 3 hours and 57 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) has used 45 minutes, leaving 4 hours and 15 minutes remaining.

Mr. SKELTON. Then subject to the Chair, I wish to recognize more than one speaker in a row on our side.

I yield, Mr. Speaker, 5 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BOYD), a gentleman who is a Vietnam combat veteran, rifle platoon leader of the 101st Airborne Division.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, may I ask the gentleman from Missouri, is it your intent to keep going or will you come back to the Republican side? Mr. BOYD and I are lucky enough to be in the same committee, and I think we are probably working under the same time constraint, if we could go back to the Republican side. That is what I wanted to ask you, after he speaks.

Mr. SKELTON. That would be fine.

Mr. KINGSTON. Thank you.

Mr. BOYD of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Mr. SKELTON, for giving me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my fellow veterans to express strong opposition to sending more than 20,000 additional United States troops to Iraq, and I rise in strong support of the underlying resolution that we are debating today.

Mr. Speaker, when thinking about our political and military situation in Iraq, I often reflect on my own service in Vietnam and my thoughts there as a person, when I served there as a young man in uniform proudly defending the ideals on which America was built.

I often think, how is it different today? How is today's soldier in Iraq different than soldiers 40 years ago in Vietnam? I think there are some differences, but there are obviously many striking similarities.

Obviously, our soldiers today have communications technologies and other war-fighting technologies that are far superior to what we had 40 years ago in Vietnam. Soldiers now have access to a 24-hour news cycle that we did not have in the 1960s.

But, Mr. Speaker, what is the same, what is exactly the same, is the fact that our soldiers are trained and equipped to accomplish the mission given to them by their political leaders in Washington. They are trained to execute this mission and to the best of their ability, without any thought to whether that mission is right or wrong, or even whether that mission is well thought out. Clearly, this is very similar to what we experienced during Vietnam.

When I served in Vietnam, we were trying to execute a mission that was impossible to do because our political leaders had given us a poorly defined mission that we could not win militarily.

Our brave men and women serving in Iraq rely on us, their political leaders, to develop a winning strategy, and it is very clear that we are not winning in Iraq by any standard of measurement that you might want to use.

I returned from my service in Vietnam at the height of the anti-war sentiment; and let me tell you, there was no worse feeling than coming home after a tour of duty to find that you had come home to an American society that was not grateful and was not behind you.

I want to make sure that our sons and daughters serving in Iraq today do not experience what we experienced 35, 40 years ago. The American people and their leaders in Congress all support the men and women executing the outlined mission. These men and women who have fought and defended our country should be proud of the job they have done, and we all are proud of them.

However, we should have learned from the mistakes our political leaders made in Vietnam and not make those mistakes again.

The problems we are having in Iraq have nothing to do with our troops and

their ability and their training and their equipment. Our problem is with our policy.

The men and women serving in Iraq are counting on their political leaders to develop a successful strategy in Iraq, and interjecting more young American men and women in uniform into the crossfire of an Iraqi civil war is simply not the right approach.

The warring factions in Iraq have been at odds since the death of Muhammad in 632 A.D., and the United States military is not going to solve an Iraqi political problem, a problem that has existed between the Sunnis and the Shias for more than 1,400 years.

Past troop surges aimed at stemming the violence in Iraq have failed, and continuing to deploy more American troops will not bring us any closer to a self-governed Iraq.

We have been training and equipping Iraqi security forces for almost 3 years. We have 325,000 trained, conducting security operations there. The continuing presence of large numbers of American troops in Iraq only postpones the day when Iraqis will have to assume responsibility for their own government. Ultimately, it is incumbent upon the Iraqis to make peace and promote democracy in their own country.

With 140,000 of our troops in Iraq, the war in Iraq is exhausting our resources, resources that we, our people, are demanding that we have at home to solve some of our domestic priorities such as health care and education. And those resources are not only dollars; they are human blood.

Again, I stand here today to oppose the Iraqi troop surge because all evidence suggests that it is not a path to victory in Iraq and will only put more Americans in harm's way.

Ultimately, the debate today is about one thing, the men and women that proudly wear the uniform and the best way to take them out of the center of an increasing sectarian conflict and civil war in Iraq.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield to Mr. KINGSTON such time as he may consume, a member of the Defense appropriations subcommittee.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Florida for yielding, and Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

I want to say this, that if the troops in Baghdad watched what Congress was doing today, they would be outraged. Fortunately for us in the Free World, they do not sit around and watch C–SPAN and what silly politicians do. They live in a real world where there are real bullets.

This resolution, on the other hand, is not real. It is a political whip check designed for press releases. It is nonbinding.

The Democrat National Chairman, Howard Dean, famously said: ''The idea that we are going to win the war in Iraq is an idea which is just plain wrong.''

Speaker PELOSI called the war ''a grotesque mistake.''

So if the situation in Iraq is so hopeless, and unwinnable, why are we messing around with nonbinding resolutions? If the war is a lost cause and there is no longer an American interest, why do we not just go ahead and get out of there now? It is not worth another life or another dime.

Conversely, if the cause is worthwhile, should we not fight to win? Nonbinding resolutions, Mr. Speaker, are great for the Democrat club back home, but for those of us who serve in Congress, we are the law of the land. We are elected to pass laws, fund wars and influence policies. Our opinions, as expressed in nonbinding resolutions about what should happen in Sudan or Israel or Cuba, they are appropriate, but when it comes to American soil, our job is to pass real legislation and make real laws. We do not have to vent our frustration. We can change policy.

This week's resolution is just a cover-your-rear-end political design to give the legislative branch a chance to say I told you so. But, Mr. Speaker, as you know, like it or not, a real vote is coming.

It is coming in the form of the fiscal year 2008 supplemental bill. In that supplemental resolution, $5.6 billion is designed to pay for 21,500 new troops in Iraq. All Members will have a chance to vote on that supplemental bill; and as you know, an amendment can be offered to delete the $5.6 billion. A ''no'' vote would be against it, and a ''yes'' vote would be to say we are against having the troops there and we are not going to pay for it. That is what is real.

I think in November the electorate made an adjustment. They did not like what the Republican House was doing, and I certainly understand that. I think we did fail on many levels to deliver the products which we promised we would deliver to the people. But the Democrats are in the same situation. It was an anti-war fever that swept so many of them into office, but here we are with a nonbinding resolution.

Now, I understand that it is frustrating. I serve, as you do, on the Defense Committee; and as you know, many times we do not get all the information that we want. We have heard, as Mr. BOYD said, general after general after admirals after captains telling us we do not need more troops in Iraq, and now they are saying that they do. We have also heard the President say the decisions for military changes in Iraq will be made in Baghdad, not in Washington, DC, and I hope that is the case with this situation.

I am very frustrated about it, but one thing we have been told unequivocally by those same generals and admirals and Secretaries of the Navy and Army and Secretary of Defense and today from the ambassadors from Jordan and Egypt is that if America withdraws from Iraq at this time, it is sure to bring chaos and destruction. That will lead to a full-scale sectarian war which could lead to a division. It could be so chaotic that the United States of America would have to return to Iraq in larger force numbers than we have now. It could lead to Iraq becoming a nation state controlled by terrorists or terrorist sympathizers and that would be in control of the third largest oil reserve in the world.

Now, we have seen what Mr. Putin and Hugo Chavez down in Venezuela are doing with their petro-dollars and all the anti-American ill will they are spreading around the globe. Would you really want to empower a bunch of terrorists with those kinds of oil revenues?

Then the other thing we are told is if you pull out immediately or quickly what happens to U.S. credibility abroad? As we are dealing with China, who very recently shot down a satellite, we are very concerned about that. North Korea, we are at the negotiating table with them right now. And Russia seems to be slipping away from democracy and going back to some of its older ways that we are worried about. As I have just said, Hugo Chavez is spreading bad street money all over South America, which is not a good sign.

And then finally, Mr. Speaker, if we pull out, what does it say to the American servicemen who have already lost their lives? Hey, sorry, we did not mean it; your sacrifice was not worth us gutting it out, if you will.

You know, it is interesting, the President has been criticized for ''staying the course,'' and he is no longer staying the course. Who is supporting staying the course by a ''yes'' vote to this nonbinding resolution, but the Democrat leadership and the Democrat Party.

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If you are saying it is a lost cause but we support you, how are you saying, no, we are not going to send recruits? It doesn't make sense. You just can't have it both ways. This is staying the course. The President no longer wants to stay the course. He is saying let's plus-up the numbers, let's divide Baghdad nine different ways. And that is something the RAND Corporation has called for as it has studied the history of nations that have insurgencies. Subdividing the areas is an effective way to fight insurgencies. The President has said let's go into al Anbar province; let's go into Sadr city. Those are changing of the course.

Mr. Speaker, a ''yes'' vote is a vote to stay the course; a nonbinding resolution is an insult to those who are in harm's way. If you truly believe that the war is a lost cause, why mess around with a nonbinding resolution? A ''no'' vote to this is a vote for change, and I believe it sends a stronger signal to the troops that we support you and we are sending new recruits to help you finish and complete this job.

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 6

minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee, my fellow Blue Dog, Colonel TANNER, a Vietnam Navy veteran, retired colonel of the Tennessee Army National Guard.

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be here with the other Democratic Members who are veterans to talk about this resolution.

I want to start off by saying what ALLEN BOYD said. I was on active duty during the Vietnam years. The problem here is not the troops; the problem is the competency of the civilian leadership that has gotten us into this mess.

This resolution supports our troops and calls for a different strategy by our civilian leadership with respect to Iraq.

When I was on active duty when I was in the military, I followed orders. That was my job. My role here in Congress as I see it is to try to help formulate some sort of competent civilian leadership and strategy so the troops can be successful. We have not seen that in 4 years. The war began in Iraq in March of 2003. Since then, we have lost 3,124 people dead and over 23,000 wounded, and it is not a bit better today than it was the day we started.

The war has cost Americans almost $400 billion, with another request for $285 billion more, with no end in sight. Competent civilian leadership for our men and women in uniform on the diplomatic and political fronts must be demanded by Congress and the American people if we are to properly honor the sacrifice of the dead and the wounded and their families.

Instead, what do we have? We have unbelievable reports that the Pentagon can't identify 170,000 guns issued to the Iraqi forces in October of 2005; some of our soldiers buying their own body armor; up-armored Humvees sitting in Bosnia or Herzegovina while we needed them in Iraq. And David Walker, the Comptroller General, says he believes that almost 30 percent of the money spent over there has been wasted, stolen, or otherwise unaccounted for.

I think any patriotic American ought to come to this floor if he or she has the opportunity and ask questions about the incompetency of the Pentagon and civilian leadership thus far.

I believe any viable Iraqi strategy to be successful must contain clearly defined goals to hold the Iraqi leaders accountable for their own security. Mr. BOSWELL, a helicopter pilot in Vietnam, said as much earlier.

Our men and women in uniform have performed magnificently. They have completed every task assigned to them. But impressive military might alone is not enough if the Iraqi people cannot or will not make progress in securing their own country and establishing a civil democracy.

Western-style democracy works because we have a theory called separation of church and state. When people don't go to the same church, they nonetheless can get together Monday through Friday and build a civil society and get along with each other. If these folks are unwilling or unable to do that for philosophical or psychological reasons, then we can only try to force a square peg into a round hole for so long. It has been going on for 4 years, and they are seemingly incapable. And I say that what we need to do is rethink our strategy and that a pullback to the perimeter is preferable to prolonging a costly and deadly military strategy toward a political goal that is out of reach.

Whether or not this new strategy works, I am glad to see that General David Petraeus will be commanding our men and women on the ground. He has proved himself a strong military commander, and I wish him well. It is not his strategy that I question.

Here is why this resolution is important to me: not only do the majority of the Iraqis in every poll that has been taken over there say they will be better off if we leave or get out or pull back, or however one wants to talk about it, but what it is doing in Iraq to our effort in Afghanistan. I am going to be leading a delegation to Brussels next Saturday to talk about Afghanistan. We are losing our momentum in Afghanistan because of the Iraqi whirlwind that is sucking everything into it in terms of our military supplies, our military approach, and so forth. Almost everyone who has looked at this situation agrees, from the Baker-Hamilton Report to everybody else, that we need to radically change our strategy.

Listen to these words from the Council of Foreign Relations. They say: ''The United States' interests in the Middle East and Persian Gulf region can be more effectively advanced if the United States disengages from Iraq. Indeed, the sooner Washington grasps this, the sooner it can begin to repair the damage that has been done to America's international position.''

Speaking of Afghanistan, they also say: ''Iraq is siphoning off so many resources that we could end up failing in Afghanistan as well.'' The report warns that Iraq is all consuming and makes it difficult for the United States to address other priorities.

That is exactly what we are talking about here, a different strategy for Iran, for our troops to be successful; an accountability from them as to their own security, so that we can concentrate with 26 other nations in NATO who are helping us fight the war in Afghanistan, a war that we can win, a war that we must win, and a war that is every bit as important if not more so in the war on terror than Iraq ever was.

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT), a veteran of the U.S. Navy.

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I proudly stand today with fellow veterans as the House debates the most damaging, costly, and divisive course of U.S. military involvement since Vietnam.

At a naval station in California, I treated combat veterans returning home from Vietnam, many with severe physical and psychological wounds like PTSD and the effects of agent orange. After Vietnam, America swore there would never be another tragic military misadventure, but that is exactly what is happening in Iraq.

The American people want this Congress to end the war and to bring our soldiers home now, not 2 years from now at the end of this President's term. That is what the American people elected Democrats to do in November.

What we do this week is a miniscule little step. Step two will come when we get to appropriations next month.

We have to get out of Iraq. We have to get out now, not 2 years from now. We are killing them, they are killing us, and nothing is getting better. And the reasons we started this whole war have turned out to be false. The American people know this, and today they are watching our debate. They will judge our actions.

Getting U.S. soldiers out of Iraq has been my top priority since they were sent there 4 years ago under false pretenses. And the new claim by the President that escalating the war will reduce the violence is just another attempt to mislead the American people. It is a lot like Lyndon Johnson sending the bombers into Cambodia and Laos. They don't accept it. The American people don't accept it and they won't.

Those who claim we cannot leave Iraq without causing chaos ignore reality.

I ask to insert in the RECORD a piece by Retired Lieutenant General and Reagan administration NSA Director William Odom that decisively debunks this argument.

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 11, 2007]

VICTORY IS NOT AN OPTION

(By William E. Odom)

The new National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq starkly delineates the gulf that separates President Bush's illusions from the realities of the war. Victory, as the president sees it, requires a stable liberal democracy in Iraq that is pro-American. The NIE describes a war that has no chance of producing that result. In this critical respect, the NIE, the consensus judgment of all the U.S. intelligence agencies, is a declaration of defeat.

Its gloomy implications—hedged, as intelligence agencies prefer, in rubbery language that cannot soften its impact—put the intelligence community and the American public on the same page. The public awakened to the reality of failure in Iraq last year and turned the Republicans out of control of Congress to wake it up. But a majority of its members are still asleep, or only half-awake to their new writ to end the war soon.

Perhaps this is not surprising. Americans do not warm to defeat or failure, and our politicians are famously reluctant to admit their own responsibility for anything resembling those un-American outcomes. So they beat around the bush, wringing hands and debating ''nonbinding resolutions'' that oppose the president's plan to increase the number of U.S. troops in Iraq.

For the moment, the collision of the public's clarity of mind, the president's relentless pursuit of defeat and Congress's anxiety has paralyzed us. We may be doomed to two more years of chasing the mirage of democracy in Iraq and possibly widening the war to Iran. But this is not inevitable. A Congress, or a president, prepared to quit the game of ''who gets the blame'' could begin to alter American strategy in ways that will vastly improve the prospects of a more stable Middle East.

No task is more important to the well-being of the United States. We face great peril in that troubled region, and improving our prospects will be difficult. First of all, it will require, from Congress at least, public acknowledgment that the president's policy is based on illusions, not realities. There never has been any right way to invade and transform Iraq. Most Americans need no further convincing, but two truths ought to put the matter beyond question:

First, the assumption that the United States could create a liberal, constitutional democracy in Iraq defies just about everything known by professional students of the topic. Of the more than 40 democracies created since World War II, fewer than 10 can be considered truly ''constitutional''—meaning that their domestic order is protected by a broadly accepted rule of law, and has survived for at least a generation. None is a country with Arabic and Muslim political cultures. None has deep sectarian and ethnic fissures like those in Iraq.

Strangely, American political scientists whose business it is to know these things have been irresponsibly quiet. In the lead-up to the March 2003 invasion, neoconservative agitators shouted insults at anyone who dared to mention the many findings of academic research on how democracies evolve. They also ignored our own struggles over two centuries to create the democracy Americans enjoy today. Somehow Iraqis are now expected to create a constitutional order in a country with no conditions favoring it.

This is not to say that Arabs cannot become liberal democrats. When they immigrate to the United States, many do so quickly. But it is to say that Arab countries, as well as a large majority of all countries, find creating a stable constitutional democracy beyond their capacities.

Second, to expect any Iraqi leader who can hold his country together to be pro-American, or to share American goals, is to abandon common sense. It took the United States more than a century to get over its hostility toward British occupation. (In 1914, a majority of the public favored supporting Germany against Britain.) Every month of the U.S. occupation, polls have recorded Iraqis' rising animosity toward the United States. Even supporters of an American military presence say that it is acceptable temporarily and only to prevent either of the warring sides in Iraq from winning. Today the Iraqi government survives only because its senior members and their families live within the heavily guarded Green Zone, which houses the U.S. Embassy and military command.

As Congress awakens to these realities—and a few members have bravely pointed them out—will it act on them? Not necessarily. Too many lawmakers have fallen for the myths that are invoked to try to sell the president's new war aims. Let us consider the most pernicious of them.

(1) We must continue the war to prevent the terrible aftermath that will occur if our forces are withdrawn soon. Reflect on the double-think of this formulation. We are now fighting to prevent what our invasion made inevitable! Undoubtedly we will leave a mess—the mess we created, which has become worse each year we have remained. Lawmakers gravely proclaim their opposition to the war, but in the next breath express fear that quitting it will leave a blood bath, a civil war, a terrorist haven, a ''failed state,'' or some other horror. But this ''aftermath'' is already upon us; a prolonged U.S. occupation cannot prevent what already exists.

(2) We must continue the war to prevent Iran's influence from growing in Iraq. This is another absurd notion. One of the president's initial war aims, the creation of a democracy in Iraq, ensured increased Iranian influence, both in Iraq and the region. Electoral democracy, predictably, would put Shiite groups in power—groups supported by Iran since Saddam Hussein repressed them in 1991. Why are so many members of Congress swallowing the claim that prolonging the war is now supposed to prevent precisely what starting the war inexorably and predictably caused? Fear that Congress will confront this contradiction helps explain the administration and neocon drumbeat we now hear for expanding the war to Iran.

Here we see shades of the Nixon-Kissinger strategy in Vietnam: widen the war into Cambodia and Laos. Only this time, the adverse consequences would be far greater. Iran's ability to hurt U.S. forces in Iraq are not trivial. And the anti-American backlash in the region would be larger, and have more lasting consequences.

(3) We must prevent the emergence of a new haven for al-Qaeda in Iraq. But it was the U.S. invasion that opened Iraq's doors to al-Qaeda. The longer U.S. forces have remained there, the stronger al-Qaeda has become. Yet its strength within the Kurdish and Shiite areas is trivial. After a U.S. withdrawal, it will probably play a continuing role in helping the Sunni groups against the Shiites and the Kurds. Whether such foreign elements could remain or thrive in Iraq after the resolution of civil war is open to question. Meanwhile, continuing the war will not push al-Qaeda outside Iraq. On the contrary, the American presence is the glue that holds al-Qaeda there now.

(4) We must continue to fight in order to ''support the troops.'' This argument effectively paralyzes almost all members of Congress. Lawmakers proclaim in grave tones a litany of problems in Iraq sufficient to justify a rapid pullout. Then they reject that logical conclusion, insisting we cannot do so because we must support the troops. Has anybody asked the troops?

During their first tours, most may well have favored ''staying the course''—whatever that meant to them—but now in their second, third and fourth tours, many are changing their minds. We see evidence of that in the many news stories about unhappy troops being sent back to Iraq. Veterans groups are beginning to make public the case for bringing them home. Soldiers and officers in Iraq are speaking out critically to reporters on the ground.

But the strangest aspect of this rationale for continuing the war is the implication that the troops are somehow responsible for deciding to continue the president's course. That political and moral responsibility belongs to the president, not the troops. Did not President Harry S Truman make it clear that ''the buck stops'' in the Oval Office? If the president keeps dodging it, where does it stop? With Congress?

Embracing the four myths gives Congress excuses not to exercise its power of the purse to end the war and open the way for a strategy that might actually bear fruit.

The first and most critical step is to recognize that fighting on now simply prolongs our losses and blocks the way to a new strategy. Getting out of Iraq is the pre-condition for creating new strategic options. Withdrawal will take away the conditions that allow our enemies in the region to enjoy our pain. It will awaken those European states reluctant to collaborate with us in Iraq and the region.

Second, we must recognize that the United States alone cannot stabilize the Middle East.

Third, we must acknowledge that most of our policies are actually destabilizing the region. Spreading democracy, using sticks to try to prevent nuclear proliferation, threatening ''regime change,'' using the hysterical rhetoric of the ''global war on terrorism''—all undermine the stability we so desperately need in the Middle East.

Fourth, we must redefine our purpose. It must be a stable region, not primarily a democratic Iraq. We must redirect our military operations so they enhance rather than undermine stability. We can write off the war as a ''tactical draw'' and make ''regional stability'' our measure of ''victory.'' That single step would dramatically realign the opposing forces in the region, where most states want stability. Even many in the angry mobs of young Arabs shouting profanities against the United States want predictable order, albeit on better social and economic terms than they now have.

Realigning our diplomacy and military capabilities to achieve order will hugely reduce the numbers of our enemies and gain us new and important allies. This cannot happen, however, until our forces are moving out of Iraq. Why should Iran negotiate to relieve our pain as long as we are increasing its influence in Iraq and beyond? Withdrawal will awaken most leaders in the region to their own need for U.S.-led diplomacy to stabilize their neighborhood.

If Bush truly wanted to rescue something of his historical legacy, he would seize the initiative to implement this kind of strategy. He would eventually be held up as a leader capable of reversing direction by turning an imminent, tragic defeat into strategic recovery.

If he stays on his present course, he will leave Congress the opportunity to earn the credit for such a turnaround. It is already too late to wait for some presidential candidate for 2008 to retrieve the situation. If Congress cannot act, it, too, will live in infamy.

Chaos, not democracy, has taken root in Iraq, and chaos will continue to take U.S. lives until we act in our best interest and order our people out of harm's way.

News accounts continue to remind us that our soldiers don't even have the proper body and vehicle armor. We cannot adequately protect the soldiers already serving, but more were ordered in anyway. If you want the most basic reason to vote to oppose escalation, it is that we haven't properly equipped the troops already in Iraq, and we are not doing any better by the troops we are sending in now.

Just being on the record against the President's escalation of this war is not enough. The only way to diffuse the violence in Iraq is to defund the war in Iraq. Congress has the power to control the funding, and we have the responsibility to exercise the power vested in us by the Constitution. That is what the American people elected us to do. We must exercise our constitutional power as a co-equal branch of government and do what the President is unwilling to do: bring our soldiers home.

When appropriations for Iraq come to the floor, I intend to offer an amendment based on the 1970 Hatfield-McGovern appropriations amendment to end the war in Vietnam. It will be an amendment to provide funding to protect our soldiers as we bring them home in a planned, safe, and orderly way, and to prohibit taxpayers' monies from being used to continue or expand the war in Iraq. This will provide a transition for the Iraqi security forces using a benchmark that matters: the date when U.S. troops will be out of there.

The Iraqis can't help themselves until we get out. Right now, almost anything constructive that Iraqis do is seen as collaborating with the United States occupiers. We have to get out of the way so the Iraqis can solve their own problems. We can't help; we just make good targets.

So I want to encourage everyone in the House to vote for this resolution. I want to make it the biggest, strongest, clearest vote that we can get to let the President know for the second time, he ignored the election, that the Congress says ''no.''

I know that many Members of the Republican Party are as distressed as I am about Iraq, and I admire their courage in standing up to their President. Every veteran, including myself, in this House and in this Nation is very proud of our soldiers. They have done what we have asked them to do. It is time for new orders to be issued. It is time to end the U.S. role in the Iraq civil war. It is not a war on terrorism; it is a civil war. And bring our soldiers home. We can begin to do it immediately. That is what I advocate and that is what the American people expect from us.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased to yield such time as he may consume to Mr. BURTON of Indiana, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, and a long-time veteran on leading the fight against Islamic jihadists.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, those who don't profit from history are destined to make the same mistakes over and over again.

When I knew this debate was going to take place, I went back and started having my staff go through all the newspapers they could find prior to World War II criticizing Winston Churchill for his stand against Hitler and the build-up in violation of the Treaty of Versailles of Nazi Germany, and nobody listened. And as a result of nobody listening, 62 million people died. Not 1,000, not 10,000; 62 million people died. You ought to read these articles. They are very interesting. He was maligned; he was criticized. They said he should be run out of Parliament. And, of course, once the war started, he became Prime Minister and one of the greatest men of the 20th century.

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We are in a world war now against terrorism. I know my colleagues on the other side of the aisle said this isn't a world war, this is a civil war. But if you look at the record, since 1983, there have been numerous attacks, numerous attacks, on the West. There have been attacks at the World Trade Center in 1993. There was attacks in 1994; the Khobar Towers in 1996; the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998; USS *Cole* in 2000; the September 11, 2001 attacks which brought this country into the war; the London bombings in 2005 and countless other attacks. This is not confined just to the Middle East. These people want to spread their venom throughout the world.

Now, if we pull out of Iraq, what does that do? Everybody knows right now that the President of Iran wants to expand his sphere of influence. He is sending terrorists across the border from Iran into Iraq. He is helping Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Let me read to you a quote from him. He said, ''Israel should be wiped off the map'' and that ''anybody who recognizes Israel,'' anybody who recognizes Israel, ''will burn in the fire of the Islamic nations' fury.'' And they have been involved in terrorist attacks. They are trying to build a nuclear bomb right now, and they are watching us on television as we speak, make no mistake.

Iran and the terrorists are watching, and they are thinking, my gosh, the will of the American people is waning, and we are going to turn tail and run. We are going to pull out.

This isn't Vietnam. Vietnam was a country, Cambodia and Laos are countries in southeast Asia. This is a world war. They have attacked the United States of America. It was a worse tragedy than that which took place in Hawaii in 1941 when they attacked Pearl Harbor, and now they are trying to develop a nuclear bomb.

If we pull out of Iraq, you may rest assured that Iran's sphere of influence will grow, and the fear of Iran throughout the Middle East and the world will grow. They will not back down from their development of a nuclear weapon and a delivery system that can reach not only the Middle East and Europe, but the entire world.

What I am trying to say now is if we start pulling out and looking like we are turning tail and running, we are likely to be in another huge war in the years to come. I don't know whether it will be 2 years, 5 years or 10 years, or quicker than that. But if they develop a nuclear weapon, and they see that we are weak, and we are pulling out, they are going to push like they have been pushing, and they will push, and they will push, and they will push until we have to go into a war that is much greater than what we face today.

There is a lot at stake right here, right now. My colleagues, I think, are being very myopic. They are not looking at the big picture. This is something that I think all of us ought to think about.

You know, we all have kids, and we all have grandkids, and we all have friends who are fighting in Iraq right now. We know young men who have gone over there and sacrificed, lost their arms and legs and have died, and it is tragic, it is a horrible thing. World War II was horrible.

Every war was horrible. When you see people dying, in combat, you can hardly stand it, because you know how their families and they feel, those who survive.

War is hell. But sometimes it is necessary. If you don't stand up to a bully or a tyrant, then they will push, and they will push, and they will push until you have to fight. If you wait too long, the fight is so severe that you really get hurt. It is better to whip them at the beginning than to wait until later on when the cost is much, much higher.

Lord Chamberlain went to Munich in 1938. He signed a peace agreement on Herr Hitler's terms, gave the Sudetenland to him and said, Hey, if you don't go into Poland or Czechoslovakia, we'll let you have it. All we want is peace, peace in our time.

He came back, and he had given the green light to Adolf Hitler because he appeared weak, and the allied forces appeared weak, they were dismantling their weapons and their military, and he said, They're weak. We can do whatever we want. So he started World War II, and 62 million people died.

We are in the same situation today, in my opinion, with the radical terrorists and Iran. We need to let them know that we are going to be firm, and we are going to stand up to whatever they throw at us right now so that we don't face a major Holocaust down the road. I really believe this. I am not just saying this as a political speech. I am not saying any of my colleagues are just making political speeches now, today. I really believe what they are saying.

But I am convinced after studying history and watching what happened in the past, that if we don't deal with this problem now, we will deal with it later, and the costs will be a heck of a lot more than it is today, and it may involve millions and millions of lives. Can you imagine what would happen if a nuclear weapon was launched in New York, California or someplace else in this country? Can you imagine?

Can you imagine a Holocaust if a nuclear war broke out involving Iran throughout the world, not only in the Middle East? This is what I think we face right now. Deal with them now, let them know we are going to stand firm, Iraq is going to be a democracy. We are not going to let Iran or any of the terrorists prevail, and we are going to stop a Holocaust in the future.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY) first and only Iraq war veteran to serve in this body, a Member of the 82nd Airborne Division, who received the Bronze Star and his unit received the Presidential Unit Citation.

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate it.

Mr. Speaker, I take to the floor today, not as a Democrat or a Republican, but as an Iraq war veteran who was a captain of the 82nd Airborne Division in Baghdad.

I speak with a heavy heart for my fellow paratrooper Specialist Chad Keith, Specialist James Lambert and the 17 other brave men I served with who never made it home.

I rise to give voice to hundreds of thousands of patriotic Pennsylvanians and veterans across the globe who are deeply troubled by the President's call to escalate the number of American troops in Iraq.

I served in Baghdad from June of 2003 to January of 2004. Walking in my own combat boots, I saw firsthand this administration's failed policy in Iraq. I led convoys up and down Ambush Alley in a Humvee without doors, convoys that Americans still run today because too many Iraqis are still sitting on the sidelines.

I served in al-Rashid, Baghdad, which, like Philadelphia, is home to 1.5 million people. While there are 7,000 Philadelphia police officers serving, like my father in Philadelphia, protecting its citizens, there were only 3,500 of us in al-Rashid, Baghdad.

Mr. Speaker, the time for more troops was 4 years ago, but this President ignored military experts like General Shinseki and General Zinni, who, in 2003, called for several hundred thousand troops to secure Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, our President, again, is ignoring military leaders, patriots like General Colin Powell, like General Abizaid and members of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group who oppose this escalation.

But most importantly, Congresses in the past did not stand up to the President and his policies. But today I stand with my other military veterans, some who were just elected, like Sergeant Major TIM WALZ, Admiral JOE SESTAK and Commander CHRIS CARNEY. We stand together to tell this administration that we are against this escalation, and that Congress will no longer give the President a blank check.

Mr. Speaker, close to my heart is a small park on the corner of 24th and Aspen Streets in Philadelphia. This is the Patrick Ward Memorial Park. Patrick Ward was a door gunner in the U.S. Army during Vietnam. He was killed serving the country that he loved. He was the type of guy that neighborhoods devote street corners to and parents name their children after him, including my parents, Marge and Jack Murphy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you, how many more street corner memorials are we going to have for this war? This is what the President's proposal does. It sends more of our best and bravest to die refereeing a civil war. Just a month ago, Sergeant Jae Moon from my district in Levittown, Bucks County, was killed in Iraq.

You know, a few blocks away from this great Chamber, when you walk in the snow, is the Vietnam Memorial, where half the soldiers listed on that wall died after America's leaders knew our strategy would not work. It was immoral then, and it would be immoral now to engage in the same delusion. That is why sending more troops in the civil war is the wrong strategy.

We need to win the war on terror, and reasonable people may disagree on what to do, but most will agree that it is immoral to send young Americans to fight and die in a conflict without a real strategy for success. The President's current course is not resolute, it is reckless. That is why I will vote to send a message to our President that staying the course is no longer an option.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for a new direction in Iraq. From my time serving with the 82nd Airborne Division in Iraq, it became clear that in order to succeed there, you must tell the Iraqis that we will not be there forever. Yet, 3 years now since I have been home, it is still Americans leading convoys up and down Ambush Alley and securing Iraqi street corners. We must make the Iraqis stand up for Iraq and set a timeline to start bringing our heroes home.

That is why I am proud to be an original cosponsor, with Senator BARACK OBAMA and fellow paratrooper, Congressman MIKE THOMPSON, of the Iraq De-escalation Act, a moderate and responsible plan to start bringing our troops home, mandating a surge in diplomacy and refocusing our efforts on the war on terror and Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, our country needs a real plan to get our troops out of Iraq, to protect our homeland and to secure and refocus our efforts on capturing and killing Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda. There are over 130,000 American servicemen and women serving bravely in Iraq. Unfortunately, thousands more are on the way. An open-ended strategy that ends in more faceless roadside bombs in Baghdad and more street-corner memorials in America is not one that I will support.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to Mr. PENCE, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, whose minority staff director, Greg McCarthy, setting up the posters, is an Iraq war veteran and a marine as well.

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

Mr. PENCE. I thank the ranking member for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the concurrent resolution for the House, and I do so from a position of a humble public servant, one who has not served in Iraq in uniform, as our previous speaker did, and others have who are in this Chamber at my side, but as one who has been there. I rise as one who is charged with public responsibility as the ranking member of the Middle East Subcommittee.

While this resolution before the Congress today and this week, while this resolution expresses support for our troops in Iraq, the heart of the resolution is a statement of disapproval of the President's so-called surge of troops in Iraq, and I cannot support it.

I see Iraq, as others have eloquently stated, as the central front in the war on terror. I rise today in opposition to this resolution out of a fundamental sense that we have a moral obligation to finish what we started, to confront the enemies of our way of life, and to support our duly elected Commander in Chief as he makes those decisions that he deems necessary and appropriate to achieve those ends.

Let me say from the heart, for a moment, my reasons for supporting this troop surge. A few days before President Bush addressed the Nation, he invited a handful of Members of Congress down to the West Wing of the White House. I must tell you that I had my doubts about this troop surge. In all four of my trips to Iraq, I had heard consistently from our military commanders over the past several years that a large American footprint in Iraq was actually counterproductive to our goals.

□ 1530

But August and the aftermath of 2006 changed all of that. All of that advice predated an extraordinary increase in violence that commenced in the late summer of last year, when it became clear to all of us in this body, and to freedom-loving people around the world, that our strategy and tactics on the ground in Iraq were not working.

Now, I took that skepticism and that counsel into the Cabinet room of the West Wing, and there I heard the President describe a new strategy and new tactics. For all of the world to have read the newspaper accounts, Mr. Speaker, I would have assumed the President was simply sending more troops for more troops' sake. But that was not the case.

Despite what the previous speaker on this floor suggested, this is a new strategy. It is a new way forward. It is an effort on the part of the President to embrace an increase in troop strengths in Baghdad that was initially recommended by the Iraq Study Group, and more on that in a moment.

But let me say that I believe this new way forward, this new approach ought to be given a chance to work. I believe to oppose the President's new strategy in Iraq is to accept the status quo. And the headlines of the last 24 hours should tell every man and woman of good will in this Congress that the status quo in Iraq is not acceptable.

Now, earlier I mentioned that the approach of a troop surge in Baghdad was first recommended by the Iraq Study Group. I am quite struck, Mr. Speaker,

that the previous speaker who is a freshman Member of Congress from Pennsylvania spoke, as many have in the Democrat majority, quite glowingly of the report of the Iraq Study Group. And I admire this work product greatly.

A bipartisan work authorized during the last Congress, James A. Baker, III, former Secretary of State, Lee Hamilton of Indiana, a former chairman of the House International Relations Committee bringing together a bipartisan group of wise counselors developed the Iraq Study Group report.

While I do not agree with every aspect of it, particularly those that talk about having a dialogue with terrorist states in the region, there is much that recommends the American people to the Iraq Study Group. And again I site in evidence the gentleman from Pennsylvania's glowing reference to that report just moments ago.

Now, let's look, if we can, at what the Iraq Study Group has to say about the idea of a troop surge in Iraq. I would offer very humbly, and maybe startling to some who are looking in, Mr. Speaker, that the very words ''troop surge'' comes from the Iraq Study Group's recommendations.

Allow me to quote from page 73 of the book that is available in book stores all over America. The Iraq Study Group said: ''We could, however, support a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad or to speed up the training and equipping mission if the U.S. Commander in Iraq determines that such steps would be effective.''

Let me emphasize that again. The Iraq Study Group that the gentleman from Pennsylvania and many in the majority have heralded as an important work that provides us with a vision for going forward says: ''We could, however, support a short-term redeployment of surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad.''

Mr. Speaker, that is precisely what President Bush called for in January. And it is precisely that which Congress this week is poised to reject in a nonbinding resolution. I submit to you today that if the Iraq Study Group is to be cited again and again by the majority as source authority, and a fount of wisdom, and I believe it is, then let's be clear about the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group.

It is not to say, Mr. Speaker, that a short-term redeployment or surge of combat forces in Baghdad will solve the present crisis and impasse that we face. It simply is a strategy to quell violence with Iraqis in the lead, to create the conditions of stability whereby a long-term political solution can be achieved.

Now let me say, Mr. Speaker, it was my great hope that the resolution before us today would have come to the floor under procedural rules that allowed for amendments. For my part I spent much of last evening offering an amendment, along with others, that would state that it is the sense of Congress that we should not take any action that would result in the elimination or reduction of funds for our troops.

I rise today not to complain about procedure, but to say, Mr. Speaker, I regret that this newly minted majority could not do as the Democrat chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee appears prepared to act.

My amendment that was offered, similar to others, has nearly identical language to a resolution being offered by the distinguished Senator LEVIN, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee. And both of us agree that Congress should affirmatively state that it will not cut funding to the troops.

I deeply regret that we were not able to make that declarative statement today. And let me say with great respect to the chairman of this Armed Services Committee, who needs not to hear from me about the deep respect I have for him, that I have to believe that somewhere in his heart of hearts, knowing his extraordinary record of service to this country, that he may well have hoped for a stronger statement as well.

While the Democrat resolution before us expresses the hope that Congress and all Americans will continue to support and protect our brave men and women serving in Iraq, it does not take the next step to show tangible support for our troops in the nature of funding. And let me say this with great sincerity: there is a fundamental difference between pledging to support and protect our troops and pledging not to cut off the funding for our war in Iraq.

It is a specious distinction, and one that is not lost on our colleagues in the Senate. I would submit to you that words have consequences, and ''support'' and ''protect'' do not assure the American people that we will continue to fund our troops in the field.

I believe the American people understand this point, Mr. Speaker. A poll cited this morning in USA Today shows that even though a majority of Americans are opposed to the surge of troops in Baghdad, a majority also oppose cutting off funding for the troops.

The American people do not want Congress to defund this war in the majority, even if they are concerned about the course and direction the war is taking. And Congress should tell the troops and the American people that it will never use the power of the purse to accomplish policy ends in the field of battle.

With this I close. Listening to this debate today and to the opposition to the surge being espoused by the Democrat majority, I have begun to wonder a very simple question: What if it works? I have made it clear that I support the surge and the President's new strategy.

My good friends on the Democrat side of the aisle and, as has been said, some Republicans have made it clear that they oppose the surge of forces in Iraq. And that is their right, and if it is in their heart, it is their duty. And at this moment, it appears that a majority of Americans are with the majority in this Congress.

But what if? What if they are wrong? What if you are wrong? What if the surge and the new leadership of General Petraeus and the courage and bravery of American men and women in uniform and the sacrifices of Iraqis in uniform succeed in the coming months?

You know, it is a snow day back in Indiana today, Mr. Speaker. And my kids are even home watching this on TV. I give my kids some pretty basic advice sometimes. One of the pieces of advice I give my kids when they are facing challenges, I say to them, you know, people don't like losers, but they like quitters even less.

And I think we ought to reflect on that old maxim as we come upon this decision today. If this new strategy in Iraq succeeds in the coming months, what will those who vote for this resolution say? The truth is, we must fight and win a victory for freedom in Iraq. The truth is we have no option but victory.

In their hearts the American people know this, and the American people are willing to make the hard choices to choose victory. Courage. Courage is the key in this moment.

C.S. Lewis wrote that courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point. Courage then is the answer, not recrimination and retreat. We are at a moment when the American people and the Members of this body will take a stand. This is a moment for courage. Our brave men and women in Iraq exhibit courage and uncommon valor every day.

It is my hope and prayer that we in this House might follow their lead and show them that such courage resides here as well. Let's vote down this resolution and find it within ourselves to lead the American people by bringing forward the resources and the support necessary to see freedom within Iraq.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this resolution and to call upon my colleagues to make a commitment to protect our troops and to bring them home as quickly and safely as possible.

Mr. Speaker, the American people and Members of Congress were deceived. Every reason we were given for invading Iraq was false. Weapons of mass destruction, not there. Saddam Hussein working hand in glove with al Qaeda, not true.

I ask you, if the President had gone to the American people and said, we must invade a country that poses no imminent threat to us and sacrifice thousands of lives in order to create a

democratic government in Iraq, would we have assented? I think not.

As the President now says to us that we should continue indefinitely to expend American blood and treasure to support one side in a sectarian civil war, should Congress continue to consent? I think not. We need to say enough already. Enough with the lies and the deceit and the evasions, enough with the useless bloodshed.

We must protect our troops and ensure their safety while they are in Iraq. But we must not send more troops there to intervene in a civil war whose outcome they cannot determine.

And we should set a swift timetable to withdraw our troops from Iraq and let the contending Iraqi factions know that we will not continue to expend American blood and treasure to referee their civil war.

Only if faced with the reality of imminent withdrawal of American troops might the Iraqis strike a deal with each other and end the civil war. We know, Mr. Speaker, that the administration has botched the handling of this war. They stood by as Baghdad was looted, they failed to guard ammunition depots, they disbanded the Iraqi Army, they crippled the government by firing all of the competent civil servants in the name of debaathification, and they wasted countless billions of dollars on private contractors and on God only knows what with no accounting.

And all this while they continued to deny resources to the real war on the real terrorists. They let Osama bin Laden escape.

□ 1545

They allowed the Taliban to recover and to reconquer. They allow our ports to remain unprotected from uninspected shipping containers, and they let loose nuclear materials remain unaccounted for, waiting to be smuggled to al Qaeda to be made into nuclear weapons.

And why does the President want more troops in Iraq? To expand our role from fighting Sunni insurgents to fighting the Shiite militias also. Of course, when we attack the Shiite militias, they will respond by shifting their targets from Sunnis to American troops. American casualties will skyrocket, and we will be fighting two insurgencies instead of one.

I believe the President has no real plan other than not to ''lose Iraq'' on his watch, and to hand over the whole mess to a successor in 2 years. He will ignore anything we do that doesn't have the force of law. That is why this resolution must be only the first step.

In the supplemental budget we will consider next month, we should exercise the only real power we have, the Congressional power of the purse. We will not cut off the funds and leave our troops defenseless before the enemy, as the demagogues would imply. But we should limit the use of the funds we provide to protecting the troops while they are in Iraq and to withdrawing them on a timetable mandated in the law. We should provide funds to rebuild the Army and to raise our readiness levels. We should provide funds for diplomatic conferences in case there is any possibility of negotiating an end to the Iraqi civil war. And we should provide funds for economic reconstruction assistance. But above all, we must use the power of the purse to mandate a timetable to withdraw the troops from Iraq.

We must use the power the people have entrusted to us. The best way to protect our troops is to withdraw them from the middle of a civil war they cannot win and that is not our fight.

I know that if we withdraw the troops, the civil war may continue and could get worse. But this is probably inevitable no matter how long our troops remain. And if the Iraqis must fight a civil war, I would rather they fight it without 20,000 more Americans dying.

Yes, the blindness of the administration is largely to blame for starting a civil war in Iraq, but we cannot end it. Only the Iraqis can settle their civil war. We can only make it worse and waste our blood and treasure pointlessly.

So let us pass this resolution, and then let us lead this country out of the morass in Iraq so that we can devote our resources to protecting ourselves from the terrorists and to improving the lives of our people.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina, United States Army veteran, Mr. ETHERIDGE.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, as a veteran, as you have heard, of the United States Army, myself, I strongly support our troops, our veterans and their families. Let me state at the outset that our troops have done everything that has been asked of them to do. They have done it well. Exceptionally well, I might say.

More than 34,000 from North Carolina have been deployed on Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. And more than 5,000 are currently over there now. More are preparing to go back to the desert once again.

I am tremendously proud of all the troops from North Carolina and across America who have laced up their boots, followed their orders, and done their duty. They are our heroes, and we salute them.

Regardless if one terms the President's announced change in policy a surge or an escalation or an augmentation, the so-called new plan can be summed up in four words: more of the same.

I myself have traveled to Iraq twice. And after I returned last year I said the administration must change from this failed policy. Specifically, I said that we need more burden-sharing support from other countries, more communities and countries in the region, because the whole world has a tremendous stake in a stable Iraq and a peaceful Middle East.

This administration's arrogant disregard for our international partners has destroyed U.S. alliances that were decades in the making. Those alliances saw us through the darkest days of the cold war when the very existence of our country hung in the balance. Yet, this administration tossed them aside like yesterday's news.

It is a sad tragedy to witness the forfeiture of America's moral standing in the world and the abandonment of diplomacy as an effective asset for America's interests.

We need to bring all the parties to the table and discuss cooperative action to secure Iraq's long-term stability and a peaceful Middle East.

Mr. Speaker, I voted to give the President the authority to topple Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq because he said it presented a ''grave and gathering threat to America.''

The President said Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction and intended to use them against America.

The President said Saddam was in cahoots with Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda terrorists. I took the President of the United States of America at his word. We have learned, to our great regret, what that was worth.

Now the President wants to send 21,000 more troops to Baghdad. Republican Senator Arlen Specter called the new deployment ''a snowball in July.'' An outgoing commander of the Central Command, with responsibility for Iraq, told the Senate last November, and I quote, ''I do not believe that more American troops right now is the solution to the problem. I believe the troop levels need to stay about where they are.''

And the former Republican chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, John Warner, a decorated marine and former Secretary of the Navy, said last month, ''I feel very strongly that the American GI was not trained, not sent over there, certainly not by resolution of this institution, to be placed in the middle of a fight between Sunni and Shiia and the wanton and just incomprehensible killing that is going on at this time.''

Mr. Speaker, I have voted for every defense bill and war funding legislation that Congress has passed for Iraq. I am very concerned about the state of readiness of our American Armed Forces.

As the Representative for Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base, I know that America's military and our military communities have many unmet needs, while the war in Iraq continues to consume more and more public dollars, with no end in sight.

In conclusion, I rise in support of this resolution with no joy in my heart, but with solid conviction in my soul. The failure of this administration has gone unchecked and unchallenged by the Congress of the United States for far

too long. We need a new direction in Iraq.

The question before Congress is this: Is more of the same in Iraq an acceptable policy? The answer is no.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to Mr. ROYCE, the ranking member of the International Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade Subcommittee, obviously an expert in this field.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LYNCH). The chair is trying to address an imbalance in the time for debate.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I very much agree, and we have been doing that approach. There are some time restraints from some of our Members, and so it necessitated this change, but we have been making sure that the Democrats could get their members in.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may proceed.

Mr. ROYCE. I will begin my remarks by saying that I hope that these 3 days of debate, Mr. Speaker, are characterized by civility and respect. Without doubt, this is the most difficult issue that we will confront in this Congress.

Iraq is terribly complex. The stakes for our national security are great, and the sacrifice in American lives and the loss of Iraqi lives have been very painful.

This is a war unlike any other we have fought, and it has been vexing. All of us, supporters and opponents of this resolution alike, Republicans and Democrats, all Americans, have a vital interest in our Nation succeeding in helping to build a stable Iraq and defeating Islamist terrorism. That is the challenge of our time.

As we have heard, mistakes have been made. There is no doubt about that. I have been dismayed by some of them: the lethargy in training Iraqi troops, the inability to meter oil and protect civilian infrastructure. But we can't allow this to cloud our strategic judgments.

To my mind, this resolution, indeed our struggle in Iraq, can be boiled down to two questions: Are Iraq and the global struggle against Islamist terrorism separable? And is Iraq hopeless? The answer to both questions is no, which leads me to a ''no'' on this resolution.

The rationale for this war has changed, whether we like it or not. We are now fighting for stability and moderation against the Islamist terrorism that is now host in Iraq.

Our Civil War didn't start out as a battle against slavery. It was a fight to save the Union.

We started out fighting Saddam and to stop what the majority of this House believed was his weapons of mass destruction program. We are now fighting Islamist terrorism. It is a different and more daunting fight, but the consequences of our success or failure are no less critical because the stakes of this battle have changed.

Let there be no doubt about this: Defeat in Iraq will be a terrible blow to our national security. It will psychologically boost the Islamist terrorists who we are fighting there and elsewhere.

The bipartisan Iraq Study Group reported Ayman al-Zawahiri, deputy to Osama bin Laden, has declared Iraq a focus for al Qaeda. That declaration is more than words.

While not all fighters in Iraq are jihadists, many are. Some have wrongly denied that here on the House floor today. Jihadists are coming from all over the world. The report reads, ''They will seek to expel the Americans and then spread the jihad wave to the secular countries neighboring Iraq.'' Chaos in Iraq will allow for more terrorist safe havens there.

The 9/11 Commission stated that every policy decision we make needs to be seen through the lens of terrorist sanctuaries. My colleagues, I would ask if we are doing that.

And that report stated that if Iraq becomes a failed state, it will go to the top of the list of places that are breeding grounds for attacks against Americans abroad.

We saw what happened when Afghanistan descended into chaos. Al Qaeda emerged out of the ruin to strike America on 9/11. That is the type of threat we are facing today, which will be supercharged if Iraq fails.

We have to confront the potential disaster scenario in the region that U.S. failure in Iraq could bring, which would be worsening strife which could engulf the entire region, sparking a wider war in this resource-rich area.

Saudis have warned that they are prepared to aid Sunni militias. Jordan could move troops into Iraq's western desert to serve as a buffer. The Turks are increasingly worried about the independent Kurdish movement. Iran could move to secure the oil fields to the south.

In describing the consequences of continued decline in Iraq, the Iraq Study Group wrote, ''Such a broader sectarian conflict could open a Pandora's box of problems, including the radicalization of populations, mass movement of populations, and regime changes that might take decades to play out.''

This is the powder keg that is Iraq today. The status quo is nasty. But the consequences of failure, while unpredictable, is far worse.

So to the second question: Is Iraq hopeless? I can understand why many Americans may feel that way. Every day there are horrific car bombings, the sectarian violence has intensified. We will hear many assessments that Iraq is hopeless in this debate.

No one is going to argue that success is guaranteed. But arguments that we have no chance of bringing stability on the ground in Iraq are also extreme arguments.

Are the forces of chaos so strong, and are the forces of stability and moderation so weak as to doom with certainty our efforts?

But I have spoken with too many people in the field, people with some optimism, that I am not ready to conclude that with certainty. And I don't think this House should reach that conclusion.

□ 1600

And that is my read of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group which, while recognizing the grave challenges, spoke of improving the process for success. The fact that the consequences of our defeat would be so great also leads me to persist.

Let's consider more about the implications of defeat. Look at neighboring Iran. Most Americans remember the 1979 Iranian takeover of our embassy in Tehran. That led to 444 days of captivity for our men and women. Unfortunately, relations with Iran have only worsened since. Iran today is a state sponsor of terrorism. It aids Hezbollah, and it backed this terrorist group's war on Israel this summer. With Iranian backing, Hezbollah is the A Team of terrorism, running highly sophisticated operatives worldwide, including here.

Some terrorism experts consider Hezbollah to be a more challenging foe than al Qaeda. Iran is backing the insurgents fighting our men and women in Iraq. Iran is also storming ahead with a nuclear weapons program.

The embassy takeover was a big morale boost for Islamist terrorists; some trace the beginning of Islamist terrorism to that embassy takeover. The shattering of the Iraqi state in our hands would be that 1979 morale boost magnified. It would also prove the way for tremendous Iranian influence in the region.

We must face our responsibility to the Iraqi people. Yes, we have given them 4 years to come together; it has been beyond frustration that they haven't. Tens of thousands of Iraqis have died during this time. What happens if we leave or operate without the manpower our military leadership says it needs? I don't think anyone believes that the carnage won't be several times what we have seen.

We often hear calls to intervene in countries for humanitarian reasons. Some would like our military to go to Darfur in Sudan. Maybe we should take decisive military actions to stop that genocide, but what about trying to finish a job where we have already made a huge military commitment, knowing full well that Iraq's withdrawal would lead to a brutal humanitarian crisis?

We also often hear from some about how unpopular our country is worldwide. This is said to greatly harm our influence and interest. And there is truth to that. Just wait if our withdrawal precipitates a horrific scale of ethnic cleansing. Is that the Iraqi legacy we want? I am not ready to concede the inevitability of this.

It is very important that our Nation be united. Our success depends upon it.

We need to be sowing discord among the enemy, not ourselves. We have had successes against Islamist terrorism worldwide.

This resolution states that Congress disapproves of the January decision of the President to deploy more troops to Iraq. The bipartisan Iraq Study Group panel, but one month earlier, said it could support a short-term redeployment of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad. This resolution goes in the opposite direction.

I have heard the argument about why this resolution isn't a retreat, but it is a nonbinding rebuke of the President's tactics, that it doesn't cut off funding. That may be the case on paper, but the symbolism is far greater. I don't see how opposing our professional military's call for more troops at this pivotal time is anything but a signal of permanent retreat. It is also congressional micromanagement.

The war is horrible. The easy thing would be to just say out. But we can't wish away the Islamist terrorists will take great strength from our defeat. That is what they are saying. These individuals in groups are as persistent as they are brutal. They must be fought and defeated. So let's not give these forces a win on the floor of the U.S. House.

I ask my colleagues to think through these implications and vote down this resolution.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA), former paratrooper with both the 101st and 82nd Airborne Divisions.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 63.

I thank the Armed Services Committee chairman, Mr. SKELTON, for carrying this legislation in support of our military troops and opposing the President's plan to send at least 21,500 more troops to Iraq.

I speak today as a proud veteran who served in the United States armed service as a paratrooper in the 101st and 82nd Airborne Division.

As a veteran and as a Congressman, I voted against this war in year 2002 because no one could convince me why we had to be there in the first place. I was tormented with this decision. I talked to many of my constituents. I called the bishop in my area. I couldn't see what invading Iraq had to do with securing the homeland. No one in the administration could convince me that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. But we sent our troops there anyway, without proper training or proper equipment.

This administration was in such a hurry to invade Iraq that we sent our military in there with defective body armor and Hummers that couldn't withstand the roadside bombs. In fact, before Congress made any appropriations for an Iraq invasion, the President took $600 million from our troops in Afghanistan and sent it to Iraq.

The administration has refused to listen to its own generals, to Congress or to the American people. They just do what they want.

After September 11, I was willing to do anything to make our country safe, like all of us. We came together in a bipartisan way. I believed in fighting terrorists in Afghanistan was the right thing to do, but the current situation in Iraq proves what we have been saying all along, that the Iraq war has not and will not make America safer. Instead, it is costing the American taxpayers $200 million every day. The money that we spent in Iraq could have sent 17 million high school students to college. Can you imagine, 17 million students going on to college right now that we could have provided assistance to, or paid for 6 million new school teachers, reduced the student ratio, funded the No Child Left Behind Act, or help with Katrina. But more money has been spent on this war, and yet it is costing us money for those that are losing their lives right now.

Over 3,000 men and women have given their lives for this war, and over 23,000 are coming home wounded or disabled. Mr. Speaker, over 10,000 of these troops are so severely wounded that they will never be able to serve again. Let me tell you, and you have to look at them, never able to serve again.

Now the President wants to send 21,500 more troops to the most dangerous part of Iraq. Why? Why are we sending our troops to fight in another country's civil war? Mr. Speaker, this isn't a strategy for success. This is a desperation attempt by the administration who can't admit that they made a mistake. They made a mistake, and they need to admit it. And the sooner we come to this realization, the better off this country will be. As a veteran, I understand that sometimes war is necessary, but as a veteran, I also know that war should always be the last resort because war means someone's sons and daughters won't come home. That means separating parents from their children, leaving their homes, someone making a sacrifice.

In my home State of California alone, we have lost 325 men and women in Iraq. Back in my home district, we have lost 10 outstanding young men. It just breaks my heart. Mr. Speaker, you don't put the American families through this kind of pain unless you are sure, beyond any shadow of doubt, that there are no other options. The President had failed to convince me in 2002, and I am still not convinced to this day.

I say let's support this resolution. Let's bring back our men.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, at this time I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 63.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SKELTON. I yield the balance of my time, Mr. Speaker, to my friend, my colleague, the gentleman from California, the chairman on the Committee on Foreign Affairs (Mr. LANTOS). I ask unanimous consent that he be allowed to control the time.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend from Missouri for yielding.

I am very pleased to yield 5 minutes to a distinguished member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, chairman of our Europe Subcommittee, my friend and colleague from Florida (Mr. WEXLER).

Mr. WEXLER. Thank you, Mr. LANTOS.

Mr. Speaker, today I stand with the American people in support of this resolution and in opposition to the President's escalation of the Iraq war. I stand in opposition to a President that failed the American people by initiating an ill-conceived war; an administration that misled the Nation, vulnerable after 9/11, into believing that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction; an administration that invented links between Baghdad and al Qaeda; that ignored the views of the intelligence community, while convincing Americans that our brave soldiers would be greeted in Iraq as liberators; an administration that assured us that Iraqi oil money would pay for the reconstruction; and that through military force, rather than diplomacy, we would cultivate American values of freedom and democracy in Iraq.

The American people know that they have been taken down a false path by this administration, down a spiraling path of war under false pretenses into a quagmire with a President who will not change course, even in the face of a growing civil war. This resolution sends the President an unequivocal message that he must change direction of this war.

How did we arrive in this desperate situation? From the top down, the President, the Vice-President and the Secretary of State have manipulated evidence, broadcast half truths, and doctored intelligence through an orchestrated effort to smear and destroy those who have opposed their policies. Just last week, in a scathing report, the Defense Department's Inspector General concluded that the Pentagon took inappropriate action by advancing conclusions that were not backed up by the intelligence community.

The American people have judged the actions of this President, they see this war for what it is, and they spoke clearly in November, stating loudly that we must end our disastrous Iraq policy. Yet this administration continues its defiant disregard of the views of the American people. Not the voice of the American people nor the conclusions of the Iraq Study Group have

budged this administration from its stubborn and misguided path. And now, the President is doubling down on a bad bet that risks the lives of thousands more American soldiers on a misguided plan that ignores the recommendations of our military commanders on the ground.

□ 1615

Unbelievably, President Bush has already tried twice the strategy of escalation. It failed both times. To try again is to act in blind faith, ignoring the facts, ignoring the experts, ignoring the will of the American people, and, worst of all, ignoring the terrible sacrifices that will undoubtedly be endured by our soldiers and their families.

Mr. Speaker, our troops must be redeployed from Iraq. Instead of a surge of American troops entering Baghdad, there should be a surge of American soldiers back into every town and every city across our Nation. For our troops who have given so much in Iraq, for our military families whose lives have been shattered by this war, it is time to bring them home.

How do we honor our brave men and women? How do we honor over the 3,000 who died, and thousands more who have been maimed? Instead of an escalation, we should honor these soldiers by bringing them home and giving them the best health care, the best mental health support that they have justly earned.

I applaud Congress for taking a stand on this war. I only wish we were voting on a binding resolution that mandates a redeployment of troops and cuts off funding for this tragic escalation. Each month we remain in Iraq, 100 more American soldiers die, hundreds more are maimed, and $5.5 billion is spent.

Mr. Speaker, we have endured 4 years of a failed Iraq policy, longer than we were in World War II, longer than we were in the Korean War, and we can afford no more blank checks for this President.

Today I stand with the American people, our soldiers in Iraq, with my fellow Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle in strong opposition to the President's escalation in Iraq and in support of our redeploying our troops and reversing, most importantly, our Nation's failed strategy in Iraq.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY).

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in vigorous opposition to this resolution. With all due respect to my colleagues across the aisle, this resolution does not outline a new strategy for how we move forward in Iraq and it will have absolutely no impact on the current strategy. Furthermore, it is the wrong signal to send to our allies in the region and the wrong signal to send to our troops, those brave, courageous men and women in uniform who have performed magnificently and done everything that we have asked them to do.

This nonbinding resolution addresses a tactic, not an overall strategy; a tactic that the President of the United States as Commander in Chief has full constitutional authority to move with.

Now, I respect my colleagues across the aisle, and I know we all want to see a disengagement of our troops from harm's way in Iraq. But I would submit that disengagement must be done under favorable circumstances in the interests of our national security. There is no other alternative.

Let's look at what would happen with a failed policy in Iraq. Iraq is on the verge of anarchic fragmentation. There are 27 ethnic groups in Iraq. It is not as simple as a Sunni versus Shiia conflict. There are other splinter groups using violence for their own designs.

Precipitous withdrawal from Iraq will lead to unprecedented violence, spilling over into neighboring countries such as Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and we will see Shiia uprisings in Lebanon and Bahrain, which have significant Shiia populations. Jordan is already facing massive numbers of refugees coming across the border, putting strain. And Iranian influence is growing. The regime is intent on gaining hegemony in the region, exerting its influence widely throughout the Middle East and controlling oil and gas reserves to use the money to further fuel terrorism. Al Qaeda will consolidate a base to work from in western Iraq to perpetrate further transnational terrorism, and Turkey will be compelled to cross borders to deal with separatist groups.

America, dear America, will lose support of its vital allies in the region and our reputation will suffer immensely for a very long period of time, much longer than what we saw after the Vietnam conflict.

It is clear to me that security and political reconciliation in Iraq run parallel, and without halting the spiral of violence, reconciliation within Iraq will not occur. Without halting the spiral of violence, our allies in the Persian Gulf and the broader Middle East will be forced to deal with their own political disruption, rather than starting multilateral dialogue that is so essential for a longer standing peace throughout this entire region, whether we are talking about the Palestinian issues, Lebanon, Iraq or Iran. Our allies in the region, particularly, need political cover. I have heard this from numerous Arab Ambassadors whom I have had many conversations with.

The ground must be laid for multilateral diplomacy. It will not occur during a spiral of violence. Our allies in the region have given commitment that they will help with Iraqi military training, police training, as well as rebuilding of Iraq and further resources, once the stage is set with security and a move toward reconciliation.

So, if we are going to be responsible in this body, there are questions we really need to ask if we are going to formulate a strategy and work with this administration for a winning strategy in Iraq. The questions that need to be asked are these: What are the benchmarks for its Iraqi military? What are the benchmarks for the Iraqi Government, for reconciliation and for internal reform in Iraq? What are the rules of engagement for our troops who will be going over there to assist in this Baghdad security operation? What resources are available? What manpower and personnel are available to our State Department and USAID to help and assist in the reform and reconciliation process so that we can create the groundwork for diplomatic resolution? And as we look at a clear holding bill, who is going to do the holding? Who is going to do the building? These are questions that a responsible Congress should be asking, not whether or not to support this surge.

The American people voted for change. This resolution offers nothing to shape a new strategy on how to move forward successfully in Iraq. The American people deserve more from Congress, and, by God, our troops deserve more from this Congress.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BARRETT), a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, over the next 2 to 3 days, Members of Congress will come to the well and they will talk about the Iraq resolution. They will talk about troop levels and spending and funding and security, training, strategy, a lot of different things in a lot of different ways, with valid arguments on both sides. But I want to boil it down to something simple, something that I understand, something that means more to me than some of the things I mentioned.

There is a gentleman from my district, a Major Rick Simmons, a native of Pickens, South Carolina, an Eagle Scout, a Citadel grad. From time to time he has written me letters concerning different issues in Iraq. He is in Fallujah right now.

He wrote me a letter dated 5 February, 2007. It is a rather lengthy letter, but I want to read you one sentence from this letter:

''This is not Bush's war, it is my war, and it is the war of every volunteer here because we know how high the stakes are for this country.'' ''My war.'' That is what he says. ''This is my war.''

Rick, first to you and all your comrades over there, I say thank you and God bless you. I pray for you every day. But I want to tell you something, son; it is my war too. It is my war and my children's war and my children's children's war.

This is our war, ladies and gentlemen. This is the greatest enemy that we have ever faced in my lifetime, Mr.

Speaker. And when I raised my right hand and put my left hand on the Bible, it was to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies. And it was to protect the protectors, the protectors of liberty, the protectors of democracy, the protectors of freedom. And if it takes a troop surge and a funding stream that is guaranteed, I will do everything I can to ensure the protectors have everything they need.

There is only one way out of Iraq, Mr. Speaker. There is only one way out of this war. Victory. Victory. I urge my colleagues to do the right thing and I urge them to vote against this resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5½ minutes to a new member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, my neighbor from Northern California, Ms. LYNN WOOLSEY.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I am a proud member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, I am a member of the Progressive Caucus and the Out of Iraq Caucus, and I have been working to bring our troops home since before we sent them there.

Mr. Speaker, the decision to send more brave Americans into the Iraq grinder is an act of staggering arrogance for the President. Nearly two-thirds of our people think this is a deeply flawed, tragically misguided policy. They get it, Mr. Speaker. They can see that more troops won't stop the sectarian violence, because it is our very military presence that ignited this sectarian violence in the first place.

The human cost in Iraq has been devastating. By some estimates, several hundred thousand Iraq citizens have died, died for the cause of their own so-called liberation. No wonder a majority of Iraqis want the occupation to end.

As the late columnist Molly Ivins put it, ''Iraq is clearly hubris carried to the point of insanity. It is damn hard to convince people you're killing them for their own good.''

I hope that an overwhelming vote in favor of this resolution will compel the President to rethink his Iraq policy. But, if not, this body will have no choice but to take further steps. Ultimately we must do more than send a message. We must send a convoy of military planes to bring our troops home.

Together with my colleagues, Congresswomen LEE and WATERS, I have offered a plan to end the war once and for all. Our bill is H.R. 508, the Bring Our Troops Home and Iraq Sovereignty Restoration Act. H.R. 508 would complete a fully funded military withdrawal from Iraq within 6 months of enactment, because our military and their families have given enough for this policy that is only increasing the terrorist threat and doing damage to our national security. The bill would accelerate the training of Iraqi Security Forces during that 6-month period. And because Iraq is not yet ready to defend its people against thugs, insurgents and militias, our bill calls for an international stabilization force to help keep the peace in Iraq. But it would stay only for 2 more years and would deploy only at the request of the Iraqi Government.

Because we have already poured enough of the people's money down this sinkhole, H.R. 508 would prohibit any further funding to deploy U.S. troops, but would provide the resources for a safe withdrawal of all of our U.S. military personnel and contractors.

The proposal would also provide for humanitarian aid and major investments to rebuild Iraq's physical and economic infrastructure, because taking our troops out of Iraq doesn't mean abandoning Iraq.

□ 1630

We can and we must go from military occupier to reconstruction partner.

Our proposal expressly prohibits the construction of U.S. military bases in Iraq because it is that kind of permanent occupation that fuels the rage and anti-American jihadists in the Middle East.

Iraq should belong to the Iraqis, and that includes Iraq's resources. So under the terms of our bill, the United States would forfeit any proprietary claim to Iraqi oil.

Finally, H.R. 508 guarantees full health care funding, including mental health benefits, for U.S. veterans in military operations in Iraq and other conflicts. It is the least, the very least, we can do to express our gratitude and repay their sacrifices.

Mr. Speaker, we must never, ever forget what war does to bodies, to minds, to families, to communities and to the human soul. The victims of war are not pieces to be moved around on a chess board. They are our fellow citizens in a global village that gets smaller every day. They are our brothers. They are our sisters. They are God's children and have as much right to human dignity as you or I.

The one thing I desperately hope we have learned from the Iraq nightmare is that we must find more sensible, humane ways to keep America safe and resolve global conflict because, if we do not, given the kinds of weapons that are available today, I fear that we are putting the entire planet on a path toward destruction.

I fear most of all for our children. ''War,'' said Martin Luther King, Jr., ''is a poor chisel to carve out tomorrow.'' Mr. Speaker, tomorrow belongs to our children. So, for their sake, we must find alternatives to war. We must protect America by relying not on our basest impulses, but on the most honorable and humane of American values, our love of freedom, our desire for peace, our capacity for global leadership, and our compassion for the people of the world.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5½ minutes to my friend from Georgia, a new member of the Foreign Affairs Committee (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. It is indeed an honor to stand before this House as a very proud member of our Foreign Affairs Committee under our distinguished Chairman LANTOS and also to stand as our co-chair of our Democratic Group on National Security, as well as a voting member of the NATO parliament.

I have been to Iraq. I have been to Afghanistan, been to Pakistan, been to Kuwait. I have been there with our soldiers and our generals, and what I am about to say is based upon my experience in this whole arena.

Now, a lot has been said and I think it has been misguided, very unfortunate. So allow me, if I may, to state for the record exactly what this resolution does.

There has been talk up here about this resolution is here to cut funds. Nothing could be further from the truth. There is no Democrat in this Congress who would dare cut the funds from our soldiers who are in harm's way, and any Member that continues to say that is doing a disservice to this Congress and to the people of the United States.

This resolution does not say we are pulling out troops. We know the situation in the Middle East. We know this region is vital to our interests. The issue here is not pulling out troops. The issue here is a vote, up or down, on a policy that says two things, 57 words. Allow me to read them to you.

It says that the ''Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect the members of the United States Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably in Iraq.''

Then it says: ''Congress disapproves of the decision of President George W. Bush announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq.''

That is what it says. Those two things. Let us not mislead the American public anymore, certainly not on what we are going to vote on here today. I stand as a proud member who has cosponsored, who supports this resolution 100 percent because of four important reasons.

The first reason is that this 21,500-man escalation, number one, is deceiving in and of itself, when we know from the CBO account that it is not 21,500. It is more like 48,000 when you put the support troops involved. I am here to tell you, this is a dangerous strain on an already overstrained military.

Let me share with you what the National Security Advisory Group is saying. It says this: nearly all of the available combat units in the U.S. Army, Army National Guard, Marine Corps, have been used in the current operations. Every available combat brigade from the active duty Army has already been to Afghanistan or Iraq at least for a 12-month tour, and most are now in

their second or third tours of duty. There is a strain here, and some are on their fourth tours of duty.

Approximately 95 percent of the Army National Guard's combat battalions and special operations units have been mobilized since 9/11, and there is very little available combat capacity remaining in the Army National Guard.

All active duty Marine units are being used on a dangerously tight rotation schedule, but here is another.

We often forget that these are soldiers with families, with mothers, with fathers who are out there, separated from their children. Listen to this. This is why we are against this 21,500, or 48,000, surge. Between 2001 and 2004, divorce rates among active duty Army officers have tripled, and rates among Army enlisted soldiers have gone up.

Let me conclude by saying this: on the bleached bones of many great past nations and civilizations are written those pathetic words, ''too late.'' They moved too late. The American people are watching us and they are hoping and they are praying that we not move too late, and let us get our young men and women out of this crossfire of a civil war.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. MYRICK), the Chair of the Congressional Anti-Terrorism Caucus.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, Iraq is just one battlefield in this multigenerational struggle against radical Islamist jihadists, but it is a very important battlefield.

This is the beginning stage of a multigenerational worldwide struggle that will last throughout our lives and likely our children's lives.

It is hard to accept that the safety and security that most Americans felt in the 1980s and the 1990s was just a smokescreen while the Islamist extremists planned and carried out a one-sided war in other parts of the world.

On September 11, we saw the unthinkable: airplanes flown into buildings, thousands of innocent people killed, and the killers claiming that this was done because God desired it. Some people still do not understand how anyone could rationalize such disgusting acts.

For the past few years, and specifically in the past month, I have joined with some of my colleagues to learn about the true nature of the threat that we face from this jihadist ideology. This ideology is preached by the likes of Osama bin Laden, Moqtada al-Sadr, Hassan Nasrallah, and the ayatollahs in Iran.

Our presence in Iraq did not make us vulnerable to these killers. There were many previous worldwide attacks before America was attacked on September 11 and before we entered Iraq.

We face this threat because we refuse to succumb to live in a world where women cannot speak, as I speak now, without risk of death. We face this threat because we seek a world where people of all religions and races and sexes are entitled to the same rights. We cannot retreat.

If we pull out, there is no doubt that Iraq will become a safe haven for al Qaeda, Hezbollah and other terrorist groups to plan and carry out attacks on unbelievers or infidels. How do I know this? Because they tell us. They told us before 9/11, but we did not pay attention. They tell us all the time that they will not stop until all lands from India to Morocco and Spain to Russia are governed by radical Islamic law.

In 1938, Adolf Hitler told us what he was going to do, and we refused to pay attention. We cannot afford to repeat that historical mistake.

This is not a Democrat and Republican issue. Our security is an American issue, and I hope we are going to start to act as Americans, like the American people expect us and want us to do.

We must understand that we are fighting the first battles of a war against radical Islamist ideology that will be waged for the next 50, maybe 100 years.

Mistakes have been made and more mistakes will be made in the future. War is never easy; nor is it predictable. But if the people of the United States understand the true nature of the threat that we all face and Congress realizes that this war against jihadism will be fought in various forms around the world for at least the next 50 years, then we can make informed policy decisions that will help us in the future.

We must plan now for the future. We need to unite as a country behind this struggle against radical Islamic jihadists.

It is downright irresponsible to tell our troops that we support you but do not support the mission that you are fighting. What message does that send to our troops? It may score political points, but it hurts our troops who are over there fighting to defend us and our right to be here and speak freely.

This resolution does not deal with the larger problem of radical Islamic jihadists. So I strongly urge a ''no'' vote. We must support our troops in the field by supporting their mission. I support our troops wholeheartedly and believe their mission is just and necessary for the security interests of our country.

The world our children and grandchildren will inherit will be a better place because we had the courage to stand up today to fight these battles.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), a senior member of the Armed Services Committee.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Armed Services Committee and a member of the Board of Visitors of the United States Naval Academy, I rise today to express my unwavering support for the men and women who wear the uniform of our proud Nation and to make clear my staunch opposition to putting more of these men and women in harm's way in Iraq.

In the absence of a clear and meaningful strategy for success, it is time to extricate our troops out of this civil war and redeploy them out of the occupation of Iraq.

Back in 2002, I joined my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus in formulating a brief and succinct statement of principles regarding the Iraq war. Within these principles we expressed our clear opposition to a unilateral first strike action in the absence of clear evidence of an imminent threat to the United States. We further stated that any post-strike plan for maintaining stability in the region would be costly and would likely require a long-term commitment of our troops and treasure.

Today, it is very clear that the overthrow of Saddam Hussein has provoked sectarian divisions in the Iraqi society that are now expressed daily through violence on a staggering scale. It is also clear that our efforts to stabilize Iraq has, indeed, required the massive commitment of both lives and taxpayer dollars that we predicted.

What was not clear then but is clear now is that this administration had no definite plan for achieving our stated objectives in Iraq.

□ 1645

The administration had lofty rhetoric, but no strategy for creating a stable democracy that could be our partner in the war on terror.

Mr. Speaker, I raise these points to remind our Congress that from the beginning of this war there have been voices raised not in opposition to our President but in demand of a strategic approach to the growing threats we face, opposition and demand of an honest assessment of what could be accomplished with military force, and in demand of a clear purpose for why we send our troops into harm's way, our young men and women, the future of our Nation into situations where they may seriously be injured or killed. These are the very points that the resolution before us today demands.

I have no illusions about the danger inherent in the growing number of nations that may soon have the capability to construct weapons of mass destruction. To the contrary, I am convinced that maintaining the peace in this increasingly dangerous world has become a precondition to our continued survival.

The question is, given the situation in which we find ourselves in Iraq and given that our primary consideration must always be the security of our Nation, is sending additional troops into action most likely to stabilize that nation and the region? Is it the action most likely to cause Iraqis themselves to take the essentially political actions that only they can take to create a government capable of governing? Is

it the action likely to initiate the reconciliation between Sunni and Shiite, and the most recent National Intelligence Estimate says is critical to reducing the violence in Iraq?

I have seen no compelling evidence that the answer to any of these questions is ''yes,'' and many of our top military commanders have testified that sending 21,500 more United States forces to Iraq will not create a path to success.

Our forces have done all and more than we have asked them to do, and their families have been patiently sacrificing for 4 long years. The voters spoke in November, and we as Members of Congress of the United States do not have the right to remain silent. We cannot allow more to be asked of our soldiers now if their mission is not clear. The President has no plan likely to produce victory. And if, as the National Intelligence estimates suggest, the Iraqi forces and the government are not capable of being partners in their own reconstruction, I urge my colleagues to support our troops by supporting this resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 5 minutes to Dr. WELDON of Florida, a member of the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to address H. Con. Res. 63, disapproving of the decision of the President announced on January 10, 2007 to deploy 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq.

This resolution essentially has, by my interpretation, three sections. It has the first section, which speaks in support of our troops; and then it has the second section, disapproving of the mission of 20,000 of the troops, which is a little bit of an inconsistency. We are saying we support the troops, but we don't support what you are trying to do.

But the most important part of this resolution is the third section shown here in white. There is nothing there. No plan.

So the authors of this resolution are essentially saying, we don't approve of the President's plan but we have no plan to deal with this challenge.

Ladies and gentlemen, we won the war in Iraq. What we are struggling to win now is the peace, establishing a peaceful government that can run this country. And we have very determined opponents seeking to make sure that chaos reigns in that country and we do what this resolution is leading us to do, which is essentially to leave.

Indeed, a senior member on that side of the aisle recently said in the press that, ''This is the bark, and the bite is coming.'' We supposedly support the troops, but what is next is no funding for the troops; that this Congress under this new leadership is going to exercise the power of the purse and cut off the flow of money.

But, ladies and gentlemen, my colleagues, this is not Vietnam. The war in Iraq in not going to go away. It is going to continue to be a problem. If we do withdraw our troops, as many in this room want us to do, the war on terror will continue.

We had a meeting today with the Ambassador from Jordan and the Ambassador from Egypt asking us not to withdraw; that we have to stay and persist and to try to establish a peaceful regime there. And they have their reasons, because they know this is a component of the war on terror. And the war on terror is a bad term; it is a war on radical fundamentalist jihadist Islam. And these jihadists are not going to stop coming at us. Indeed, since over the last 4 years, there have been attack after attack after attack in Bali, in Spain, in London, and they are going to keep coming after Western interests, because their goal and their agenda is to defeat the West, to defeat everything we stand for, and to ultimately establish a global fundamentalist Islamic regime.

I oppose this resolution. I am going to vote against it, and I encourage all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do the same. The President's plan was recommended to us in the Iraq Study Group. It is amazing, many of the people who are saying they are going to vote for this supported the Iraq Study Group, and the Iraq Study Group recommended many of the components that are in the President's plan. We need to give this time to work. I know the American people are losing patience in this conflict, but I also know the stakes in this conflict are huge. And if we fail, the consequences could be huge to the region, they will be huge to the world, they will be huge to the American people and our children and our grandchildren.

So I strongly encourage a ''no'' vote on this resolution.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5½ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, there is a concept from the people of West Africa called Sankofa. Literally translated, it means, ''It is not taboo to go back and fetch what you have forgot.''

Today, I want to use the premise of Sankofa and go back to some of the things that have occurred in the recent past with regard to Iraq so that we can learn from those lessons. In order to know where we need to go in Iraq, we have to evaluate what missteps have been made. That is our responsibility.

As we look at the last 5 years, the President has shown no accuracy on the challenges we face in Iraq. While our soldiers are courageously carrying out their orders, it has become apparent that military action to bring security to Iraq has reached its limitation, but our President insists on escalating military force.

I recall over 4 years ago hearing the President and the administration push for war with talk about a smoking gun that would come in the form of a mushroom cloud. The administration pulled on the emotions of the public while our Nation was still in shock from 9/11. Our President pushed for war with arrogance. ''Bring it on,'' he said. Coalition of the willing. Deck of cards. Freedom on the march. Mission accomplished. A plan for victory. Those are just some of the promises that have been made, but the administration has not been able to make good on those promises. It is fair to say that the President has defaulted on a promissory note.

Today, the question before us is can the President make good on the promise of security in Iraq with an escalation of the combat operation. All of the facts point to a strong ''no'' on that question.

After reviewing all of the facts, I saw that increased troops did not work in the spring of 2004, when troop levels were raised by thousands, but this did nothing to prevent the continued uprising, and April of 2004 was the second deadliest month for American forces. I have heard from generals, former Secretaries of State, and a bipartisan commission, all saying that escalation will not work. I am vehemently opposed to the escalation of the Iraq war and its open-ended commitment to a failing effort.

The President only accepts the advice of those who agree with him. After months of threats and a long military build-up, the United States attacked Iraq on March 19, 2003. The administration cut short U.N. arms inspections after a war-sanctioned resolution failed by a wide margin to gain support in the U.N. Security Council. Because the President could not get the U.N. or the world public in support of an invasion, he developed his unilateral preemptive doctrine.

The President has had generals tell him that this war should end and an escalation is not the answer; but when he gets advice he doesn't like, he simply fires the generals.

He has had a commission of experts advise him that a diplomatic political effort with all of Iraq's neighbors would be the most effective way to enable the U.S. to move its combat forces out of Iraq responsibly. However, the President did not like that advice, so he has chosen to simply ignore it.

When the President needed Congress to approve military action against Iraq, he cared about the perspective of the Congress then. As Congress begins to conduct oversight of the combat operation, the President wants to ignore the voices of dissent that come from this very body.

The cameras of history are rolling, and I hope and pray that at the end of this debate history can record that this body, starting with this resolution as a first step, has taken the appropriate action to end a morally wrong war that threatens to irreversibly stain the fabric of Congress if we do not exercise our constitutional authority and our

patriotic responsibility to balance the President's power.

To move forward and bring security to Iraq will require a bipartisan effort; it will require dialogue with Congress, dialogue between Congress and the administration, and dialogue and diplomacy between Iraq and all of its neighbors, as the Iraq Study Group wisely recommended. I am reaching across the aisle to my colleagues who also believe that military action has its limitations and a diplomatic offensive will bring a new and critical approach to secure Iraq.

This war has created deep humanitarian crisis in Iraq and a deep political crisis in the international system. Based on all that has happened leading up to this war and since its commencement, I cannot in good conscience support any escalation of military force in Iraq. But I plan to move forward with a strong push for a diplomatic effort to a problem that military action simply has not been able to solve.

Some ask what will happen in Iraq if we leave, but the more fundamental question is, what will happen to Iraq and the United States if we stay.

Dr. King, when speaking on Vietnam once said, ''A time comes when silence is betrayal. That time has come for us in relation to Vietnam.'' I echo those sentiments today. If Congress is silent while the President escalates the war in Iraq, we betray the American people, we betray the American soldiers, and we betray our constitutional responsibility.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5½ minutes to Mr. WOLF of Virginia, the ranking member of the State and Foreign Operations appropriations subcommittee.

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, we are a coequal branch of government. We do not work for the President or the administration; our job is to thoughtfully consider the issues before us, and to work with the President and with the administration. When we agree, it is our responsibility to work together for the best interests of our country; and where we cannot agree, however, we have an equal responsibility to make the case of why we disagree, and offer responsible and thoughtful alternatives. This resolution does not meet that test.

Some may say that is what we are doing in the House this week, disagreeing with the President and offering alternatives to the plan. This resolution fails. There is no plan offered.

Certainly the resolution before us includes a statement on which we all unequivocally agree: support for our brave men and women in the Armed Forces who are serving or who have served in Iraq.

□ 1700

Yet it also includes a statement of disapproval on the plan for Iraq offered by the President, a statement of disagreement to which, again, no alternative is offered. If we disagree with the President's plan, we should be offered reasoned, responsible alternatives. Instead of speaking today as Democrats or Republicans, we should come together, speaking as Americans who are seeking to answer the questions of how to move forward with success in Iraq.

Under the process today, we have only one option from the other side of the aisle. Is that what the American people expect from this House? No. The American people expect more. What is so amazing to me and in this Congress, you voted, this Congress voted and passed legislation last year that set our country on a course to find our way forward in Iraq. We have to look no farther than the report of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group to find a way forward, a new approach for Iraq, an approach that can bring us victory.

That is what we should be considering today. The recommendations of this distinguished group can bring us to a consensus and unite the Congress and the Nation on Iraq. I have been to Iraq three times, and since there, I continue to be deeply concerned.

So when I came back from my third trip, I offered this idea of an independent bipartisan commission we called fresh eyes on the target, and many Members on your side have been hailing it, yet you would not permit this to come up for a vote. Why would the Rules Committee shut down something that many of you ask for over and over? And there are Members on my side who don't like it, but it is the only balanced plan.

This legislation was set up, the 10 Members, bipartisan, five Republicans, five Democrats, Jim Baker, former Secretary of State; Lee Hamilton, who served here and has probably, quite frankly, forgotten more about this issue than any Members on your side or any Members on my side. A 10–0 decision, Leon Panetta, Ed Meese, whose son will serve with General Petraeus, they came up with this idea.

Yet the Rules Committee has shut this down not to permit a vote. They worked for more than 8 months supported by expert working groups, and senior military advisors in the areas of the economy, reconstruction, military, security and political development. The study's report was issued on December 6 and was hailed, but yet it is not permitted to come up for a vote.

Because of the importance of this group, I introduced a sense of Congress resolution in support of the recommendations. I asked the Rules Committee late last night to make my resolution in order to be considered during the debate. By doing so, I believe the House will be working to meet our responsibility as political leaders to seek a bipartisan consensus on the issue of war and peace.

But the request, not on my behalf, but on behalf of the American people, was turned down by the Rules Committee. Believe me, just for a second, maybe our side at times treated you wrong; but, believe me, you are getting to be a fast learner, because every time you seem to speak over here, the Republican side of the aisle is shut down from offering anything. This is the major issue of war and peace. Can you imagine if this were 1937 or 1938 or 1939 in the House of Parliament, and it was a resolution like this with Nazi Germany pouring over Europe, there would be some resolution, and everyone else, Churchill would have been shut out because he wanted to offer something constructive to make a difference.

Let me read from a letter penned by Jim Baker and Congressman Hamilton. There is no magic formula, they said, to solve the problem of Iraq. They basically say there are actions to take. The political leaders need to establish a bipartisan approach. They go on to make the report, the consensus report as to work that they have done. We recommend their report, and then they end by saying, ''Yet, U.S. foreign policy is doomed to failure—as is any course of action in Iraq—if not supported by a broad, sustained consensus.'' Then they go on to say how dangerous this is.

I ask you, why? Why couldn't we get a vote? Why couldn't the American people get a vote on something that many on your side may not like, but most do, and some on my side may not like, but most do, and I ask, this body ought to be voting on the Iraq Study Group to show the American people that we can be successful.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN), a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and chairman of the Middle East Subcommittee.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, the coalition of the willing no longer is. If those who are no longer with us are against us, then we have lost the support and the admiration of the entire world. Those of us who came of age in the sixties believing that war is the ultimate breakdown of civilized process have done the unthinkable. We trusted our leadership when we should have questioned more.

We gave war a chance. We called upon our sons and daughters entering the prime of their young lives to step up, as had generations before them, to defend our freedom and our liberty against an Iraqi nuclear threat that did not exist. Our young people did not disappoint. They answered the call, have been fighting bravely and ferociously, putting their lives on the line every day for going on 4½ years.

They followed the orders of their officers right up to the Commander in Chief, and a grateful Nation, indeed, can ask no more. They did not disappoint. But it is we who let them down, tragically. We are reminded that the President is the Commander in Chief, and, indeed, he is. He sent them to fight and die in a war based on a

faulty and tortuously shifting premise. That we, in our positions of great trust, were misled and then misplaced our trust, does not excuse us.

He sent them to fight in a war without equipping them properly, and, as many generals believe initially, in insufficient numbers. With an abundance of prayers but inadequate plans, he sent them to fight international terrorists; but, instead, they are mired down, enmeshed, and are being slaughtered in someone else's sectarian and deadly civil war while the real terrorists prepare to retake Afghanistan.

Six years ago I voted with the President. He is our President. I did not want him to fail. His failure is our country's failure, and that is not acceptable. But here is where we are. We have lost the support of even those in the region who wanted Saddam's demise. We have not found the real terrorist, Osama bin Laden.

We have lost the support of the coalition of the willing. We have lost the support of our major allies. We have lost the prestige and admiration of the world. We have lost our credibility. We have lost the confidence of the American people. And we have lost over 3,000 precious lives of our bravest patriotic and promising young citizens. I voted with the President, and I was wrong, but I know I was wrong.

Grown-ups know that not every story has a happy ending regardless of good intentions. I am afraid this is one such story. I am afraid we have been led into a dead-end chasm from which there is no easy escape. Under the administration's leadership, everything has gone wrong. So what do we do now? Do we compound the disaster?

Perhaps we can learn from the great Iraqi poet, Omar Kyayyam, who in the Runaiyat wrote:

''The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,
Moves on; nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.''

Mr. Speaker, sending 20,000 additional troops is not a change of plans, it is merely an escalation. About one out of every 40 people we send to Iraq comes home in a casket. As an old math teacher, I can tell you by extrapolation that sending 20,000 more brings home 500 more dead. Little else changes.

This vote is, indeed, nonbinding. It is but the little boy in the crowd yelling, ''The emperor has no plan.'' Mr. Speaker, managing failure is unpleasant, but reinforcing it is criminal. Vote for the resolution so that we might help the President to avoid compounding this disaster.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, before I yield the 5 minutes to Mr. KING of Iowa, I would like to yield 15 seconds to Dr. GINGREY of Georgia to make some remarks.

Mr. GINGREY. I appreciate the gentlelady yielding.

Mr. Speaker, in response to our articulate friend from the State of New York, in regard to his comment, we have given war a chance. I would just say to him, you have. We have given war a chance, and we have not given victory a chance. This is not the time to pull the rug out from under those who have given their lives for their country.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield to Mr. KING of Iowa for 5 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentlelady for yielding this time, and I appreciate very much the privilege to address you, Mr. Speaker, and the message that is coming, at least from our side of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, I take us back to how do we identify this enemy that we are fighting? So I looked back through some of the history. In 1783, we made peace with Great Britain. The Revolutionary War, for combat purposes, was over. 1784, American merchant marines were being attacked in the Mediterranean by Barbary pirates.

In 1786, two diplomats, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, went over there to meet with them, and their idea was, we will be able to talk them into peace. Well, they talked to them all right, and the representative of the Barbary pirates, Mr. Sidi Haji Abdul Rahman Adja, responded to them, and this is in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD from Thomas Jefferson's report.

He asked him, why do you fight us, why do you attack us, why do you kill us? We have done nothing hostile towards you. His answer was, It is founded on the laws of our Prophet. It was written in the Koran. All nations who should not have acknowledged their authority were sinners, that it was their right and duty to make war upon them wherever they could be found and to make slaves of all they could not take as prisoners, and that every Muslim who should be slain in battle was sure to go to Paradise.

I take you back to today. We call our marines leathernecks. The reason for that is they wore a heavy leather collar to diminish the odds that they would be beheaded by this enemy who has, to this day, at least fairly recently, is still beheading marines. That is how this started.

Now, we are in a war. Von Clauswitz wrote that the object of war is to destroy the enemy's will and ability to conduct war. That means take away their munitions, take care of their armies, destroy them if you can. But in the end, whatever you might do doesn't break their will. You have to destroy their will. There is nothing going on on this side of the aisle that is diminishing the will of our enemy.

I will tell you, they will interpret it as encouraging the will of the enemy. I would point out this quote from Moqtada al Sadr. I heard this over al Jazeera TV when I was in the Middle East, actually in Kuwait City, waiting to go into Iraq the following morning, June 11, 2004. He said, ''If we keep attacking Americans, they will leave Iraq the same way they left Vietnam, the same way they left Lebanon, the same way they left Mogadishu.''

June 11. Where does he get this from? Well, he gets part of it from General Jeaps' book in Vietnam, the successful general there. They understand, as I heard to my own shock and sorrow, a World War II veteran said to me on one of the days we were honoring him, We haven't really won a war since World War II.

Think about what that means. Think about what that means to our enemies who are encouraged by this kind of debate and this kind of behavior. We must have the resolve. I point out also our casualties. We have lost 2,534 brave, patriotic Americans in hostile action. We have lost 591 to accidents within that theater.

The loss in American lives as a price to be ready between Desert Storm 1 and the beginnings of Operation Iraqi Freedom, that 10 years, was a little over 5,000, averaging 505 a year. There is a price to be ready, and they pay that price. Those lost lives are every bit as precious to us.

I listened to the debate over on this side of the aisle. A brave American, former admiral from Pennsylvania, stated that he believes his job now is to come in and help manage a successful conclusion to the war.

Well, I want to compliment Judge Louie Gohmert, who had the urge from the bench, to legislate from the bench, and realized that his constitutional responsibility, if he wants to legislate, is to run for Congress. So now we have Representative GOHMERT in Congress actually legislating instead of legislating from the bench.

I would submit my question to the gentleman from Pennsylvania: Do you really think your job is to come here and micromanage the war? Do you really think that is constitutional? Regardless of that question, do you think it is wise?

How would you like it if Congress made a decision that you really only needed one destroyer in your task force, or you get along without the submarine or maybe you only needed half the supplies on your supply ship?

□ 1715

That would be micromanagement that I think he would raise a powerful objection to. And so I would point out that here on the floor of this Congress when we had Nouri al-Maliki, the Prime Minister of Iraq, speaking from that very podium behind me, July 26, 2006, a short half a year ago, he said, ''The fate of our country and yours is tied. Should democracy be allowed to fail in Iraq and terror permitted to triumph, then the war on terror will never be won elsewhere.''

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be here and to be part of this debate. I wanted

to congratulate the bipartisan way in which this resolution was brought before this House with two Members of the Armed Services Committee, the chairman, IKE SKELTON from Missouri, and Republican Member JONES from North Carolina, and also Chairman LANTOS of the Foreign Affairs Committee. I congratulate them in their leadership.

At a recent send-off of troops being redeployed from my home district in Missouri, I told the families that I would work in Congress to bring their loved ones home safe, sound and soon. However, this proposed military escalation flies in the face of that intention.

As we enter the fifth year of this mismanaged war in Iraq, with an ill-defined plan, it is irresponsible to think that an escalation is in the best interests of our troops. The Bush escalation plan is yet another indication that the President has failed to listen to the American public, military experts, the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, and Democrat and Republican Members in this Congress.

Even General Colin Powell, the former Secretary of State, said, I am not persuaded that any surge of troops in Baghdad for the purposes of suppressing this communitarian violence, this civil war will work.

It is my solemn responsibility to act on behalf of Missouri constituents and their overwhelming desire for change. I am proud to see the new Congress has begun to systematically analyze the President's proposal regarding the war in Iraq.

Since the beginning of the year, we have already held 52 hearings in this Congress about the war in Iraq. Evidence this new Democratic-led Congress is exercising real oversight and demanding accountability on the Iraq war. We will continue to ask the tough questions about the President's plan, continue to insist on a new direction while always putting our troops first.

We have the best military in the world, and we owe our troops a clear mission. Our men and women in uniform have done their job two and three times over, and our civilian leadership must provide a clear, achievable objective so they can come home soon.

This Congress has a grave duty to listen and take action. Recently, the mother of a young soldier being deployed back to Iraq told me, Congressman CARNAHAN, I am one of those mothers who is against the war in Iraq, but my son volunteered to serve his country. Please be sure they get the support and equipment they need to come home quickly and safely.

That mother's heartfelt request is a powerful example of our national unity and resolve to support our troops and oppose this escalation policy that is not making the Iraq Government more self-reliant. In fact, it is using us further as a crutch.

It is not making the Middle East region more stable. In fact, many of our military leaders say our very presence there is fueling the insurgency, and it is not making our country safer. Today, the House begins a detailed deliberation on House Concurrent Resolution 63, which is only the beginning of this Congress's oversight of the President's strategy in Iraq.

This straight-forward resolution plainly expresses our support for the brave men and women who are currently serving or who have served in the Armed Forces. In my home State of Missouri, over 27,000 men and women have been deployed to serve in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraq Freedom since September 2001.

It is our duty as Members of Congress to ensure they have the necessary training, equipment, resources and support while in harm's way and when they return home.

When debate concludes this week, it is my firm hope that the result will be a bipartisan vote reflecting both our unwavering support of our troops and the reality that a fourth U.S. escalation is the wrong direction for our country.

As the new majority, we have the opportunity to develop a comprehensive and commonsense solution to enable us to protect our troops, maintain our obligation, and end this conflict as quickly as possible. We stand ready to provide real peace of mind for the American people by securing our homeland and changing course in Iraq.

Great change is possible when this Congress acts in unison with the American public. In the weeks and months ahead, this Congress will act in a bipartisan way to carefully and thoroughly examine the President's proposals and pass decisions through hearings, debate and oversight using all tools available to change the direction of this war.

Most importantly, we will continue to support our troops in hopes of de-escalation of the war and escalation of the political solution for Iraq. Working together, Mr. Speaker, great change is possible.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5½ minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SHADEGG), a member of the Anti-Terrorism Caucus.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. I rise in opposition to House Concurrent Resolution 63, the resolution that calls on us to disapprove of the increase in troops in Iraq. I rise to oppose it, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to carefully reflect on what we are doing.

This debate may benefit the American people. This resolution will undoubtedly harm America and harm our troops. Every American wants our troops home. Every American wants this war over. But it is not that easy. You cannot just wish this war would end and believe it will go away as a problem for America. Life is never that easy.

Let us begin with the text of the resolution. Make no mistake about it, it is very brief, and all of us should have read it. It is two sentences long. It essentially says: stay the course. A resolution which says, we oppose increasing troops, but we support our current troops is a resolution that says, stay the course.

It is not a resolution that says withdraw. That might be a morally defensible position, because perhaps we should withdraw, at least some believe. It is not a resolution that says, put in more troops. It is a resolution that says, adding more troops is wrong, but we support those that are there.

That is a resolution to stay the course. I would suggest no American believes we should stay the course. I would suggest that the RAND study and the Army's manual on counterinsurgency both suggest that staying the course is wrong. Indeed, it is a recipe for failure. Both RAND and our own counterinsurgency manual say, if anything, we should have between 400,000 and 450,000 troops there.

So why would we support staying the course? Now, we all know that many of us, and I included, wanted a change in strategy in Iraq. My colleagues on the other side called for a change in strategy. This surge is the change in strategy.

Indeed, and I am mystified, and I am glad some of my colleagues today have made the point, this is the change in strategy, at least one of them, recommended by the Iraq Study Group. I thought my colleagues on the other side supported that. It seems to me that there is also an important flaw in this debate.

My colleagues say that this is a nonbinding resolution. I would suggest to you that when you are at war, and when the United States Congress acts with regard to that war, it is not nonbinding. The world is watching. The world is watching every word that is said on this floor.

I believe we have a moral duty to finish what we began. Earlier on the floor, my colleagues have mentioned that many leaders in the region, in the Middle East, have begged us not to leave. They have begged us to stay at least long enough to stand up the Iraqi Government so that it can defend itself. They have implored us not to leave.

Let me give you their words. They have said, because they opposed our originally going in, the coalition came uninvited, it should not leave uninvited. They are making the point that we have a duty to finish this effort. They have talked about analogies. They pointed out that a heart surgeon who begins a heart surgery is not entitled, halfway through the surgery, to say, you know what, I am tired, I want to leave.

On the other side of the aisle many of my colleagues have said this is hard. Indeed, it is hard. But that is not a justification for leaving. The best analogy I heard was one that said, this is like stepping on a land mine, where you put your foot on it, but you know that if

you lift your foot off it will blow up. We have put our foot on a land mine in Iraq. But if we lift our foot off before the Iraqi Government can defend itself, it will blow us up, and it will blow them up.

You cannot wish this war away. And so I would suggest this resolution is binding. The world is watching. Our allies, if we abandon Iraq, will never trust us again. But why do they want a nonbinding resolution? Because they do not want to accept responsibility.

The President does not have that choice. He has responsibility. Those who oppose this war have a duty to take a stand, one side or the other. If you oppose the war, then seek withdrawal. If you do not, then do not undermine our troops. Because make no mistake, this nonbinding resolution hurts our troops.

Let me just conclude with this point. In the midst of an ongoing war, it is impossible to support the troops and oppose the mission. Let me make that clear. The world is watching. Our enemies, al Qaeda, and the radical jihadists who hate us and want to kill us are watching. If we tell them we oppose the mission, we are encouraging them. They have guns, rockets, and missiles pointed at our troops. This resolution is a grave error. I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA), who is a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and chairman of the Higher Education Committee.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 63. The State of Texas has a proud history of military service. Thousands of Texans have fought with distinction in every conflict this country has entered.

Hundreds of my constituents are currently serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. They are willing to leave behind their families and friends to risk their lives in service to their country. Many will never return home. Many will come home maimed and injured.

I want to read the names of the young people from the 15th District of Texas who have given their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan: Darrell Shipp, Benito Ramirez, Javier Marin, Julio Alvarez, Gary Moore, Tomas Garces, Mark Anthony Zapata, Juan Calderon, Christopher Ramirez, Dustin Sekula, Juan Garza, James Kesinger, Mitchell Mutz, John Russell, Quinton Gertson, Christopher Kilpatrick, Tina Priest, and Daniel Galvan.

I know how much their families and friends have grieved at their loss. I have spoken to their parents and spouses and have attended many of their funerals. We are all so very proud of their military service and know they did their very best.

However, as an elected Representative of the United States Government, I have a responsibility to make sure that the sacrifices of these brave men and women were not in vain.

□ 1730

I have a responsibility to see that more Americans will not be sacrificed unnecessarily. I have supported the funding to give our military the body armor, the equipment and training they need, and I will continue to see that they have whatever they need. But I will not support an administration policy that puts more troops in harm's way, with no apparent end in sight and with no clear goals on how to win the fight.

In 2002, I stood in this well and I spoke on that resolution giving the President permission to go to war, and I voted against going to war with Iraq because I didn't believe we had all the information we needed on Iraq's nuclear capabilities and weapons of mass destruction and its support for terrorism. I was concerned that the President had not convinced the 39 countries who had supported us in the previous war with Iraq. I was disappointed that the President did not have an exit plan after we defeated Iraq. And I was disappointed that the President would not put in the budget what we were going to spend on that war.

No one denies that Saddam Hussein was a cruel dictator who brutally oppressed his people, and I am glad that the Iraqis are free of this tyranny. But the Bush administration did not have accurate information then, and I don't believe they have an accurate picture of the situation today.

Our troops are now caught in the middle of a civil war between religious groups that have hated each other for centuries. There is no defined enemy and no clear battle lines.

The task of imposing and growing democracy in a place where it has never been is not the job of our military. It must come from the political will of the Iraqi people. Only the Iraqis can decide whether they want to put aside centuries of discord and come together to create a stable, democratic country where the rights of every group is recognized. The Iraqi Government must take responsibility for its own future.

After more than 4 years, the U.S. is not safer because of our efforts in Iraq. By dividing our resources, we have allowed the Taliban to reemerge in Afghanistan and have given al Qaeda a strong foothold that it never had before in Iraq. Syria and Iran have gained influence throughout the entire region.

We have spent hundreds of billions of dollars at the expense of critical programs at home like education, health care and homeland security. Our military is severely strained with troops on their third and fourth tours of Iraq. Units are being deployed, either understaffed or with new personnel, that has decreased unit cohesiveness, proficiency and morale. Equipment is worn out and our readiness to deal with an additional crisis is in jeopardy.

Unfortunately, most of his generals disagree. The distinguished members of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group disagree, and more importantly, the American people disagree.

I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting H. Con. Res. 63 and opposing the President's decision to send more troops to Iraq.

We have spent hundreds of billions of dollars at the expense of critical programs at home like education, health care and Homeland Security. Our military is severely strained with troops on their third and fourth tours of Iraq. Units are being deployed either understaffed or with new personnel that has decreased unit cohesiveness, proficiency, and morale. Equipment is worn out and our readiness to deal with an additional crisis is in jeopardy.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, before I turn over our segment of the debate to Mr. HOEKSTRA of the Intelligence Committee, I would like to recognize our last speaker for our segment, Mr. SHUSTER of Pennsylvania, a member of the Anti-Terrorism Caucus, for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, ''So they go on in strange paradox, decided only to be undecided, resolved to be irresolute, adamant for drift, solid for fluidity, all-powerful to be impotent.'' The words of Winston Churchill on the eve of World War II ring true today as clearly as they did decades ago describing our state of affairs.

I am disappointed with my colleagues in the majority. They spent the time and effort solidifying their caucus against the war in Iraq. They devised a number of plans to withdraw our troops. They made Iraq the focus of their agenda in November and not staying the course their slogan. However, they stand today, as Churchill said, resolved to be irresolute in their position on Iraq.

The resolution we debate in the House today is based on flawed logic. The resolution states that Congress supports the efforts of our troops in mind but not in body. The fact is, this resolution is framed upon the idea that the current state of affairs in Iraq is beyond recovery and should be abandoned.

Instead of offering any real alternatives, the Democrats have drafted a nonbinding resolution that rejects the President's plan to reinforce our troops and give the Iraqi Security Forces the assistance they need. This resolution does not bring us one step closer to victory. This resolution does nothing more than reinforce the status quo.

This resolution does show the American people that yet again, the Democrats, for all of their rhetoric, have no plan, no alternative to fight the threat of Islamic jihad. They instead have chosen, amazingly, to simply stay the course.

I will be the first to admit that, despite the outstanding jobs that our troops on the ground have done, progress in the war is slow and frustrating. We overthrew a violent despot, only to see a new and dangerous threat emerge. But we can not be fooled into thinking that by leaving Iraq this threat will melt away.

By the very admission of the Islamic fundamentalists we fight, this war is

only part of a larger power play to consolidate power and form a jihadist Islamic state in the center of the Middle East.

In a speech released this month, Ahman Zawahiri praised al Qaeda's master plan for Iraq. He asked Allah to consolidate Iraq so that it unites all our Muslim brothers in Iraq and sets up an Islamic state which will proceed to liberate Jerusalem and take steps towards reestablishment of the Caliphate.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is a grave mistake for us to not take our enemy at their word. The jihadists do not want peace. They want capitulation. We ignored their threats in the 1980s and they bombed our Marine barracks in Beirut. We ignored their rhetoric in the nineties and they bombed the World Trade Center and our embassies in Africa. We ignored their threats in the days leading up to September 11, and our world was changed forever.

Democratic Presidential Candidate John Edwards described this resolution best when he compared it to a child standing in a corner, stomping his feet. This resolution may draw headlines, but it will not change a thing.

We have one Commander in Chief, not 435 separate executives. What the Congress does have is the power of the purse and the ability to cut off the funding for the war. Let's be honest. This resolution is the first step in that direction.

If cutting off funding is the Democrats' plan, and I believe it is, then let them state it openly. They are no longer the voice of the opposition in Congress. They are the majority, and they have an obligation to govern. It is time for them to create a plan, a real course of success. The American people are waiting.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5½ minutes to the Representative from California, DIANE WATSON, senior member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, the escalation of the conflict in Iraq is an exercise in futility. It has been 3 years now since the President declared that our original mission was accomplished in Iraq.

And then the President let victory escape from our grasp. He confused the toppling of Saddam Hussein with accomplishing the mission.

But there is a more important question being raised here on the House floor. It is an issue which has confused our mission in Iraq from the beginning. And it is the preposterous argument that Iraq is part of the war against al Qaeda.

The al Qaeda attack on America killed almost 3,000 innocent Americans in New York, at the Pentagon, and in a field outside of Shanksville, Pennsylvania. We pursued al Qaeda into Afghanistan, dislodged the Taliban and cornered Osama bin Laden at Tora Bora. We had al Qaeda on the run. We had the world united against terror and in favor of freedom and democracy.

But then the President switched his focus at a critical time. He dismissed the factors which had brought success in Afghanistan, a just cause, clear evidence, and a community of nations, and instead pursued his Iraqi adventure based on faulty intelligence and employing a strategy rejected by his own Army Chief of Staff and numerous other generals.

Thus, the President gave al Qaeda breathing room; he let them regroup, because he lost focus on the war on al Qaeda, to wage war on Iraq. Meanwhile, in Afghanistan, al Qaeda and the Taliban regrouped.

Iraq is not the central front in the war on al Qaeda. Iraq is a distraction from the war on al Qaeda. Each day we spend in Iraq is a day we are not working to bring the perpetrators of 9/11 to justice.

Whatever happened to Osama bin Laden? Why aren't we looking for him?

We have a direct connection to 9/11. The families of those who perished on 9/11 are still waiting for an answer.

This escalation is an appalling display of our weakness. We are sending only 21,000 combat troops to Iraq because, after stretching our military thin for 4 years, that is all the troops we have available at the moment.

The President cannot tell us what victory is or when he hopes to achieve it. What is really our goal in Iraq? What are we trying to achieve? And are we going to leave this mess for the next President?

Today, Iraq is consumed by civil war. Her neighbors, including our allies, Jordan, Kuwait and Turkey, are overwhelmed with refugees, and Iran is strengthened and emboldened. If that is not already destabilized, then the word truly has no meaning.

The occupation itself is what is destabilizing Iraq. The occupation is placing Americans on the killing fields. The occupation undermines American prestige and authority, and the occupation in Iraq makes it harder to defeat al Qaeda.

The military battle is over. Our only hope is to change course, to acknowledge the reality that we have lost the military struggle in Iraq. Only then can we reengage with a strategy to give us a political victory.

We must remove our forces and move forward with a political and diplomatic strategy to engage both our allies and our adversaries in the region. This will mean talking to Iran, not capitulating to Iran. Even at the height of the Cold War, Reagan was willing to talk to Moscow. Until we are willing to engage with Iran, our friends in the Middle East, who fear Iranian dominance as much as we do, will not believe we are serious about confronting the Iranian threats.

Last, and most appalling, is the desperation accusation that we are going to cut off funds for our troops. Simply not true.

This attack is especially galling when it has been a Republican Congress and a Republican President who, for 4 years, left our troops vulnerable, without proper equipment, without proper armor, and in an effort to fight this war on the cheap.

I will never vote to leave our troops without the support they need. But neither will I vote to continue down a path that is putting them at needless risk.

Vote for this bill.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 6 minutes to my colleague from Alabama, who recognizes the danger of believing that we can negotiate with al Qaeda and bin Laden, Mr. EVERETT.

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member of the Intelligence Committee, my friend from Michigan.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H. Con. Res. 63, the Democrats' nonbinding resolution that does nothing to improve the outcome of the war, but does much to hurt the war against terrorism.

The resolution claims they support the troops. However, regardless of what the previous speaker said, they refuse to protect the money our troops must have while they are in harm's way.

□ 1745

If we wanted to have a meaningful debate on the real issues facing this country, we would take up Congressman SAM JOHNSON's bill that opposes any effort to cut off or restrict funding for our military.

But that is not the debate we are having today. Instead, we are debating a nonbinding resolution that, in my mind, can only hurt our troops who are on the battlefield as we speak, and this resolution can only give comfort to those who wish to kill Americans.

Making Iraq a secure place is difficult because of deep-seated religious and ethnic divisions. This is highlighted by the murderous acts of Saddam's dictatorship that killed so many thousands. In addition, al Qaeda and local terrorists along with hostile foreign governments, including Iran, have both encouraged and funded the current violence in the hopes that Iraq will not follow the path to democracy. They must not be allowed to succeed.

Any American lives lost in the defense of our Nation is one too many. Yet we must not turn from our task of defeating terrorism before the job is done. President Bush is the Commander in Chief and intends to reinforce American troop strength by 21,000 soldiers to help Iraq's new government finally control violence and restore order. While I believe the decision to increase troop strength in Iraq could have been made much sooner and in greater numbers, it today presents the only viable option to bringing order to the country and laying the foundation for Iraqi Government control of that nation's security.

Iraq's government is taking new steps to control the violence from all ethnic groups and made it clear that

our abandoning them at this stage would guarantee failure for democracy in Iraq. And it would ensure a tremendous setback in America's battle to deny terrorism a foothold and give them more chances to continue to kill Americans. Pulling back now with no viable plan to stabilize Iraq would be a disastrous action. This sentiment was expressed in the most recent National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the NIE is the intelligence community's most authoritative written judgments on national security issues and is designed to help us develop policies to protect U.S. national security interests. Specifically, this report states: ''Coalition capabilities, including force levels, resources, and operations, remain an essential stabilizing element in Iraq.'' In addition, it goes on to say: ''If coalition forces were withdrawn rapidly during the term of this estimate, we judge that this almost certainly would lead to a significant increase in the scale and scope of sectarian conflict in Iraq, intensify Sunni resistance to the Iraqi Government, and have adverse consequences for national reconciliation.''

While America must not be in Iraq indefinitely, we should not leave without ensuring that the terrorists that are there are put down. To do otherwise would be terribly shortsighted and would ultimately embolden our terrorist enemies who have made no secret of their desire to continue to kill Americans.

As a member of the House Armed Services Committee and Intelligence Committee, I have monitored the developments in the war on terrorism, including those in Iraq. I met with President Bush in the White House to discuss the military mission in Iraq shortly after he outlined his strategy for Iraq in early January. We explored what would happen in Iraq, the Middle East, and America if we withdrew from the fight before Iraq's democratic government is strong enough to maintain the peace. Our conclusion was that Iraq would become a sanctuary for terrorists and a base from which they could launch future attacks against Americans.

Some Members have tried to claim that the war in Iraq has nothing to do with the war on terrorism. That is the only way they can justify this nonbinding resolution, and that is pure nonsense.

We have the greatest military on the face of the Earth, one that no other military dare stand before lest they be destroyed. The only thing that can defeat us is the lack of will. And may God help us if we lose the will to defend this great Nation against terrorism.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from California, HILDA SOLIS, member of the Energy and Commerce Committee and Vice Chair of the Environment and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time.

I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 63.

I am a strong supporter of our service men and women and strongly committed to finding a reasonable and responsible resolution which includes a redeployment of our troops. However, a responsible resolution does not include the deployment of more of our brave service men and women to Iraq. Sixty-six percent of Americans oppose the President's escalation plan to send additional troops to Iraq. They believe, as I do, without a new policy to secure the peace and stabilize Iraq, further escalation will do nothing but unnecessarily risk the lives of more U.S. service men and women.

There are currently 135,000 U.S. troops courageously serving in Iraq. At the direction of our government, they left their fathers, mothers, brothers, children, and wives. This war is having, as you know, a significant impact on their families and our communities.

In the district that I represent, the 32nd Congressional District of California, we have lost 13 sons to combat. Note the photograph that I have here on display. This includes Lance Corporal Francisco Martinez from the city of Duarte in the San Gabriel Valley, who bravely served our country despite not even being a U.S. citizen. I was able to meet his parents. They were very humble individuals who spoke only Spanish and proudly stated that their son served their country with honor. It breaks my heart to think that this was only one servicemember, only one of the more than 3,000 families that have been through this since the war started almost 4 years ago.

The past 3 months, as you know, have been the deadliest months in the war in over 2 years. While Latinos make up 12 percent of the U.S. population, they make up 17 percent of the service men and women in combat in Iraq, and 11 percent of those have already been killed. U.S. casualties are now more than 3,100 and more than 23,400 service men and women have been wounded in action, and nearly half of those wounded will not be able to lead a normal life because of severe injuries, permanent disabilities, and post-traumatic stress syndrome. Yet many of these service men and women will return to Iraq for a second, third, and maybe even a fourth tour.

The President's proposal to escalate ignores the real needs of our troops and the grave reality of this situation. Three times in the past 2 years the number of U.S. troop levels have increased in Iraq. Three times this approach has failed. And during Operation Together Forward, additional troops were sent into Baghdad because of an increase in sectarian violence. U.S. military spokesman General William Caldwell stated that the increase was a failure and had ''not met our overall expectations of sustaining a reduction in the levels of violence.'' Even the commander of the U.S. Central Command in Iraq has testified that top military commanders in Iraq do not believe that increasing the number of troops is the right approach. He stated, ''I do not believe that more American troops right now is the solution to this problem. I believe that the troop levels need to stay where they are.''

Increasing the number of U.S. troops is not a solution. The increase does nothing to improve long-term security and end sectarian violence. Our country needs a policy to secure and stabilize Iraq and one that constructively engages in diplomacy and partners with our neighboring countries and the region to create a stable and peaceful nation, not a blank check to send more men and women into harm's way. We need a policy and a plan to put the welfare of our service men and women first so they can come home, rejoin their families, and receive the care they deserve. They should include adequate services for returning service men and women, including culturally competent care, mental health care for veterans, housing and education.

We need a plan to ensure that U.S. tax dollars are not going to war profiteering and fraud, such as the $1.4 billion that has been somehow charged by Halliburton. I strongly believe that this is possible, but it will require courage, cooperation, and leadership on the part of all my colleagues. Let me say to my colleagues that I support our troops and the war on terror. Unfortunately, the war in Iraq is not the war on terror.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to support and protect our sons and daughters who are serving, as these young people have served us so well. I will do so by voting for this resolution and by supporting their redeployment.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I yield at this time 5 minutes to my colleague from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the co-Chairs of the Iraq Study Group, former Secretary of State James Baker and former House Foreign Affairs Chairman Lee Hamilton, wrote late last year: ''There is no magic formula to solve the problems of Iraq. However, there are actions that can be taken to improve the situation and protect American interests.

''Many Americans are dissatisfied,'' they go on to say, ''not just with the situation in Iraq but with the state of our political debate regarding Iraq. Our political leaders must build a bipartisan approach to bring a responsible conclusion to what is now a lengthy and costly war. Our country deserves a debate that prizes substance over rhetoric and a policy that is adequately funded and sustainable. The President and Congress,'' Baker and Hamilton go on to say, ''must work together.''

''The President and Congress must work together.'' ''Our country deserves a debate that prizes substance over rhetoric.'' Good advice, especially when we are in the middle of a war to

help a suffering people living in a tortured land striving to matriculate from dictatorship to democracy.

Like many Americans, Mr. Speaker, I too have serious questions about this war, especially its cost in human life. I too am impatient and want our men and women brought safely home as quickly as possible.

But with so many Americans and Iraqis and coalition forces at risk, it is important to ask what message a nonbinding surge disapproval resolution with no force of law might have on a troop surge already under way and what message do we send to our troops, our allies, and our enemies. Will it demoralize even a little, maybe a lot, those brave Americans who have put their lives on the line so that others may be free? Will it undermine the resolve, commitment, and solidarity of those nations that have stood with us against the hate and murder of the extremists? And how will our enemies regard passage of this resolution? With celebration? Will they step up their already far too robust campaign of terrorism, murder, and suicide bombing?

If the Democratic leadership wants to stop the surge or the war itself, bring a measure to the floor to defund it. The debate on defunding the war and, most certainly, the vote would have predictable clear-cut consequences. The President can't spend money on a war he doesn't first get from Congress. But by offering what is essentially a sense of the House resolution, the weakest, least effective way of driving home a point because it compels nothing, I am concerned that the House this week may, unwittingly, significantly hurt the morale of our warfighters while empowering the hate mongers. Surely no one in this Chamber wants that.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN), member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and Vice Chair of the Subcommittee on Health.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for allowing me to speak.

I rise today in support of this resolution. The President's escalation, or surge, as he calls it, is not a strategy that will quell the violence in Iraq.

We have heard for too long that change in Iraq is just around the corner, and we continue to spend billions of dollars and have taken thousands of U.S. casualties.

I supported our goals to bring democracy to Iraq, voted for the Iraq resolution, and voted for the billions of dollars to support that effort. And I will not vote to cut funding for our troops while they are in the field in Iraq and Afghanistan.

□ 1800

They are doing their best with a very flawed plan, and that doesn't come from just GENE GREEN saying it. I heard it less than a year after we went there, from e-mails that parents forwarded me.

Our goals were great in Iraq. The plan was not. The administration's plan has not worked since the first year. It is time we send a strong message to the President that we no longer support the administration's strategy.

President Bush addressed the Nation on January 10 of this year to announce his plans to send an additional 21,500 soldiers and marines to Iraq. This move ignores advice from the military and has been tried before without success.

General John Abizaid, former commander of the Central Command, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee on November 15, 2006, that he and General George Casey, the Corps Commander, and Lieutenant General Martin Dempsey all agreed that more troops were not needed. The White House is continuing with the same flawed strategy to pacify the country that has not worked, and adding another 20,000 troops will not make it work.

March 19 of this year will mark 4 years since we went into Iraq. May 1 will mark 4 years since the President declared ''mission accomplished.'' But we turn on the news today and still see headlines, ''Car Bombers Kill 60 in Baghdad,'' ''Four More American Soldiers Killed in Gunfight With Militia.''

We have made great strides in Iraq, but we are now trying to police a war between sectarian armies. Our troops have performed all that has been asked of them, and according to the National Security Council's analysis, we have achieved many of our initial objectives: removing Saddam Hussein from power, assisting Iraq with a constitution and free elections, and helping establish democratic institutions.

It is time for the Iraqis to take control of their own country and that we begin bringing our troops home. This is in the best interests of our military, the Iraqis and our national security.

Our forces cannot indefinitely sustain the demands we currently are placing on them. Joint Chiefs Chairman Peter Pace acknowledged last week when testifying before the House Armed Services Committee that nondeployed U.S. forces are not sufficiently equipped, echoing similar concerns expressed recently by Army Chief of Staff Peter Schoomaker and Lieutenant General Steven Blum, chief of the Pentagon's National Guard Bureau.

The Guard, nationwide, is only equipped to about 30 percent of their needs. Units are taking equipment with them into theatre and being forced to leave much of it for other units to use when they come home. It will cost about $25 billion to reequip the National Guard and Reserves to pre-Iraqi war levels.

We cannot continue to send troops to Iraq for 12-month deployments every other year and expect to maintain a well-equipped and experienced fighting force with high morale.

This resolution expresses the beliefs of many Members of this House that sending an additional 21,500 troops to Iraq is not in our Nation's interests and not a solution for the violence in Iraq. The solution is for the Iraqi Government, the elected government, to do what they need to do. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to my colleague from California (Mr. ISSA), a member of the Intelligence Committee.

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be modified at page 1, line 6, after the word ''Iraq'' to include ''personnel from the United States Intelligence Community who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably worldwide to counter radical jihadists.''

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. KAPTUR). The previous question has been ordered without amendment.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, does that mean that unanimous consent cannot be offered?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The previous question has been ordered, to adoption of the concurrent resolution without intervening motion.

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, further point of inquiry. My understanding is that a unanimous consent request is always in order separate from the rule. Is that not correct?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That is not correct. Under the present circumstances the Chair is constrained not to entertain an amendment to the resolution.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, that makes it very clear that in fact even if there is no objection to including the brave men and women who operate, often without weapons, who operate behind enemy lines, who in fact are part of our Intelligence Community, they cannot be included in this resolution. It is a sad day when democracy does not even include that which there is no objection to from being considered.

Notwithstanding that, Madam Speaker, I think it is extremely important that we deal with the limited strict language we have been offered, and, in the spirit of that strict language, I must oppose it. I must oppose it because in fact on a strict basis this resolution, if heeded by the administration, says stay a failed course of action.

Madam Speaker, it is amazing that the election very clearly told us in November that the American people were not comfortable with the conduct of this war; that in fact on both sides of the aisle, people were calling for a bolder vision, a vision that was more aggressive diplomatically and militarily. In fact, two Presidential candidates, Senator HILLARY CLINTON and,

in fact, Senator MCCAIN, are and have been saying we should have had more troops early, we should have more troops now. It is amazing that in fact the one thing this resolution is saying is stay the course, make no changes.

Further, regardless of what my Democrat colleagues would say today, the next step after ''Mr. President, we will not send more troops,'' is, ''Mr. President, we will not send more tanks; Mr. President, we will not send further personnel and intellectual gatherers to understand our enemy; Mr. President, we won't send more translators; Mr. President, we cannot and will not support more body armor; Mr. President, we will not support this war on terror throughout the region.''

Those are the next steps, because you can't simply say, as this resolution tries to, stay the course. Do nothing. No increases, no decreases. Support the troops, but send them no more.

That makes as much sense as telling the people at the Alamo, stay the course. That wasn't the right solution at the Alamo. At the Alamo they should have either increased their forces so that they could have sustained the bombardment, or withdrawn.

We, in fact, are in a position where the President has made a multitude of new initiatives, one of which includes additional troops to help relieve those tired troops, to help bring the force level up to a level similar to exactly what Presidential candidates on both sides of the aisle were clamoring for just a few weeks ago and throughout the election.

Madam Speaker, one of the other things that just amazes me, today I took a little time and I checked out how many Members of Congress served in the military. It turns out it is less than one-third. I checked out how many Members went to Iraq in the previous Congress. It turns out less than one-third.

The fact is that we are considering a resolution as though we were General Petraeus, a man who was unanimously confirmed in the Senate just a few days ago, and deployed to support and defend our troops and this effort, who is solidly convinced that we have to do more and do it better and who is there to do it and was unanimously confirmed.

In closing, Madam Speaker, only here, with less than one-third of the Members having gone and seen what is going on in Iraq, less than one-third having served in the military, even at a minor level of lieutenant or captain or private, have the hubris to say that we have to not add, not subtract, just keep the exact same number that we and the American people believe is not getting the job done. That is exactly what this resolution is claiming to do. We are not given an alternative in any way, shape or form.

So, Madam Speaker, there is no choice on either side of the aisle. Whether you believe we should have more or we should have less, nobody believes that we should stay the exact course with no change, and that is what this is asking for.

So I call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to realize that in fact this resolution calls for the one thing that the American people most object to, and that is unchanged staying the course at this level. The American people called on us in November to do something bolder, to bring peace in the region, and I call on you to vote down this resolution just exactly to do that.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee and chairman of the Subcommittee on Telecommunications.

Mr. MARKEY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Madam Speaker, this debate marks the beginning of the end of the ill-conceived, mismanaged and ultimately failed war in Iraq. The war in Iraq was launched on the basis of false and misleading intelligence about a nonexistent nuclear weapons program. When the inspectors looked for nuclear weapons in all the most likely places, there was nothing there. When they looked in all the unlikely places, there was nothing there. When this was reported to the world, the world said ''don't invade.'' But when this was reported to the President of the United States, he chose to invade Iraq. In other words, the President did the opposite of what the evidence would dictate.

Here we are, 4 years after the invasion. The American people looked at the facts on the ground in Iraq and voted in November to de-escalate. The generals looked at the situation and said de-escalate. The Iraq Study Group analyzed our options and said we should de-escalate.

So what has the President of the United States decided? After all the evidence, he has chosen to escalate the war. Once again, our President is doing the opposite of what the evidence and common sense dictates.

Our troops continue to fight heroically to prevent Iraq from sliding into anarchy, but they are losing ground to a deep emotional cycle of religious strife and revenge that goes back 14 centuries. Our soldiers cannot be beaten on the military battlefield, but neither should they be faulted for failing to drain a political swamp.

The American people are now speaking out with one clear voice, in frustration and in anger, demanding change, demanding a new direction in Iraq. But the President isn't giving us a new direction. All he has to offer is more of the same, an escalation of our troop presence in Iraq. And this escalation ignores the recommendation of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, which said that all combat brigades not necessary for force protection could be out of Iraq by the beginning of 2008.

This week, we have a choice: We can say no to the President's failed war in Iraq, we can say no to the President's escalation, and we can say no to the unnecessary loss of another American soldier, marine or airman; or we can once again vote to stay the course and to continue on with this failed policy.

Many Americans have expressed frustration that the resolution we vote on this week is a nonbinding resolution, and I understand that frustration. On January 9, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced companion bills in the Senate and House to block President Bush's new plan to escalate troop levels in Iraq. Our legislation would prevent the obligation or expenditure of a single dollar to increase the number of troops in Iraq unless Congress affirmatively voted to do so.

But I would not dismiss this resolution's importance simply because it is nonbinding. Twenty-four years ago, this House took up another nonbinding resolution when it first debated my nuclear freeze resolution. We passed the nuclear freeze on the floor of the House. It was nonbinding and it never passed the Senate. But it nevertheless changed the course of this Nation's nuclear weapons policy. It did so because of the pressure it put on the White House to change, and it was followed by binding legislation that halted tests of anti-satellite weapons, cut funding for Star Wars and cut in half the plan size of the MX missile force.

That is why I fully understand why some Republican Members have simultaneously denounced this resolution as silly and unserious, and, at the same time, have tried to prevent its passage. Why are they afraid of a nonbinding resolution? Because this resolution exposes the lack of support in the Congress for the President's escalation scheme.

The administration's failed strategy has already ended any chance of a successful short-term outcome. The just-released, deeply pessimistic National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq simply confirms this situation.

We are in the middle of a sectarian religious civil war in Iraq, and the presence of our troops is preventing the Iraqi people from taking responsibility for their own security and for their own political solution that must follow.

This war should never have been fought, period. It was a mistake, the American people know it was a mistake, our military leaders know it was a mistake and a bipartisan majority in the United States Congress know it was a mistake.

□ 1815

Let's pass this resolution and send a strong signal to the Bush administration that it is time to stop the escalation, bring this war to an end, and bring our troops home. I urge adoption of this resolution.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. KAPTUR). Please state your parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Does this resolution include any provisions expressing support for the members of the United States intelligence community serving inside of Iraq?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will not interpret the pending measure.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Further parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may state his inquiry.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. When would it be appropriate to ask for unanimous consent to correct this oversight in this resolution that only addresses support for our armed services, but as the ranking member of the Intelligence Committee, I feel that it does a great injustice to the hundreds of people in the intelligence community who are not recognized for their service in Iraq?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would look to the majority manager of the concurrent resolution for any proposal to alter it.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Further parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may state his inquiry.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Would it be appropriate at any time during the debate on this resolution to ask for unanimous consent to modify this resolution to address the significant oversight in the underlying resolution?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would only entertain such a request at the instance of the majority manager of the concurrent resolution.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I thank the Chair.

With that, I would like to yield 5 minutes to my colleague from the State of Illinois (Mr. MANZULLO).

Mr. MANZULLO. Madam Speaker, I am privileged to be a member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Our chairman, Mr. LANTOS, has scheduled for March a hearing to discuss the different proposals relating to the handling of the war in Iraq. He has promised a lot of time for debate on all the different bills introduced in the House of Representatives, ranging from those that call for us to pull out of Iraq immediately, to those that demonstrate our presence there as part of a larger war, not against a nation, but against a movement, Islamic jihadis. They are everywhere and are responsible for attacks in India, Jordan, Israel, England, Egypt, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Spain, Turkey, the Gaza, Morocco, Pakistan and in the United States and Iraq.

Chairman LANTOS wants to make sure that all sides are heard, that all possible alternatives are given an airing. But that is what is missing in the bill that the Democratic majority has given us this evening: it can't be amended. Can you imagine three days of debate without the opportunity to amend a bill? That implies the Democratic leadership believes they have a monopoly on truth and fear input from other Members of Congress.

The bill we are debating today condemns the infusion of up to 21,000 more troops in Iraq. However, at a time when we should be excited about a new proposal calling for a major shift in our policy on Iraq, the bill we are debating condemns it. This proposal taps as its new leader Lieutenant General David Patraeus, who should be given an opportunity to succeed. Confirmed unanimously by the Senate, he has extensive knowledge of other wars and military conflicts and has resolved that America can achieve a favorable result in Iraq.

The new policy is a shift in the rules of engagement and calls upon the Iraqis themselves to step up in responsibility and achievement. A Washington Post story dated January 12 of this year with the byline, ''Withdrawals could start if Iraq plan works: Gates,'' repeats the words of Secretary of Defense Robert Gates testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee on January 11, Gates said: ''If these operations actually work, you can begin to see a lessening of the U.S. footprint both in Baghdad and Iraq itself. Then you could have a situation later this year where you could actually begin withdrawing.''

Isn't that what Americans want, a plan of action with a new focus, stabilizing Iraq and bringing our troops home? But that plan is not being debated today, and that is why I am going to vote against this resolution.

We live in extremely dangerous times. We know Iran is developing atomic weaponry. We also know that six other Arab nations are actively seeking atomic technology, according to the International Atomic Energy Agency. The stakes are onerous. That is why America's men and women in uniform not only deserve our support in the field, but also here in the House of Representatives, by allowing their opinions to be voiced through their Members of Congress. It is the least we can do for them.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from California, MAXINE WATERS, Chair of the Out of Iraq Caucus.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I rise as Chair of the 76-member Out of Iraq Caucus, and I will be followed by many other members during this hour. I rise in support of our troops and in support of this resolution opposing the President's escalation of this war.

Madam Speaker, I support this resolution, hoping this will be a first step in ending this war and reuniting our troops with their families and loved ones. This is an unbinding resolution. The real test for this Congress is going to be whether or not we will continue to fund this war.

For nearly 4 years, our troops have served bravely and admirably in Iraq. Unfortunately, the President and his administration have decided to pursue a political agenda when it decided to push for an invasion of Iraq. The President ignored the advice of dozens of experts inside and outside the government about invading Iraq. For example, the administration ignored the intelligence community's opinions about the status of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs. The administration also ignored recommendations about the number of troops needed to secure Iraq following the fall of Saddam Hussein. In addition, the President and the administration ignored warnings about the difficulty and danger of occupying Iraq and that Iraq would likely break down into sectarian violence.

In short, the administration ignored everything that conflicted with its plan to invade Iraq. Unfortunately, no one has borne the burdens of the administration's Iraq narrow agenda more than our troops and their families. The decision to escalate the war, to send more than 21,000 additional troops to Iraq, will only increase the burden on our troops. Many of the troops serving in Iraq have served two, three, even four tours of duty. And of course the failed Iraq policy has resulted in the death of 3,109 U.S. troops, including 325 from my own State of California, and injury of more than 23,000 others.

Madam Speaker, many experts believe that the President's latest plan will not work, and early indications support that conclusion. About 5,000 troops have arrived in Baghdad since the President announced the plan in January, yet the violence and devastation in Iraq is increasing. It is estimated that more than 2,276 Iraqi civilians have died so far this year and that more than 1,000 Iraqi security forces and 33 U.S. servicemen have died in just the past week. We are sending thousands more troops to Iraq in what is now known to be a civil war. Sending more troops to Iraq is not the answer. The key to stabilization is bringing our troops home and renewing our commitment to diplomacy.

This resolution is the first step in reining in this President and his misguided policies. However, as many have noted, this is, again, an unbinding resolution. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the war, spending bills that will be considered in the coming months to enact meaningful changes to this failed policy and to finally bring our troops home. The future of the entire Middle East is at stake.

The President does not appear to understand or appreciate the situation in Iraq is deteriorating each day. We are losing; however, we can win. And we will win by using leadership to engage and unite rather than attempting to overpower and conquer. Who are we fighting? The Sunnis, the Kurds, the Shias? Who are the insurgents? Some Sunnis, some Shias, some Kurds? Who are the terrorists? Shias, Sunnis, Kurds, Syrians, Iranians? Who are we fighting? I don't think our soldiers know, and I am not so sure this administration has really given the kind of deep thought and consideration as to who we are really fighting.

Diplomacy is the only answer. Today, we must oppose this escalation. However, I have no choice but in the final analysis to oppose continued funding of the American taxpayers' dollars to the war giant whose appetite cannot be satisfied, but in the interest of peace, must be denied.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. At this time I would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I think we need to ask ourselves several questions: Does this resolution make America safer? Does this resolution send a message to our allies that draws them closer to us? Does this resolution encourage our troops, or does it discourage our troops?

We heard about de-escalation and when that might be appropriate, when it may not be. But I can tell you that this resolution does not accomplish de-escalation. In fact, it does not even support the troops on their way as we speak. It only supports the troops who have served or are currently serving.

Madam Speaker, in my conversations with constituents, with soldiers, with those closest to the situation, they see hope, they see hope in a change of strategy. We know that the status quo is not what we need to do, and that is why a change in strategy is certainly in order.

I don't pretend to be General Patraeus, and I hope that none of us pretend to know more about the situation than General Patraeus.

I am concerned when we hear that this resolution is the first step for cutting funding. Why don't we just put that resolution up right now? We can save a lot of time; we can send a more direct message. Is that the appropriate thing to do? I hope that you will join me in voting ''no'' on this resolution because I support our troops and their mission.

Mr. CARNAHAN. I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York, JOSÉ SERRANO, member of the House Appropriations Committee.

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

Mr. SERRANO. This is, indeed, a very solemn occasion; and anyone watching this debate, either on television or in the gallery, should understand that we take very seriously what we say here today. We may disagree on what the final outcome should be, but we do take it very seriously.

And I take it seriously as I recall a funeral I attended, it seems a long time ago, for a member of the Armed Forces, Luis Moreno, who was killed in Iraq. I remember that rainy morning, leaving the church on the way to the cemetery, the pain and the sadness that took place in the whole community, the pain and the sadness that engulfed a family and everyone who was there.

We took seriously the loss of that life, and we honor every day the fact that he was sent to that battlefield and he gave his life for that particular cause, which we discuss today.

We are here in his honor to say that we have to make sure that we no longer continue to escalate this war which was presented to us, it seems again, a long time ago based on, at the minimum, false information, and at most, sadly, lies presented to this Congress.

□ 1830

We have to make sure that no further loss of life takes place. So much has been said today about supporting our troops. Well, I know of no greater support than to bring them home tomorrow morning.

I know a lot of people will say, if you bring them home, Iraq will become a mess. Well, has anyone noticed that Iraq is a mess?

Well, if you bring them home now, Iraq will become a country in a civil war. Has anyone noticed that Iraq is involved in a civil war?

The question is, will we wait for more Americans to lose their lives and more to be wounded?

When I say that we were given bad information or possibly lied to, we were told at that time, I remember, how the weapons of mass destruction were stored in Iraq and that we had to get them before they got us, and how there was a link between al Qaeda and September 11 and Saddam Hussein. And now, even the administration and its ardent supporters agree that there was no link between Saddam Hussein and September 11, there was no link between al Qaeda, there was no link between any of that that we were told; and we still haven't found the weapons of mass destruction. It was simply a desire to take us to where we shouldn't be. And in the process, we really blew it.

I was in New York City on September 11; I was not with my colleagues here. It was election day in New York, primary day, and I was there in New York on that day for some local elections. I lived through that moment, and I know how painful that was. But beginning with September 12, the world was with us. Every country was supportive of what we were going through. It always amazed me that countries that live with terrorism on a daily basis thought that, for some reason, the attack on us was in many ways even bigger than the attacks on their own country, and they supported us. We could have taken that goodwill and used it for positive things throughout the world. What did we do? We totally lost the goodwill by going and invading a country that had nothing to do with September 11. And so now, the same people who supported us no longer support us.

What we are doing here today is exerting a constitutional right. This is not a political exercise, this is not a legislative exercise, this is Members of Congress saying that it is our right to oversee the President and to stop him whenever we can when we know that any President, any administration is making a mistake.

Now, how has this administration been able to keep us supportive in some ways up to now? By doing something which is really sad, by questioning our patriotism. And so tonight and tomorrow and for the next couple of days more will question our patriotism. But I ask you, isn't a true patriot he or she who is not holding back to question the actions of his country even during wartime? Isn't that the true patriot who is willing to say, even during wartime, stop it now, stop the madness before it goes any further and before we lose more of our young people?

And so we gather here after 3,109 losses, after 23,000 wounded soldiers saying we have to stop it now, and we have to vote for this resolution.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. At this point in time, I would like to yield 5½ minutes to a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and also a member of the Subcommittee on the Middle East, Mr. FORTENBERRY from Nebraska.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Madam Speaker, when I left home this week for Washington, my 6-year-old Kathryn became very sad. See, she has big, beautiful brown eyes and they welled up with tears at the prospect of my leaving again for Washington. And she said to me, Daddy, why do you have to be a Congressman? And I thought of the words of the Revolutionary War author Thomas Paine when he said, ''I prefer peace; but if trouble must come, let it come in my time so that my children can have peace.''

Madam Speaker, this is a pivotal moment for our Nation and a very grave, solemn policy debate. We cannot afford to allow the ups and downs of the daily news cycle set the course for our deliberations. The stakes in Iraq are simply too high.

During last year's debate on Iraq, I emphasized that this war is different from wars of the past. There is no front, no lines of demarcation, no clear enemy in distinct uniforms. This is a war that invades tranquil time and space without warning, carried out by those who hide among populations seeking to exploit the vulnerable for ruthless, ideological purposes.

We have never before waged a war in an era of globalization, in an age when technology eviscerates the concept of distance, magnifies our losses, trivializes our accomplishments, and places our adversaries in a far better position to leverage our freedoms, particularly the freedom of speech, against us. These are the complexities we face now.

Madam Speaker, I submit that our choices now stand to determine not only the future of the Middle East but the very future of civilization. We can point fingers and blame each other, or we can think constructively together.

So what are our choices? The National Intelligence Estimate categorically rejects an arbitrary or precipitous U.S. troop withdrawal. The result

would be horrific chaos, a humanitarian disaster, destabilizing the entire Middle East, emboldening the geopolitical aims of Iran, and leading to a much less peaceful world in very short order.

The conflict in Iraq is dangerous, risky, and complex. And we can all agree that our troops are doing an outstanding job, and so are their families who bear the biggest burden in their absence.

I submit that our time and energy as leaders of this Nation should be focused on new, clear military and geopolitical strategies.

First, Iraqis must fight for their own country now. They must lead in the battle for Baghdad now.

Over the past several months I joined colleagues in urging the President to deploy trained Iraqi troops into the heart of the battle for Baghdad, and I am pleased to see that this recommendation is now under way. However, I remain concerned about exposing our forces to unnecessary danger in the sectarian violence of Baghdad. As best we can, our troops should remain in support and training roles. I also believe that it is prudent to send reinforcements to our marines in Anbar province who are achieving good success against al Qaeda elements in collaboration with Sunni tribal leadership.

Second, we must engage responsible members of the international community, particularly the pan-Arab world, to assume a unified and decisive role in neutralizing the forces of chaos and helping secure stability and peace throughout the Middle East.

Third, we must provide meaningful congressional oversight. And I commend Chairman LANTOS for taking this lead in the House Foreign Affairs Committee and for his commitment to a substantive and reasoned debate in this regard.

I would have liked to have had the opportunity to support a constructive bipartisan initiative drawing upon the substantive resources like the Iraqi Study Group to enhance congressional oversight and set out meaningful benchmarks to measure progress toward the stabilization of Iraq and the drawdown of our troops.

While it would be politically easier for me to vote for this resolution, I cannot. I see no useful purpose in supporting a nonbinding resolution that may have the unintentional consequence of undermining our efforts while our troops remain in harm's way.

Madam Speaker, this resolution, while wrapped in the mantle of supporting our troops, does not point to a credible way forward in Iraq. I believe I would make the same decision if a Democratic administration were struggling with similarly arduous challenges. If we flinch now, regardless of the goodwill behind our motivations, if we are perceived as weak and divided and eager to throw up our hands in frustration, we will pay a heavy price. And every nation that counts upon us as a friend and ally will also pay a very heavy price. None of us wants to see the repeat of the last helicopter out of Saigon.

I urge my colleagues, let's find constructive ways to get the job done.

Mr. SKELTON. May I make an inquiry, Madam Speaker, of how much time has been consumed and how much time remains on each side, please.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Missouri has 2 hours, 28 minutes. The gentleman from Michigan has 2 hours, 15½ minutes.

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

The great Chinese strategist and thinker once wrote that war should not be begun unless the end is in sight. Sadly, that admonition of Sun Tzu was not adhered to in this war in Iraq.

Let me bring us back to what we are all about today. We have been hearing discussions ranging from both ends of the football field. This is a very simple, straightforward resolution.

The first part of it is: We fully support the American troops. And I am going to say, Madam Speaker, we are so proud of them. They are volunteers, they are professionals, they understand the word duty.

And, secondly: We do not agree with the troop increase of 21,500, for the simple reason it has not worked in the past, for the simple reason it is going to cause somewhere between 2,500 and 13,000 support troops to support that effort. And, consequently, it is not a well-thought-out tactic. And despite the fact that some wish to call it a strategy, it is a tactic, and there is a large difference between the two.

Madam Speaker, at this time I yield 5 minutes to a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee as well as the Budget Committee, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

Mrs. CAPPS. I thank my colleague for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution supporting our troops and disapproving the President's plan to escalate the war in Iraq.

More than 4 years ago, the resolution to support a war in Iraq came before this House. After careful consideration of the evidence and arguments put forth for a unilateral preemptive attack on Iraq, I decided I could not in good conscience vote for that resolution.

My ''no'' vote against the President's plan for war in Iraq is one of my proudest moments in Congress. I didn't believe the case where war had been made. There was no real evidence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. The administration's arguments about al Qaeda connections with Iraq were specious, and its attempt to link Iraq with the tragedy of 9/11 was shameful.

I was deeply concerned about the effects of preemptive war on America's standing in the world, and equally worried about the ramifications for the greater Middle East, a region of great importance and even greater fragility. And I had strong concerns about the administration's preparation for the aftermath of a war in Iraq. The administration was completely focused on waging war and not on winning the peace.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, all of those concerns have been borne out. There were no WMDs, no al Qaeda connections, no 9/11 link. It was all trumped up evidence by an administration consumed with toppling the dictator in Iraq. Today, Iraq is in civil war, the Middle East is even more unsettled, and our standing in the world is at a low point. The international support given to America after 9/11 was squandered and will take years to repair the damage. And, as a Nation, we are even less secure today than we were the day we invaded Iraq. I point this out only because it is critically important to know where we have been if we want to know where we should be going.

This resolution gives voice to the deep, deep opposition here in the Congress and throughout the country to the President's plan for escalating the war in Iraq.

□ 1845

I speak for the vast majority of my constituents on the central coast of California when I state my unequivocal opposition to this escalation. The administration's plan looks like more of the same failed policies that got us here in the first place. It is a plan based more on hope than on fact, buttressed by hysterical rhetoric. It is a plan opposed by numerous military leaders and experts. It is, quite frankly, simply not believable.

The recent National Intelligence Estimate makes it perfectly clear that the President's grand plan is just never going to work. The resolution here before us puts Congress on record against the proposition that success will come only after more troops are thrown into battle.

The other objective of this resolution is to remind everyone that opposing the war in Iraq, and especially opposing the President's escalation, is consistent with supporting our troops. Our men and women in uniform have done everything we have asked them to do and so much more. Over 3,000 have made the ultimate sacrifice. More than 20,000 others have been injured, so very many of them seriously.

Let no one doubt the bravery of our troops and the support that I and my colleagues who are opposed to this war have for them. I am eternally grateful for the sacrifices our men and women in uniform and their families are willing to make every single day. They continue the long distinguished line of soldiers, sailors and airmen that have kept our country and so many others free from tyranny and oppression, but their service is due more than heartfelt appreciation and flowery words from politicians.

Their sacrifice, their service, is owed responsible leadership from those civilian leaders with whom power ultimately rests, and that is where our soldiers have been let down. This administration has taken arrogance, stubbornness and incompetence to new heights. It ignored the advice of military experts leading up to and throughout this war.

It stocked reconstruction teams with political hacks, and it brushed off the indisputable reality of Iraq in a meltdown. It dismissed the considered opinion of the Iraq Study Group, the Congress, most importantly, the American people.

Make no mistake, the failure of the war in Iraq lies at the highest levels of the White House and at the desks of the Pentagon's civilian leadership, and the cost of that failure is borne by our troops, their families and the Iraqi people. It is time for the administration to stop obfuscating the conditions on the ground in Iraq, stop the charade about so-called new plans that will finally bring success in Iraq.

Madam Speaker, it is time to stop the war in Iraq. Support the troops. Indeed, bring them home.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, at this time I would like to recognize my colleague from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, today tens of thousands of our young men and women are serving in uniform heading for Iraq. More are headed there as we speak. They will do what American soldiers do. They will serve our Nation with courage and pride, and for that they deserve our deep gratitude.

Today in the House we are engaging in a debate on a resolution that declares their military and humanitarian missions failed. I have seen this resolution described in the press as symbolic, toothless and meaningless. I couldn't disagree more. Our consideration of this resolution, the words spoken on this floor, carry great meaning and weight.

The actions of this body have consequences. When Members speak, the world listens: our friends, our allies, our rivals, our enemies and future enemies alike. What are they hearing?

I remember just 2 weeks ago, during the Super Bowl, seeing the video of our troops in Baghdad watching the game. Our soldiers watched that game. Every Member on this floor should know with certainty that our soldiers surely are watching this debate, and so are their families, and so are our enemies and so are the loved ones of those who made the ultimate sacrifice in their service to our Nation.

Instead of showcasing the best partisan rhetoric and working for political advantage, we should be working together with our Commander in Chief to honor their service and commitment, to find a way forward in Iraq that protects our Nation and results in a stable Iraq that can govern and protect itself.

I know that none of us are happy with the progress of the war. I know that the American people are struggling with this war. I struggle too. I am reminded that we have been sent here by our constituents to exercise our best judgment and to bring our experience to bear on the most pressing issue facing our Nation, the global threat of a radical Islamic fundamentalism.

Last week in the House Appropriations Committee on Defense, on which I serve, I asked the chiefs of staff of the Army about the consequences of failure in Iraq. I was reprimanded for getting off topic. But that is the topic. That is the point. Withdrawal from Iraq will have consequences, both immediate and in the seeds of future conflicts.

What will Congress do if we leave Iraq to flounder and descend into chaos, and how will we handle the next challenge laid before us, for there will be others. Do any of us doubt the determination of forces who are counting on our failure, on our resolve? This is the most fundamental question that confronts us, not solely the question of troop reinforcement that is already under way. Our answer to this question will be the legacy, not just of this President, but of all of us in this Chamber.

Over 35 years ago I served with the Army in Vietnam. While I never much advertised this fact, I was proud to serve, even as my father, then a Member of Congress himself, was subject to many personal attacks on the home front from those who opposed the Vietnam War.

Like many soldiers then, I wanted to do my time and come back safely. I promised myself one day that if I had the chance, I would be a better person, a better elected official, for that military experience. I promised myself that I would never let our soldiers down wherever they might be.

Madam Speaker, we are Americans first, and as Republicans and Democrats, we need to come together to work on solutions in Iraq and the Middle East. We are a Nation at war, lives are on the line, and we could do much better than this resolution.

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Northern Virginia, a member of the Appropriations Committee, Congressman JIM MORAN.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I would like to paraphrase a poem that Rudyard Kipling wrote upon the death of his son in World War I that seems particularly apt to the war in Iraq:

When they ask why the young men died

Tell them it's because the old men lied.

Madam Speaker, when the White House announced 4 years ago the U.S. military would attack Iraq under the guise of the global war on terrorism, there wasn't one single uniformed military officer who believed that Iraq was part of a global war on terrorism. Saddam had had nothing to do with the 9/11 attack.

Saddam wasn't harboring any al Qaeda cells that did attack us. In fact, they understood that starting a new war would distract us and limit us from accomplishing our immediate need to eliminate Osama bin Laden. Saddam was a vicious, secular, despotic dictator, but he saw al Qaeda as a threat to his control, and al Qaeda viewed Saddam as an enemy of their religious extremist world vision.

The U.S. Intelligence Community knew that there was no clear evidence that Saddam was a threat to the United States. There was no failure of our professional Intelligence Community, but there was an abysmal failure of our political leadership.

So how did we get to this point? First we were scared with the threat of Saddam's arsenals or weapons of mass destruction, al Qaeda training camps, an Iraqi meeting with the 9/11 hijacker, mobile labs, aluminum tubing, yellow cake uranium. But there were no weapons of mass destruction, Madam Speaker.

The training camps didn't exist. Mohamed Atta never met an Iraqi agent in Prague. The White House knew, before they informed us about the mobile labs, that our experts had determined that they were not in any way related to chemical or biological weapons. Likewise, the aluminum tubing was bogus information. Well before the so-called yellow cake uranium from Niger was cited as evidence at an attempt at nuclear armament, our Intelligence Community had informed the White House that it was a hoax.

Yet we were told repeatedly by the President and the Vice President that Saddam was a threat to global stability, that there was a direct connection between Iraq and al Qaeda and September 11. We were told in the buildup to the war that our troops would be greeted by the Iraqis as liberators, being offered flowers in the streets. This was propaganda that the State Department warned the White House not to believe, but they nonetheless peddled it to the Congress and to the American people.

We were told that to liberate Iraq was to spread freedom and democracy, to keep oil out of the hands of potential terrorist-controlled states. We were told that the war would pay for itself with Iraqi oil revenues. Yet all we have done is to finance our enemies, the insurgents and Iranian Shiia interests.

After Baghdad fell, we were told that America had prevailed, that the mission was accomplished, that the resistance was in its last throes, that more troops were not needed. As things went from bad to worse, we were told of turning point after turning point, the fall of Baghdad, the death of Saddam's sons Uday and Qusay, the capture of Saddam, a provisional government, the trial of Saddam, a charter, a constitution, an Iraqi Government, elections,

purple fingers, a new government, the death of Saddam, all excuses for triumphant rhetoric while the reality on the ground continued to worsen.

We were told, as they stand up, we would stand down. We would stay the course. Now we are told that there is a new course, but it is in the same misguided direction. Falsehood after falsehood unravels each day, with the morning paper reporting even more deaths.

Now the American people are being asked to put 20,000 more sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives into the line of fire, and into the dead zone between the sectarian sides of a civil war. A message was sent to President Bush on November 7, 2006. This surge of more troops into Iraq defies the will of the American people.

But this is a new Congress. We will no longer be cowed by leaders using 9/11 as a political ploy against sensible people who oppose the administration's failed Iraq policy. Today for the first time since the war began, Congress will go on record opposing the President's failed Iraq policy. Some will argue that it is a nonbinding resolution, that it will not have the impact of a law, that it will not stop a roadside bomb or bring a single soldier home to their family. But the President understands what this resolution means. It is the beginning of the end of this wrong war of choice.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, I yield 10 minutes to my colleague from New York, a member of the Intelligence Committee, roughly 1 minute for every foot of snow that his community has recently received.

Mr. MCHUGH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Very roughly, you owe me a few.

Madam Speaker, listening to this debate tonight, it becomes obvious that kind of like life itself, those of us in Congress have moments of high drama and great importance, and by any measure, the date this evening and tomorrow and the days that follow and, most importantly, the vote that will attend it, is just such a moment.

I would observe, Madam Speaker, in the now nearly 231 years that this great Union has endured, this House has encountered few sessions demanding greater honesty, greater selflessness, and greater wisdom than that of occasions of war. And as I said, this is such a time.

But this debate really does stand alone. It is unique over the more than two centuries and three decades of our history, because from my study at no time in this Nation's history has the Congress considered the matter before us this week. The question of shall we resolve, in a nonbinding resolution, that this House disagree with a mission, duly designated by the constitutional authority vested in the President, as Commander in Chief, in the conduct of the war, that this same Congress, in an earlier session has, in fact, expressly endorsed.

I have listened today with great interest. I have enormous respect for all Members on both sides of the aisle. But I have heard about how wherever they are, many Members tonight will go to the well when they ultimately vote and try to send the President a message, try to signify to the administration that this war has not been conducted in the appropriate way. It has not achieved the objectives that we all felt were possible, in fact, absolutely necessary at its outset.

□ 1900

I would say, Madam Speaker, I understand that perspective; not only understand it, in many ways I strongly share that perspective. But I have to argue the fact of the matter is, for all of the good intentions we have here tonight, the negative aspect of such an action is going to far outweigh, far outweigh whatever good it might attempt to achieve.

The reality is, if this message is heard at all at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, it is going to speak in whispers. Whispers. But in other lands, in other continents, in other cities, far, far away, when this resolution comes before us, and if it is passed, it is going to crash like thunder. In places like Ramadi and Basra, from Baghdad and beyond, friend and foe alike are going to hear something far different than what we intend.

They are going to hear that through this vote we have abandoned the Iraqi people. They are going to hear that America has forsaken this struggle. They will hear that we disavow our military objective in Baghdad really before it has meaningfully begun, and most importantly in the shadows where our enemies lurk, in places like Tehran and Damascus, the message will fail where its authors intend, but it will succeed very, very mightily where they wish it would not.

Madam Speaker, for all of the good intent embodied in this proposal, it will not bring a single soldier home sooner. This vote, no matter what the tally, no matter what this board shows as to green and red at the end of the day, will not shorten this conflict by a single month, not by a week, not by a day. It will not change the course of a single battle. It will not even alter a pebble that lies on the battlefields in which those struggles will be fought.

It will, however, say to the insurgents, the Saddamists, the radical Islamic militants and their patrons that time is on their side. It will say that America has no stomach for this fight. And somewhere in a cave in Afghanistan, or in a hut on the Afghan-Pakistan border, Osama bin Laden is going to smile.

His words of a failure of America will be that much closer to reality. As he has said: ''The epicenter of these wars is Baghdad, the seat of the caliphate rule.'' They keep reiterating that ''success in Baghdad will be success for the United States, failure in Iraq the failure of the U.S. Their defeat in Iraq will mean defeat in all their wars and a beginning to the receding of their Zionist crusader tide against us.''

Those are bad messages, Madam Speaker. But I would suggest respectfully to all of my colleagues for all the wrong messages this resolution will send to our enemies, nothing it contains will be more devastating than what it says to our troops, to our military, those brave men and women in uniform who answered the call to arms, issued not by some ephemeral entity, but by us, by this Congress.

And how do we say through the resolution we are considering here today, we support your needs, but we reject your mission? We allow for your deployment but we shun the premise of your departure? And what do we say to the wife or husband? How do we respond to the father or the mother or the loved one of the next warrior lost in battle who asks, why did you oppose through that resolution the job they were sent to pursue but did absolutely nothing from preventing them from going from the outset?

That is the tyranny, and I have to say it, Madam Speaker, that is the folly of the resolution before us for all its lack of practical result, for the fact that this resolution will do absolutely nothing. Never has this Congress in its history of war considered an action of such dramatic consequence.

Now, it is said during the Civil War that the great Southern general, Robert E. Lee, was really tired, and I think we can all relate to this, of the criticism, the second-guessing that was directed at his leadership through the major newspapers of his time.

And he observed, Apparently all my best generals had become journalists. Today, tonight, I think it can be fairly said of some, apparently all of our best generals have become Congressmen. My colleagues, we are not generals. The Constitution of this great Nation does not provide for 535 Commanders in Chief, yet that is the reality lost in the proposal that we are considering this night in this week.

But I would suggest, instead of being diminished by that fact, instead of being lessened by what we are not, we need to be empowered by what we are. And I say to my colleagues tonight on both sides of the aisle, we indeed have a grave responsibility in this matter. But it does not lie in nonbinding resolutions that send wrong messages to our troops and absolutely wrong messages to our enemies. It rests in the authorities vested in us by the Constitution of this great land, the power to fund or not all matters of government, especially war.

Like all of us here tonight, I want this war to conclude. I represent the 10th Mountain Division, the most deployed division in the United States Army. I was there 3 weeks ago. I know the pain. I know the suffering. And like all of you, I am frustrated by the path we have traveled to this point, and I am troubled by the course that apparently lies ahead.

And we can, we must have, a different approach, one that especially places responsibility for success where it rightfully lies, and I have heard my colleagues tonight speak about that, with the Iraqi people. I propose an amendment to the supplemental appropriations bill that will just do that, require the Iraqis to step forward, to stand up, to stop the talking, and to begin to act.

It will fully fund the needs of our troops and provide for us, the Congress, the rightful role and expedite an opportunity to review the Iraqis effort and to judge the progress of this new mission in Baghdad. These things have to be done. But this resolution, in my judgment, in my judgment, is what must decidedly not.

This weekend I took the time to reread John F. Kennedy's Pulitzer Prize-winning work ''Profiles in Courage.'' And in those pages our martyred President spoke: ''In no other occupation but politics is it expected that a man will sacrifice honor, prestige, and his chosen career on a single issue.''

My friends, this is such a moment. I accuse nobody in this Chamber, Madam Speaker, of any kind of transgression, honorable people, good people. We will disagree, as I expect they will on this and other days, but I do plead that every Member in this House vote on this resolution, not for themselves, not for gain or posture through politics, not because of their alleged attention to public opinion, because it is right.

We can do better. We must. But this resolution is not the path to that objective.

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

My friend from New York, a fellow member of the Armed Services Committee, Mr. MCHUGH, a good friend, I must agree with him on one comment that he made when he said, I am troubled by the course that lies ahead.

Madam Speaker, I am very troubled about the course that lies ahead. That is what we are about this evening. We have seen an irretrievable strategic mistake made in Iraq that put us where we are. And consequently it brings us to this point where we express our concern and disagreement with the increase in troops in this crucial time in Iraq and allows us the opportunity to say thank you. We are proud of you, each of you who wears the American uniform.

Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH), a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

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

Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, I raise today to voice my support for this resolution. For too long now, under a Republican-controlled Congress and a Republican-controlled Senate, the President has been given a free hand and a blank check to conduct this war in Iraq, for far too long without any oversight, for far too long without any accountability from this the equal branch of government, this U.S. Congress. Madam Speaker, and because of the Republicans' unwillingness and the Democrats' inability to question the President or his administration about the conduct of this war, we now find ourselves embroiled in a civil war on a foreign soil.

We are not seen as liberators. We are seen as an occupying force on a foreign land. We are seen as an occupying army by the Iraqi people. Madam Speaker, we are trapped in a deadly situation where American soldiers and Iraqi citizens are targeted for murder, mayhem and maiming.

Many of our top generals and experts in this field have testified that the American troop presence is the biggest, largest, most provocative catalyst to the violence in Iraq. The Iraqi people are very suspicious of this administration and the motives of this President. And they do not view foreign soldiers in their cities, in their towns, in their homes as something that they desire.

So if the Iraqi people no longer want us in their country, and if the military objective, which was supposed to be the toppling of Saddam Hussein has been achieved, then why do we still have hundreds of thousands of our troops there?

Why on Earth are we sending more troops to this unstable and volatile area when it is obvious that the solution to this problem is not a military one, but a political one?

Madam Speaker, if we want to get out of this hole, then we must first stop digging. It is well past time for this President to finally understand that he cannot solve the world's problems with brute force, the American military, and our boys' and girls' lives. We must begin a serious and political and diplomatic effort in this region to hold the Iraq Government responsible for protecting its own people and to solicit comments from Iraq's neighbors as well as our friends and allies around the world to help stabilize Iraq and to rebuild that devastated country.

The Iraqi people do not want to see more American troops coming into their homes and into their cities. They want their chosen, duly elected leaders to step up to the plate and to protect them as they were elected to do. And they want their foreign occupiers to leave their homeland.

Madam Speaker, this is not hard to comprehend. Would we not want the same thing if a foreign military came and occupied our cities, our States, our Nation, our homes?

This war is draining American resources and stretching our military to the point where we will be unable to protect ourselves against any real threat to our national security. We know that to date over 3,000 American soldiers have lost their lives in Iraq, and more than $500 billion has been appropriated for this unjust and this misguided war.

Yet dispute these costs, neither the American people nor this Congress has been given a reasonable explanation or reasonable grounds for keeping American troops in Iraq to do the job that Iraqi soldiers should be doing for themselves.

□ 1915

Madam Speaker, because of our grave missteps, our enormous miscalculation, the situation in Iraq has steadily declined. And there is no evidence that increasing the number of American soldiers at this point will do anything other than provide more targets to the Iraqi insurgents and make the situation in Iraq even more volatile.

Madam Speaker, after being wrong on so many counts time and time again, I believe the stakes in this war are too high for us to continue to put blind trust in this administration. The world in which we live deserves more.

Madam Speaker, I am against this troop surge because the American people and the Iraqi people want truth surge. They want strategy, not more of the same.

It is the job and the responsibility of this Congress to reflect the will of the people who have put us here, and demand that the Administration bring an end to this ill-fated war, not escalate it.

Believe me, Madam Speaker, it brings me no pleasure to have this debate and publicly disagree with the President, but my solemn oath to my constituents, as well as my conscience and integrity prevent me from doing anything less.

It is time for us to end our occupation in Iraq. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Con. Res. 63.

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from the Appropriations Committee, Mr. HINCHEY, the gentleman from New York.

Mr. HINCHEY. Madam Speaker, as a veteran of the United States Navy, I am very, very honored to be a Member of this House of Representatives. And today I am very proud and pleased to stand here in support of this very important resolution, which needs to be adopted as the final first step of this Congress in dealing with this unjust, illegal, unnecessary invasion of Iraq and the subsequent disastrous occupation.

In October of 2002, when the resolution authorizing this invasion came to the floor, 133 Members voted against it. 127 Democrats and six Republicans voted against it. Most of us voted against it because we knew that the so-called logic or rationale that had been presented by the administration was untrue, that there was no connection between Iraq and the attack of September 11, that there was no evidence that there were chemical or biological weapons left in Iraq, even though we know that previous administrations of this country had supplied those weapons.

We knew that the rationale presented for the development of a nuclear weapon in Iraq was completely falsified. The documents were forged.

On the 19th of March, this administration carried out an illegal, unnecessary, unjustified invasion of Iraq. We will soon mark the fourth year of that action. In all of that time, this Congress has done nothing significant or substantial to stand in the way of the illegal, unjustified actions of this administration, in spite of the fact that they have caused the death of now more than 3,000 American servicemen and women, more than 23,000 physically injured, unknown numbers psychologically injured, hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians killed.

In spite of all of that, and in spite of the fact that, increasingly, every Member of this Congress has begun to understand with greater and greater clarity, how the information was falsified, how what the Intelligence Committees told the White House, the Department, the State Department, and others in this administration, had been twisted and distorted and turned around purposely and specifically to carry out this disastrous invasion and subsequent occupation, nothing has been done.

The previous leadership of this Congress failed to step forward and take any kind of action against this administration. And we hear people on this side of the aisle, tonight, speaking against this resolution saying it doesn't do anything significant. It doesn't do enough.

Well, let me tell you something. This is the first step of a new majority in this Congress taking the right kind of action on the basis of our obligations and responsibilities under the Constitution to stand up to the actions of this administration and to put this country back on the right track. Not just in the case of what is going on in Iraq, even though that is so terribly disastrous, but the consequences here in our own country, the intimidation of people, the internal spying, the elimination of habeas corpus, all of the impingements on the American Constitution, based upon the culture of fear cultivated purposely by this administration for their own personal and political objectives. No one in the previous leadership, no one in the previous majority, stood up to this administration in any kind of a constructive way.

So, if you want to correct the failures that have existed in this Congress since that resolution came to the floor and since the 19th of March in 2003, when this administration carried out that illegal, unnecessary and unjustified invasion, then you will support this resolution, recognizing that it is the first important step taken by a new majority here in this Congress to deal with the consequences of all of that falsehood.

If you fail to do so, you will continue to leave the door open for further violations of law and constitutional principles by this administration, perhaps next in Iran, because that may be the next illegal step of this administration.

If you want to make up for what you failed to do, if you want to do the right thing for this country, for our people, and for our military personnel, please, support this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. KAPTUR). The Chair would like to announce that the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) has 2 hours, 5½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA) has 2 hours, 30 seconds remaining.

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, at this time I yield the balance of my time to the gentlelady from California, who is a member of the Armed Services Committee and chairman of the Strategic Forces Subcommittee, Mrs. TAUSCHER. I ask unanimous consent that she be allowed to control the time from this moment.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman and the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee for yielding time.

At this time I am happy to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, as we debate this nonbinding resolution on Iraq, the administration is preparing for the next war in Iran. We are losing our democracy to war, massive debt, fear and fraud. The American people need Congress to surge towards the Constitution, surge towards the truth.

Now, some call this resolution a first step. I would like to believe that Congress will respond to the will of the American people expressed in the November election. They expect us to take real action to assert our constitutional power, to take America out of Iraq by refusing to provide any more funding for the war. That is our right. That is our duty. We have a duty to restrain an administration which is conducting an illegal war. We have a duty to hold to a constitutional accounting a President and a Vice President who led us into a war based on lies.

I led the effort against the Iraq war resolution.

Madam Speaker, I ask to include into the RECORD an analysis of the President's war resolution which was given to Members of Congress back in October of 2002. It pointed out that there is no proof that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, anything to do with 9/11, anything to do with al Qaeda's role in 9/11. It is not as if Congress had no idea the war was based on untruths.

Now we must tell the truth, not just about the escalation, but about the occupation. We are illegally occupying Iraq. We attacked a nation which did not attack us. We must recognize the wrong that has been done and move to right it.

Instead of debating the end of the war, Congress is ironically preparing to give the war a new beginning. Some have made it clear long before this particular resolution that they will continue to fund the war by approving the upcoming supplemental appropriation, even though money exists to bring the troops home now.

When we equate funding the war with supporting the troops, we are dooming thousands of young Americans who are valiantly following the orders of their Commander in Chief. If we truly cared about the troops, we would not leave them in the middle of a civil war. If we truly cared about the troops, we would not leave them in a conflict for which there is no military solution.

The war is binding. The resolution is not. This resolution will not end the war. It will not bring our beloved troops home. It will not even stop the administration from sending more troops. That is because this resolution is nonbinding.

The war is binding. The resolution is not; 3,100 U.S. troops are bound in death; 650,000 innocent Iraqi civilians are bound in death.

The war is binding. The resolution is not. American taxpayers are bound in debt. The war could cost $2 trillion. We are borrowing money from Beijing to fight a war in Baghdad. Worse, each and every time Congress votes to fund the war, it votes to reauthorize the war. There were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, but there are weapons of mass destruction at home. Poverty is a weapon of mass disruption. Lack of education is a weapon of mass destruction. Poor health care is a weapon of mass destruction. We must find and disarm those weapons of mass destruction which threaten the security of our own Nation. But Congress must first take responsibility.

The Federal Court has made it abundantly clear that once a war is well underway, Congress' real power is to cut off funds. Funding the war is approval of the war.

The American people are waiting for us to provide real leadership to show the way out of Iraq. My 12-point plan responds to that demand. This plan, drafted with the help of experts in international peacekeeping, specialists with U.N. experience and veteran military advisors, creates a peace process which will enable our troops to come home and stabilize Iraq.

Here are the elements of the Kucinich plan.

First, Congress must deny any more funds for the war.

Second, the President will have to call the troops home, close the bases and end the occupation.

Third, a parallel peace process which brings in international peacekeepers must begin. That is third.

Fourth, move in the international peacekeeping and security force and move out U.S. troops. Peacekeepers will stay until the Iraqis are able to handle their own security.

Fifth, order U.S. contractors out of Iraq.

Sixth, fund an honest process of reconstruction.

Seventh, protect the economic position of the Iraqi people by stabilizing

prices in Iraq, including those for food and energy.

Eighth, create a process which gives the Iraqi people control over their economic destiny without the structural adjustment policies of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Ninth, give the Iraqi people full control over their oil assets, with no mandatory privatization.

Tenth, fund a process of reconciliation between the Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds.

Eleventh, the U.S. must refrain from any more covert operations in Iraq.

And twelfth, the U.S. must begin a process of truth and reconciliation between our Nation and the people of Iraq.

There is a way out. Congress should stand for that. And we will have an opportunity to do it once again in about 6 weeks.

ANALYSIS OF JOINT RESOLUTION ON IRAQ

(By Dennis J. Kucinich)

Whereas in 1990 in response to Iraq's war of aggression against and illegal occupation of Kuwait, the United States forged a coalition of nations to liberate Kuwait and its people in order to defend the national security of the United States and enforce United Nations Security Council resolutions relating to Iraq;

Key Issue: In the Persian Gulf war there was an international coalition. World support was for protecting Kuwait. There is no world support for invading Iraq.

Whereas after the liberation of Kuwait in 1991, Iraq entered into a United Nations sponsored cease-fire agreement pursuant to which Iraq unequivocally agreed, among other things, to eliminate its nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons programs and the means to deliver and develop them, and to end its support for international terrorism;

Whereas the efforts of international weapons inspectors, United States intelligence agencies, and Iraqi defectors led to the discovery that Iraq had large stockpiles of chemical weapons and a large scale biological weapons program, and that Iraq had an advanced nuclear weapons development program that was much closer to producing a nuclear weapon than intelligence reporting had previously indicated;

Key Issue: UN inspection teams identified and destroyed nearly all such weapons. A lead inspector, Scott Ritter, said that he believes that nearly all other weapons not found were destroyed in the Gulf War. Furthermore, according to a published report in the Washington Post, the Central Intelligence Agency has no up to date accurate report on Iraq's WMD capabilities.

Whereas Iraq, in direct and flagrant violation of the cease-fire, attempted to thwart the efforts of weapons inspectors to identify and destroy Iraq's weapons of mass destruction stockpiles and development capabilities, which finally resulted in the withdrawal of inspectors from Iraq on October 31, 1998;

Key Issues: Iraqi deceptions always failed. The inspectors always figured out what Iraq was doing. It was the United States that withdrew from the inspections in 1998. And the United States then launched a cruise missile attack against Iraq 48 hours after the inspectors left. In advance of a military strike, the U.S. continues to thwart (the Administration's word) weapons inspections.

Whereas in 1998 Congress concluded that Iraq's continuing weapons of mass destruction programs threatened vital United States interests and international peace and security, declared Iraq to be in ''material and unacceptable breach of its international obligations'' and urged the President ''to take appropriate action, in accordance with the Constitution and relevant laws of the United States, to bring Iraq into compliance with its international obligations'' (Public Law 105–235);

Whereas Iraq both poses a continuing threat to the national security of the United States and international peace and security in the Persian Gulf region and remains in material and unacceptable breach of its international obligations by, among other things, continuing to possess and develop a significant chemical and biological weapons capability, actively seeking a nuclear weapons capability, and supporting and harboring terrorist organizations;

Key Issues: There is no proof that Iraq represents an imminent or immediate threat to the United States. A ''continuing'' threat does not constitute a sufficient cause for war. The Administration has refused to provide the Congress with credible intelligence that proves that Iraq is a serious threat to the United States and is continuing to possess and develop chemical and biological and nuclear weapons. Furthermore there is no credible intelligence connecting Iraq to Al Qaida and 9/11.

Whereas Iraq persists in violating resolutions of the United Nations Security Council by continuing to engage in brutal repression of its civilian population thereby threatening international peace and security in the region, by refusing to release, repatriate, or account for non-Iraqi citizens wrongfully detained by Iraq, including an American serviceman, and by failing to return property wrongfully seized by Iraq from Kuwait;

Key Issue: This language is so broad that it would allow the President to order an attack against Iraq even when there is no material threat to the United States. Since this resolution authorizes the use of force for all Iraq related violations of the UN Security Council directives, and since the resolution cites Iraq's imprisonment of non-Iraqi prisoners, this resolution would authorize the President to attack Iraq in order to liberate Kuwaiti citizens who may or may not be in Iraqi prisons, even if Iraq met compliance with all requests to destroy any weapons of mass destruction. Though in 2002 at the Arab Summit, Iraq and Kuwait agreed to bilateral negotiations to work out all claims relating to stolen property and prisoners of war. This use-of-force resolution enables the President to commit U.S. troops to recover Kuwaiti property.

Whereas the current Iraqi regime has demonstrated its capability and willingness to use weapons of mass destruction against other nations and its own people;

Whereas the current Iraqi regime has demonstrated its continuing hostility toward, and willingness to attack, the United States, including by attempting in 1993 to assassinate former President Bush and by firing on many thousands of occasions on United States and Coalition Armed Forces engaged in enforcing the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council;

Key Issue: The Iraqi regime has never attacked nor does it have the capability to attack the United States. The ''no fly'' zone was not the result of a UN Security Council directive. It was illegally imposed by the United States, Great Britain and France and is not specifically sanctioned by any Security Council resolution.

Whereas members of al Qaida, an organization bearing responsibility for attacks on the United States, its citizens, and interests, including the attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, are known to be in Iraq;

Key Issue: There is no credible intelligence that connects Iraq to the events of 9/11 or to participation in those events by assisting Al Qaida.

Whereas Iraq continues to aid and harbor other international terrorist organizations, including organizations that threaten the lives and safety of American citizens;

Key Issue: Any connection between Iraq support of terrorist groups in Middle East, is an argument for focusing great resources on resolving the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. It is not sufficient reason for the U.S. to launch a unilateral preemptive strike against Iraq.

Whereas the attacks on the United States of September 11, 2001 underscored the gravity of the threat posed by the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by international terrorist organizations;

Key Issue: There is no connection between Iraq and the events of 9/11.

Whereas Iraq's demonstrated capability and willingness to use weapons of mass destruction, the risk that the current Iraqi regime will either employ those weapons to launch a surprise attack against the United States or its Armed Forces or provide them to international terrorists who would do so, and the extreme magnitude of harm that would result to the United States and its citizens from such an attack, combine to justify action by the United States to defend itself;

Key Issue: There is no credible evidence that Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction. If Iraq has successfully concealed the production of such weapons since 1998, there is no credible evidence that Iraq has the capability to reach the United States with such weapons. In the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq had a demonstrated capability of biological and chemical weapons, but did not have the willingness to use them against the United States Armed Forces. Congress has not been provided with any credible information which proves that Iraq has provided international terrorists with weapons of mass destruction.

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 678 authorizes the use of all necessary means to enforce United Nations Security Council Resolution 660 and subsequent relevant resolutions and to compel Iraq to cease certain activities that threaten international peace and security, including the development of weapons of mass destruction and refusal or obstruction of United Nations weapons inspections in violation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 687, repression of its civilian population in violation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 688, and threatening its neighbors or United Nations operations in Iraq in violation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 949;

Key Issue: The UN Charter forbids all member nations, including the United States, from unilaterally enforcing UN resolutions.

Whereas Congress in the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102–1) has authorized the President ''to use United States Armed Forces pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 678 (1990) in order to achieve implementation of Security Council Resolutions 660, 661, 662, 664, 665, 666, 667, 669, 670, 674, and 677'';

Key Issue: The UN Charter forbids all member nations, including the United States, from unilaterally enforcing UN resolutions with military force.

Whereas in December 1991, Congress expressed its sense that it ''supports the use of all necessary means to achieve the goals of United Nations Security Council Resolution 687 as being consistent with the Authorization of Use of Military Force Against Iraq

Resolution (Public Law 102–1),'' that Iraq's repression of its civilian population violates United Nations Security Council Resolution 688 and ''constitutes a continuing threat to the peace, security, and stability of the Persian Gulf region,'' and that Congress, ''supports the use of all necessary means to achieve the goals of United Nations Security Council Resolution 688'';

Key Issue: This clause demonstrates the proper chronology of the international process, and contrasts the current march to war. In 1991, the UN Security Council passed a resolution asking for enforcement of its resolution. Member countries authorized their troops to participate in a UN-led coalition to enforce the UN resolutions. Now the President is asking Congress to authorize a unilateral first strike before the UN Security Council has asked its member states to enforce UN resolutions.

Whereas the Iraq Liberation Act (Public Law 105–338) expressed the sense of Congress that it should be the policy of the United States to support efforts to remove from power the current Iraqi regime and promote the emergence of a democratic government to replace that regime;

Key Issue: This ''Sense of Congress'' resolution was not binding. Furthermore, while Congress supported democratic means of removing Saddam Hussein it clearly did not endorse the use of force contemplated in this resolution, nor did it endorse assassination as a policy.

Whereas on September 12, 2002, President Bush committed the United States to ''work with the United Nations Security Council to meet our common challenge'' posed by Iraq and to ''work for the necessary resolutions,'' while also making clear that ''the Security Council resolutions will be enforced, and the just demands of peace and security will be met, or action will be unavoidable'';

Whereas the United States is determined to prosecute the war on terrorism and Iraq's ongoing support for international terrorist groups combined with its development of weapons of mass destruction in direct violation of its obligations under the 1991 cease-fire and other United Nations Security Council resolutions make clear that it is in the national security interests of the United States and in furtherance of the war on terrorism that all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions be enforced, including through the use of force if necessary;

Key Issue: Unilateral action against Iraq will cost the United States the support of the world community, adversely affecting the war on terrorism. No credible intelligence exists which connects Iraq to the events of 9/11 or to those terrorists who perpetrated 9/11. Under international law, the United States does not have the authority to unilaterally order military action to enforce U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Whereas Congress has taken steps to pursue vigorously the war on terrorism through the provision of authorities and funding requested by the President to take the necessary actions against international terrorists and terrorist organizations, including those nations, organizations or persons who planned, authorized, committed or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001 or harbored such persons or organizations;

Key Issue: The Administration has not provided Congress with any proof that Iraq is in any way connected to the events of 9/11.

Whereas the President and Congress are determined to continue to take all appropriate actions against international terrorists and terrorist organizations, including those nations, organizations or persons who planned, authorized, committed or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such persons or organizations;

Key Issue: The Administration has not provided Congress with any proof that Iraq is in any way connected to the events of 9/11. Furthermore, there is no credible evidence that Iraq has harbored those who were responsible for planning, authorizing or committing the attacks of 9/11.

Whereas the President has authority under the Constitution to take action in order to deter and prevent acts of international terrorism against the United States, as Congress recognized in the joint resolution on Authorization for Use of Military Force (Public Law 107–40); and

Key Issue: This resolution was specific to 9/11. It was limited to a response to 9/11.

Whereas it is in the national security of the United States to restore international peace and security to the Persian Gulf region;

Key Issue: If by the ''national security interests'' of the United States, the Administration means oil, it ought to communicate such to the Congress. A unilateral attack on Iraq by the United States will cause instability and chaos in the region and sow the seeds of future conflicts all other the world.

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE.

This joint resolution may be cited as the ''Authorization for the Use of Military Force Against Iraq''.

SEC. 2. SUPPORT FOR UNITED STATES DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS.

The Congress of the United States supports the efforts by the President to—

(a) Strictly enforce through the United Nations Security Council all relevant Security Council resolutions applicable to Iraq and encourages him in those efforts; and

(b) Obtain prompt and decisive action by the Security Council to ensure that Iraq abandons its strategy of delay, evasion and noncompliance and promptly and strictly complies with all relevant Security Council resolutions.

Key Issue: Congress can and should support this clause. However Section 3 (which follows) undermines the effectiveness of this section. Any peaceful settlement requires Iraq compliance. The totality of this resolution indicates the Administration will wage war against Iraq no matter what. This undermines negotiations.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES.

AUTHORIZATION.—The President is authorized to use the Armed Forces of the United States as he determines to be necessary and appropriate in order to—

(1) Defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq; and

(2) Enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions regarding Iraq.

Key Issue: This clause is substantially similar to the authorization that the President originally sought.

It gives authority to the President to act prior to and even without a U.N. resolution, and it authorizes the President to use U.S. troops to enforce U.N. resolutions even without U.N. request for it. This is a violation of Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, which reserves the ability to authorize force for that purpose to the Security Council, alone.

Under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, ''The Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace . . . and shall make recommendations to maintain or restore international peace and security.'' (Article 39). Only the Security Council can decide that military force would be necessary, ''The Security Council may decide what measures . . . are to be employed to give effect to its decisions (Article 41) . . . [and] it may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security.'' (Article 43). Furthermore, the resolution authorizes use of force illegally, since the U.N. Security Council has not requested it. According to the U.N. Charter, members of the U.N., such as the U.S., are required to ''make available to the Security Council, on its call and in accordance with a special agreement or agreements, armed forces . . .'' (Article 43, emphasis added). The U.N. Security Council has not called upon its members to use military force against Iraq at the current time.

Furthermore, changes to the language of the previous use-of-force resolution, drafted by the White House and objected to by many members of Congress, are cosmetic:

In section (1), the word ''continuing'' was added to ''the threat posed by Iraq''.

In section (2), the word ''relevant'' is added to ''United Nations Security Council Resolutions'' and the words ''regarding Iraq'' were added to the end.

While these changes are represented as a compromise or a new material development, the effects of this resolution are largely the same as the previous White House proposal.

The U.N. resolutions, which could be cited by the President to justify sending U.S. troops to Iraq, go far beyond addressing weapons of mass destruction. These could include, at the President's discretion, such ''relevant'' resolutions ''regarding Iraq'' including resolutions to enforce human rights and the recovery of Kuwaiti property.

PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION.—

In connection with the exercise of the authority granted in subsection (a) to use force the President shall, prior to such exercise or as soon thereafter as may be feasible, but no later than 48 hours after exercising such authority, make available to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate his determination that—

(1) Reliance by the United States on further diplomatic or other peaceful means alone either (A) will not adequately protect the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq or (B) is not likely to lead to enforcement of all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq, and

(2) Acting pursuant to this resolution is consistent with the United States and other countries continuing to take the necessary actions against international terrorists and terrorist organizations, including those nations, organizations or persons who planned, authorized, committed or aided the terrorists attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001.

(c) WAR POWERS RESOLUTION REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) SPECIFIC STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION.—Consistent with section 8(a)(1) of the War Powers Resolution, the Congress declares that this section is intended to constitute specific statutory authorization within the meaning of section 5(b) of the War Powers Resolution.

(2) APPLICABILITY OF OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—Nothing in this resolution supersedes any requirement of the War Powers Resolution.

SEC. 4. REPORTS TO CONGRESS.

(a) The President shall, at least once every 60 days, submit to the Congress a report on matters relevant to this joint resolution, including actions taken pursuant to the exercise of authority granted in section 2 and the status of planning for efforts that are expected to be required after such actions are

completed, including those actions described in section 7 of Public Law 105–338 (the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998).

(b) To the extent that the submission of any report described in subsection (a) coincides with the submission of any other report on matters relevant to this joint resolution otherwise required to be submitted to Congress pursuant to the reporting requirements of Public Law 93–148 (the War Powers Resolution), all such reports may be submitted as a single consolidated report to the Congress.

(c) To the extent that the information required by section 3 of Public Law 102–1 is included in the report required by this section, such report shall be considered as meeting the requirements of section 3 of Public Law 102–1.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Do any of us really believe that the resolution in front of us today is a serious piece of legislation?

Does it discuss or force a debate on the really tough issue of how big this conflict is?

Who is it that hates America and others so much that they are willing to kill innocent men, women and children?

Again, it does not do that. There are people who hate us enough to want to kill. I speak of militant Islam's hate for America, a hate that extends to others as well, including Muslims. And these militant Islamists kill. They kill violently and indiscriminately.

Who are they?

What should America's response to this threat that we and others face on a global basis be?

What is America's response to jihadism?

How will America win this war against this calculating enemy?

How will America lead the world, once again, in the face of such a ruthless threat?

What is a jihadist, other than someone or some group so full of hate that they are willing to kill?

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I have a passion for understanding this threat. These Islamic jihadists are a fringe element of Islam who have very specific ideas about how to revive Islam, return Muslims to world power, and how to deal with their enemies. They are committed to a violent overthrow of the existing international system and to its replacement by an all-encompassing Islamic state, the caliphate, as it is called.

This is more than just about Iraq. It is a much bigger problem. It is also clear that this jihad is about them, their god, their religion before it becomes anything about anyone or anything else. That is right, it is about them before it is about us. And that is why this resolution comes up so short because it does not address all of these issues.

Madam Speaker, I would like to yield to my colleague from California (Mr. CAMPBELL).

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

You are right. A big problem, big issues, and this resolution doesn't address them.

What does it do? It basically says that the military leaders have a suggestion that we have reinforcements that they believe may improve the situation, help us get a victory in Iraq. Now, they can't guarantee that. The President can't guarantee it. Nobody can guarantee it. But what does this say? It says we are not going to do that. Okay, fine. But what are you going to do instead?

This resolution, by rejecting the only plan on the table, basically is saying stay the course, keep the status quo.

I don't think the status quo has been working. I think we know we have to make some changes in strategy and whatever. We have to make something work. But this basically says we will take the only plan that is out there and reject it. We won't do it.

So my question would be what do you do instead? What do you do to ensure that we don't have a genocide in Iraq on the scale of what is going on in Darfur? If you don't want to do this plan, what do you do to ensure that terrorism does not grow and flourish in Iraq and that then they come to attack us on our soil again, which they haven't done for 5 years? What do you do to protect our troops?

I think these are a lot of questions that we have, Mr. HOEKSTRA, which is why just saying no to the only plan that is on the table won't do it. It is kind of like a football game: the coach and quarterback call a play, and they are in there, and then someone runs into huddle and says, No, we are not going to run this play.

What play are we going to call?

We don't have a play.

So the quarterback gets under the center. The center snaps the ball, and nobody goes anywhere. Nobody knows what to do because there is no play, there is no plan. That will fail.

This simple status quo resolution is not the solution.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman. I think he has made some very good points about what we don't see in this resolution. We don't see a discussion of what the global threat is from these jihadists who hate democracy, who hate other heretic Muslim states, who want to establish this caliphate that spreads throughout the Middle East, spreads into Europe, across Africa, into Asia. It lacks the concept of putting it into a bigger picture.

There is no alternative plan. Really, if you vote for this resolution, what you are voting for is you are voting for stay the course. Support the troops; don't try a new strategy or tactic. Just stay the course. And it also does not deal with what the potential consequences may be of that failed strategy.

Madam Speaker, I would like to yield to my colleague from Arizona.

Mr. SHADEGG. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

And I have listened to his eloquent words today about the radical threat we face.

I have a fundamental question for the other side. I thought our colleague from New York did a superb job of acknowledging the good intentions of every Member of Congress involved in this debate and the good intentions of the majority. I share his frustration with the progress of the war to date. I share the comments made by my colleagues on the other side who are unhappy at how we got here. But I think that misses what I believe is the essential question we confront now, and that is, where do we go from here? What will this resolution do? And I would suggest that that is a question that has not been examined in this debate. I would suggest that many would like to wish this war would go away, that many would like to believe that if the United States withdrew its troops from Baghdad and withdrew its troops from Iraq that somehow Iraq as a problem would go away.

But, Mr. Chairman, you have made the point over and over and over again today: this isn't about Iraq.

I would ask my colleagues on the other side can they name a single jihadi leader, a single radical Islamist, who has said if they prevail in Iraq, if we will just leave Iraq, that this will end, that they will no longer desire to conquer the world, that they will back away from all of their rhetoric about attacking all Westerners everywhere? And I suggest you can't name anyone like that.

Let me read you just a few quotes to make this point. Ayman al Zawahiri, we all know who he is, a well-known jihadi leader: ''It is a jihad for the sake of God and will last until our religion prevails.'' Not until we abandon Iraq, but until their religion prevails.

''The entire world is an open battlefield for us,'' he goes on to say. ''We will attack everywhere until Islam reigns.'' Ayman al Zawahiri does not say we will attack until the war in Iraq ends, we will attack until Americans pull out of Baghdad, we will attack until they are no longer in the nation of Iraq. He says, ''We will attack everywhere until Islam reigns.''

Again al Zawahiri: ''The jihad in Iraq requires several incremental goals. The first stage: expel the Americans from Iraq.'' Note that that is only the first stage. ''The second stage: establish an Islamic authority or emirate. The third stage: extend the jihad wave to the secular countries neighboring Iraq.'' It will not end.

If your resolution, if a resolution tonight, could end this war and bring our boys home and our girls home and make the world safe, I would be the first to vote for it. But it won't.

Osama bin Laden says it clearly: ''Hostility toward America is a religious duty, and we hope to be rewarded for it by God . . . I am confident that Muslims will be able to end the legend of the so-called superpower that is America.''

We are on notice. I think we have to take them at their word. It isn't about Iraq. It is about our confrontation, a historic confrontation, with radical jihadists who seek to kill us.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, reclaiming my time, I think the gentleman from Arizona stated it very well. When we talk about the jihadists, they believe that the modern world has forsaken that pure religious life. They believe only in a caliphate governed by shiria law and that is the way to return to that pure life. That is the world they now want to recreate. And as they recreate it, they want to force it on the rest of us.

Madam Speaker, I would like to now yield to my colleague, Mr. SAXTON.

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. HOEKSTRA for yielding.

I would just like to build on something that Mr. SHADEGG said. He said, in essence, that this subject is so important because it goes so much further than Iraq. And as a member of the Armed Services Committee, I try to keep close tabs on where our soldiers and sailors and marines and airmen are deployed. And it may surprise some on the other side of the aisle, but perhaps not, to know that we have troops deployed in Southwest Asia in five countries; we have troops deployed in Europe in quite a few countries, several countries; in Central Asia we have troops in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan; in Southeast Asia we have troops deployed in the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia; in South America in Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and Guantanamo Bay; and in 19 countries in Africa, all in support of the war on terror.

And as Mr. SHADEGG mentioned a few minutes ago, it has been clearly stated that Iraq is the first battleground chosen to make their stand and clearly stated that all of these other places where we have sent troops, not because we have extra troops to send somewhere, not because we have extra taxpayer dollars that we are trying to get rid of or spend, but because every one of those countries exhibits a piece of geography where there is a threat related to the global war on terror.

So a vote for this resolution is a vote, perhaps, of goodwill on the part of those who will eventually in a few days vote for it, but it won't end this war. It won't end the desire of the Islamists to take advantage of various situations and, as Mr. HOEKSTRA mentioned, achieve their goals.

And so this is a broad war. This is a war where it will be years and perhaps decades to bring to a conclusion. And the worst thing we can do is to send messages that we are not serious about carrying out our duties in defense of this generation and, as I will point out later, future generations of Americans.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, reclaiming my time, with that I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I would like to yield myself 20 minutes. And at this time I would like to yield 5 minutes to my good friend and neighbor in California, the gentlewoman from Oakland, Representative BARBARA LEE of the Appropriations Committee.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman for her leadership, for yielding, for her deep commitment to our troops and to our country.

As a daughter of a proud veteran of two wars, I know personally that we have a moral obligation to support and protect our brave men and women on the ground in Iraq. However, there is no reason for us to stand behind the President's plan to escalate his failed policy in Iraq. In fact, Madam Speaker, the American people are way ahead of us.

A USA Today/Gallup poll released just today shows that 60 percent oppose this escalation, 63 percent favor bringing our troops home by the end of 2008, and last November the American people soundly rejected the President's failed policy in Iraq at the voting booth. You would think that the President understood what all this meant. After the election he continued his listening tour on options for Iraq, but it seems that he wasn't hearing what the American people were saying.

The Iraq Study Group actually indicated and said very clearly that there was no military solution to this mess. And rather than heed the call of military experts, advisers, and the American people, the President offered an even worse plan: put more troops in harm's way in Iraq. This just doesn't make any sense.

That is why this no-confidence resolution puts the administration on notice: end the occupation and bring our troops home. However, if the President doesn't change course, we must go further. This war has undermined our credibility and standing in the world. It has cost too many lives and injured too many of our troops. This war has cost too many Iraqi lives. This war has cost us nearly half a trillion dollars, and the costs keep mounting. The chaos in Iraq that the President set in motion has further destabilized an already precarious balance in the Middle East.

We must take steps to use the upcoming supplemental appropriations bill to set in motion an end to this terrible and misguided war and bring our troops home from Iraq.

To that end I support fully funding the safe withdrawal of our troops from Iraq over a 6-month period, and I will work with my colleagues to do this. Additionally, along with Congresswomen WOOLSEY and WATERS, we have introduced H.R. 508, the Bring our Troops Home and Sovereignty of Iraq Restoration Act.

□ 1945

This bill would completely fully fund military withdrawal from Iraq within 6 months, while ensuring that our troops and contractors leave safely, and accelerate the training of Iraqi Security Forces. And we would make certain that our veterans, who have given us so much, receive the health and mental health benefits that they deserve.

Our bill would remove the specter of an endless, and that is what this is right now, it is an endless occupation, by preventing the establishment of permanent military bases. Our very presence in Iraq is fueling the insurgency, and our troops have been the targets of this civil war.

Madam Speaker, these are the best and the safest ways to end this occupation. But it really didn't have to be this way. Imagine for a moment what would have happened had Congress adopted my substitute amendment to the authorization to use force against Iraq in October 2002. We would have allowed the United Nations inspectors to finish their job. We would have discovered what we all know now as fact, that Saddam Hussein had no weapons of mass destruction, and, as then, there was no connection between the horrific events of 9/11 and Iraq. Iraq did not attack us, as many are trying to continue to convince the American public that it did. Iraq did not attack us 5 years ago.

The bottom line is that Iraq also would not be a war-torn country as it is today, and, again, the world is less safe. And if this wasn't enough, over the last several months the President has been saber-rattling on the issue of Iran. We must not go down the same path and end up in another unnecessary, dangerous, costly and disastrous preemptive war with Iran. This notion of the ''axis of evil'' and preemptive war is very, very dangerous.

Madam Speaker, the stakes are too high. We need to stop digging ourselves deeper into this hole. Escalating this war and expanding this war does nothing in terms of our national security. It puts us more at risk. Iraq was not a haven for terrorists as it is now. Again, Iraq, Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda, there was no connection, and we have to dispel that notion so the American people know the truth.

So, rather than end this war today, we are saying let's just for today at least take one step and stop the escalation and expansion, and we will be back to talk about how we are going to begin to bring our troops home, and bring them home within 6 months.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I am happy to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HARE), a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. HARE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California. I rise today in strong support of this resolution.

Recently at a town hall meeting that I had, a man approached me, pulled out a picture of his son, said that he had just died in Iraq 6 months ago. His wife won't come out of the home. He said, ''I want you to promise me that when you go to Washington, you will do everything you can to make sure that this never happens to another family.''

Three days later, I called the family of Senior Airman Daniel Miller of Galesburg, Illinois, who lost their son to a roadside bomb explosion outside of Baghdad 2 weeks prior to when he was supposed to be coming home. I hope and pray I don't ever have to make another phone call to another grieving family. That is why I come to the floor this evening in strong opposition to the President's decision to deploy 21,500 additional troops in Iraq, and I strongly support this resolution.

The current situation in Iraq is grave, and it is rapidly deteriorating. The sectarian conflict is the principal challenge to stability in Iraq, and caught in the middle of this civil war are approximately 140,000 of our bravest troops. Over 3,000 troops have already lost their lives, while over 22,000 have been wounded.

Our current strategy has not made significant impact on reducing the violence. In fact, December 2006 was the third deadliest month since the war began. The cost of this war, both in the number of lives lost and the amount of dollars spent, has had a profound effect on Illinois and my congressional district. Out of the 3,128 deaths, 95 have been from Illinois, and eight soldiers from the 17th District.

But not only will an increase in troop levels not solve the fundamental cause of violence, it places us at a great disadvantage here at home. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the troop surge could require as many as 48,000 troops and as much as $27 billion, which is five times the amount of the President's request of $5.6 billion. Also the U.S. military will be forced to deploy many combat units for their second, third, and even fourth deployments in Iraq, and extend the redeployment of others.

Currently as we sit in debate on this resolution, 16,000 single mothers are serving in Iraq. This troop surge would only extend the time their children are left at home alone, with their mother or their father.

Since the military is already short thousands of vehicles, armor kits and other protective equipment, a troop surge threatens the readiness of our forces. In fact, if you saw the paper recently, a soldier was quoted saying he had to go to the junkyards to dig up pieces of rusted scrap missile and ballistic glass so they could armor the vehicles and make them combat ready.

While only a first step, this resolution is a good start. It does not give up on our troops or declare defeat in Iraq, but offers a new forward direction towards a nonpartisan goal of bringing our troops home safely, quickly, and securing stability in the region.

Already, this Democratic-led Congress has had 52 oversight hearings on various issues related to this war, and many of my colleagues have introduced several bipartisan measures that promote political and diplomatic engagements.

A person this evening said, Where do we go from here? I would strongly suggest that this administration try something it hasn't tried yet: diplomacy. It can work. You just have to have the courage to try.

In the coming weeks, I am hopeful that Congress will consider a comprehensive measure such as H.R. 787, the Iraq War De-escalation Act, of which I am a cosponsor. In addition to requiring the responsible redeployment of U.S. forces from Iraq and allowing basic force protection, it launches a comprehensive regional and international diplomatic initiative. I am thoroughly convinced that the only way we will attain peace in this region, in Iraq, is through diplomatic initiatives.

This legislation also makes the Iraqi Government responsible for their own destiny by establishing benchmarks concerning Iraqi military readiness to police their own country without United States assistance.

Finally, as a veteran myself, I also hope as we move forward we will adequately prepare for the return of thousands of new veterans. Our number one priority should be to fully fund the cost of veterans health care and PTSD benefits.

This administration's budget calls for cutting prosthetics by $2 million and severely cuts funds to the VA at a time when it is proposing an increase in troop levels. Without full funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs, our veterans are left without the services they were promised when they pledged to defend this Nation.

Madam Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this resolution as the first of many steps towards bringing our troops home and securing our success in Iraq. As I told the gentleman at my town meeting, I promised him I would do everything I could so this would never happen again. That journey begins this evening.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I am happy to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), a member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, first of all, I want to thank Speaker PELOSI for providing what we never had in the last session, and that is ample opportunity to fully discuss Iraq, where we are and what we ought to be doing about it.

I have always been told that when you start with a faulty premise, you will inevitably reach a faulty conclusion. And the rationale given for entering the war was faulty. There were no weapons of mass destruction, no connection to 9/11. Therefore, we never should have invaded Iraq in the first place.

But then after the invasion, the occupation of Iraq has been tragically mismanaged. Civilian military leadership ignored the advice of senior commanders on requirements for preventing chaos in the aftermath of the invasion. As a result, our extended presence in Iraq continues to worsen the situation, not only in Iraq, but in the entire region.

Terrorist incidents continue to flare up around the world, from England to Spain, from Indonesia to Jordan. Chaos and intolerance in the form of civil war now has secured a deadly grip on Iraq. The policy of escalation has failed, and failed again, to loosen that horrendous grip. The Iraqi people want us to leave, and so do the American people, especially those in my congressional district, and especially those that I encounter at churches, schools, synagogues, town hall meetings and on the street.

Madam Speaker, democracy and self-government cannot be imposed on Iraq by any foreign power, including us, the United States of America. Our troops have done everything we have asked of them, even when we have failed to equip and protect them. The problem does not lie with our troops, but with the distorted world view of this administration and the military and diplomatic doctrine of preemptive war as a solution to global political problems.

We must do everything possible to protect our troops and we must do everything in our power to take care of them when they return home.

It is impossible, Madam Speaker, to build a coalition against terrorism by attempting to unilaterally impose these doctrines on the international community. We cannot undo the many mistakes which have been made in Iraq. And when our national interests have been so distorted, when we have so lost our direction, it is the historical, moral, and constitutional responsibility of this Congress to set us back on course and on the right track.

It is time to recognize that we are enmeshed in an unending, vicious circle of escalating violence, rather than a force for peace, and that is why I am a cosponsor of H.R. 508, which would bring the force of law to end this war.

Today we have before us a nonbinding resolution, most likely insufficient to end the occupation. But it can help to move us in the right direction and set us on the right path. Therefore, I support this resolution, because it reflects the will and interests of the American people, and I trust that this administration will abandon demagogic calls for constantly changing notions of success and victory and awaken to the world of reality.

Madam Speaker, it is time, it is past time, to bring our troops home. I am told that insanity is doing the same thing over and over and over again and expecting different results. This resolution sets us on the right course, gives us the right direction. I urge its passage.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I am happy to yield 5 minutes to my neighbor and colleague from California (Mr. HONDA).

□ 2000

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentlewoman from Northern California (Mrs. TAUSCHER).

Like so many of my colleagues, I stand here today in opposition to President Bush's surge in Iraq.

We should not have attacked Iraq in the first place, and we definitely should not escalate things further. The initial evidence for the war was flimsy at best, and realizing that, I voted against the authorization for war.

The most recent evidence that the President has presented in support of this surge is even less credible, and I urge my colleagues to prevent the President from throwing more gasoline onto a fire that is already burning out of control.

When I speak to veterans of the Iraq war, I become infuriated by their tales of the destruction that this President's policies have wrought in that country. Nor can they fathom why their Commander in Chief insists on squandering the strength of the greatest fighting force in the history of the world.

While Iraq under Saddam Hussein's rule was a rogue state and an affront to American values, today Iraqi citizens are forced to endure even more severe and deadlier situations.

There is no indication that Iraq was a center for international terrorism prior to President Bush's adventure there. Now, as a result of his irresponsible actions, it undeniably is.

Over 3,000 brave American service men and women have lost their lives in Iraq in addition to the 100,000 or more Iraqis who have been killed; 25,000 American soldiers have been injured.

For what, Mr. President? For what? You have yet to answer this simple question, and I suspect this is because you do not have an answer. There is not, nor can there be, a credible answer to this utter folly.

Each Member of this House has tales of constituents whose lives will never be the same because of the Iraq war.

In the aftermath of 9/11, one of my constituents joined the Army out of a deep sense of patriotism. One day while on patrol in Iraq, his tank drove over an explosive device, sending the vehicle 10 feet in the air. He survived but suffered severe brain and spinal injuries. For his bravery, he was awarded the Purple Heart, multiple commendations and other medals.

After completing a service to his country, he returned home to resume his life with his wife and newly born triplets.

Upon returning to work, however, he found that he had difficulty concentrating as a result of his head injury. He was diagnosed with traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder.

As a result of the strain that the President's policies are placing on the Veterans Administration, he, like so many of my constituents, was unable to receive a change in his benefit allowance in a timely manner. So that he could continue to live in dignity, local officials and media had to put out a call for donations to pick up where his government failed him.

This brave man expected that his sacrifices would be repaid with the generosity that America promises to our veterans. Instead, he encountered a system that is overextended and ill equipped to help him when he needed it. Other constituents have told me that when they try to call the Veterans Administration they have to wait on hold for over 2 hours before they can talk to a human being.

Is this how we should treat those who put their lives on the line for our country? The Veterans Administration recently testified that it needs a 13 percent increase in funding to address rising costs and increased demand, but the President's budget proposes less than half of that.

And now the President wants to further escalate the strain on our already over-extended system by sending more soldiers off to Iraq? I am outraged and I cannot mince my words. This is a national shame. This is not how America repays its valiant heroes.

Madam Speaker, we must stop this madness. This surge, this escalation will fail just as past surges have.

This conflict requires the diplomatic and political solution, not just simply sending more troops into the fight. We cannot allow this President to shatter the lives of more of our best and brightest. It is time to bring our troops home.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. AL GREEN of Texas). Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I understand we have until 12 o'clock to complete this part of the debate?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, in my office I keep a photo of about a dozen Kurdish mothers whose bodies are strewn across the hillside in northern Iraq, holding their babies, killed in mid-stride where they were gassed to death by Saddam Hussein. As I listened to some folks in this debate talk about what they consider to be an immoral war, an illegal war, an occupation that is not consistent with morality, I harken back to that picture and the thousands of people that it represents, and I harken back also to the exhuming of mass graves with, again, mothers shot in the back of the head with a .45-caliber pistol by Saddam Hussein's executioners and with their little babies similarly with holes in the back of their skulls.

Mr. Speaker, this operation in Iraq is indeed a moral operation. It represents the goodness of the American people.

I am also reminded of something that lots of folks and the Vice President talked about, and that is the goodness that we have brought with the 3 million-plus babies who have been vaccinated, with the hundreds of schools and hospitals that have been built, and with all those expectant mothers that were given prenatal care by the Americans so that their children would be born in a healthy fashion.

But, Mr. Speaker, I recall that in 1984 Ronald Reagan very eloquently asked the American people to support him in bringing freedom to the people of El Salvador. I remember his speech; and in his speech, he harkened back to another American who had appealed to us in bringing freedom to another part of the world, which was at that time endangered, and that was Greece in 1947.

The communists were very close to victory in Greece, and Harry Truman appealed to the American people in a joint session of Congress. He said the free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining their freedoms. If we falter, we may endanger the peace of the world, and we shall surely endanger the welfare of this Nation.

Now, we have no guarantee of victory in Iraq. There is no battle plan that comes with a guarantee of victory, but I will tell one thing that is very clear: what is happening in Iraq and our efforts in Iraq are connected and are watched by every terrorist in the world, and that connection is established and travels as fast as the speed of electrons in this age of television and technology and high-paced, fast media and the Internet. They see what we are doing.

And that connection, Mr. Speaker, was made when the Beirut bombings occurred against the Marines in the Marine barracks in Beirut. In fact, I think Mr. SKELTON was with me. We were over there very shortly before those bombings occurred.

They are connected and the terrorist world watched very closely when there was no response to that. They watched very closely when there was no response in the Khobar Towers, with respect to the Cole and extremely anemic response with respect to the bombings in the embassies in Africa.

Now we are undertaking an important and difficult mission; and, Mr. Speaker, I pointed out before that at least one brigade of the 82nd Airborne is already in place in Baghdad, now engaged in the operation, and we have a brigade of the Big Red One moving now toward the theater. I believe we have right at 4,000 members of the 82nd Airborne now in country in Iraq, and we have Iraqi soldiers and Americans engaged in the nine sectors of the city already undertaking this operation and this plan that has been developed by our warfighting commanders.

The idea that we are here, poised to retroactively condemn an operation that our soldiers are already carrying out, is, to my mind, remarkable. There is not going to be any force in effect with respect to this vote that will take place shortly that will do anything but send the wrong message to America's

allies, and I think you have seen comments by some of our allies over the last several weeks with respect to the message that we send out. We are interesting people are we not, Mr. Speaker. We send out messages with all the electronic gadgets in the world to convey the messages to the entire world, and then we say, you know, we really did not mean what you take our statements to mean and we really did not intend to give anybody the wrong message that we still support the troops.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we have got a number of great members of the Armed Services Committee that I want to yield to, and I want to come back later and talk a little bit later about this war against terror and the centerpiece that is Iraq and the centerpiece of that which is as planned.

You know, I was thinking there was a statement once that in a little hut in Central America when we were standing up to the Communists and we were providing a shield for El Salvador, while that fragile democracy stood up, there was a hut in El Salvador which reportedly had the writing on it, Thank God for Ronald Reagan. I am wondering if some trooper in the 82nd Airborne, in the 2nd brigade of the 82nd Airborne may write on a wall in Baghdad, maybe on Friday when we take this vote, This is the day in which the American Congress condemned the mission that we are carrying out today.

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

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to lend my strong support to this bipartisan resolution supporting our men and women in uniform and opposing the President's decision to send more troops into Iraq.

Last year, Congress united across party lines to say loudly and clearly, the year of 2006 must be a year of significant transition in Iraq. Rather than chart a new course, the President is proposing more of the same. His actions will only deepen America's involvement in Iraq's civil war.

Instead of acknowledging the facts on the ground, instead of listening to the combatant commanders and the Iraq Study Group and instead of hearing the American people's call for change, the President has once again chosen to stick to his failed policies, and now he has raised the risk by insisting more U.S. troops head to Iraq.

It has been 4 years, Mr. President. The American people have every right to expect a change of course in Iraq, and it is your responsibility to them and our men and women in uniform to stop fighting Iraq's civil war.

As General Odom, the former head of the National Security Agency under President Reagan, wrote this weekend, unless Congress speaks up, and I quote, we may be doomed to 2 more years of chasing a mirage in Iraq and possibly widening the war to Iran. We cannot let that happen. Sending more U.S. troops to Iraq will not stabilize it or the region as a whole. As the latest National Intelligence Estimate makes clear, Iraq is becoming more polarized and violent, not less. Sending more American troops to Iraq without stronger Iraqi leadership will only lead to further chaos.

My consistent opposition to this troop surge is built upon years of hearings in the House Armed Services Committee, congressional briefings and five trips to the region, including three to Iraq, witnessing the war firsthand and speaking with our troops and commanders on the ground.

I have watched the President plead his case to the American people, trying to justify why more troops will save his failed policy; but I am consistently disappointed by the stubbornness exhibited by an administration that has failed every step of the way.

I have stated from the beginning of the war that the Commander in Chief has the responsibility to define a well-articulated mission that has the support of the American people and an exit strategy to bring our troops home sooner and safer. He has neither.

Top military commanders in Iraq, the bipartisan Iraq Study Group and the American people all agree that sending more troops to Iraq will not end the civil war. They understand the Iraqi Government needs to take responsibility for securing their own country, and we should immediately begin a strategic redeployment of U.S. troops in conjunction with diplomacy that forces Iraq's neighbors to step up as regional, responsible partners.

If the President sidesteps the Congress, he does so at his own peril; and, sadly, it is the men and women of our Armed Forces and their families who will pay the highest price.

□ 2015

I believe it is grossly irresponsible to send more troops to Iraq when only two thirds of our Army's up-armored Humvees in Iraq and Afghanistan have been fitted with the latest anti-IED protective kits. That is over 4,000 Humvees without the right equipment.

General Pace has indicated that all armored vehicles will not be up-armored until July, well after the President's surge has occurred.

This is why I am an original cosponsor of the Meehan legislation that requires the President to ask Congress for an up-or-down vote if he plans to raise troop levels in Iraq and why I am proud to support this legislation today.

I will continue to challenge the President to abandon his flawed troop surge policy, and I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution. We owe it to our troops and to our conscience.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself just 30 seconds, and I would like to just make one note. That is, if we add the 21,500 troops that are already partly in Iraq, these reinforcements to the 138 who existed before the movement started, and we allow for the troops who are rotating home, we will have fewer; we will have 157,000 troops in Iraq, according to DOD. That is fewer than the number of troops that we had a year ago in December. That is the state of this so-called surge; fewer troops than we had last year.

Mr. Speaker, at this point I would yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) who, for a number of years, chaired the Terrorism Subcommittee and is now the ranking member.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the ranking member for yielding me this time.

I rise in opposition to the resolution that will be voted on Friday. And my statement, as clearly as I can, says why.

Mr. Speaker, I recently attended the funeral of an old friend who passed away after a wonderful, productive 90 years of life. His family and friends gathered at the church to celebrate his life and to remember his accomplishments. During World War II, he served as a member of the Army Air Corps.

Near the end of the service, two Air Force sergeants unfolded and refolded an American flag, and then caringly presented it to my friend's widow saying, ''On behalf of the President of the United States, the United States Air Force, and a grateful American people, I present this flag in honor of your husband's service to his country.''

Mr. Speaker, we survive as a nation today in large part because of the selfless service to our country by a great many Americans just like my friend. Soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, members of the Coast Guard, and members of the foreign service organizations have been supported by the American people and by American resources and funding.

Because we are once again involved in a war which threatens our country, we find American military personnel are again deployed to many parts of the world. Last week, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Peter Pace listed the long list of countries where our forces are deployed and are present to help protect us as part of the global war on terror. Earlier tonight, I read from that list. There are 70 countries where Americans serve abroad in support of the global war on terror. We don't send them there because we want to send them off to some far off part of the world for no good reason. There are threats there, threats like al Qaeda, threats like Hezbollah, threats like the Quad groups that are funded by Iran.

This is a unique and historic struggle for a number of reasons. Chief among them is that our enemies are both state and nonstate actors. They are lethal and deadly. Fortunately, the great citizens of this country have responded. Americans have volunteered in large numbers to work, defend, and fight to protect our way of life. Yet,

today some among us would question whether we are on the right track. And I think they are on the wrong track.

As many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle know, I have devoted much of my career in Congress to studying and understanding this enemy. I must say that I believe I have developed some understanding of them, and so I would like to take a few minutes here tonight to share some thoughts and some facts about them. You simply cannot discuss or understand our situation in Iraq without first addressing some of the fundamental and important questions about the enemy.

Who is he, or who are they? How do they work to achieve their goals on the battlefield? How do they work to achieve their international objectives? What is our record against them? And what is at stake?

First of all, who are they? Members of al Qaeda and Hezbollah, the Quads forces, and other similar terrorist groups' view of the world is based on an extreme ideology, an ideology that is far more extreme than most Middle Eastern people want or support. I certainly can't speak for the citizens of the Middle East, but it seems clear to me that in the opinion of the great majority of citizens and residents of the Middle East, both Muslim and non-Muslim, that this is an extreme ideology which they feel they should reject. And they do.

The extremists are groups of individuals who do not believe in any form of secular government, and will go to seemingly any lengths to sabotage others who try to establish secular or representative free types of governments. Their tactics run the gamut from sermonizing to mistreatment to capture, torture, and death, often by beheading. Their leaders are male and assign subservient roles to females. Their ideology holds that members of society, both Middle Eastern society and otherwise, who do not share their same radical beliefs are assigned to a subservient role or simply eliminated. They are members of organizations who state openly and repeatedly, ''Death to the non-believers, death to America.'' They say it every day. This, in short, is what they are about.

Perhaps there are some of us here in Congress who don't take these people seriously. I do. And I am glad Franklin Roosevelt took Hitler and his people seriously as well. It is much the same.

Twenty years ago, while on my second trip to Israel, it was 1987 to be exact, I came across an article about Hamas. In 1987, I had never heard of them before; they were a brand-new group. So while I was there, I asked about them. And I learned much about Hamas, but also about other groups that we hear about today, groups like Hezbollah and the Islamic Jihad, other groups that existed at the time. And I will always remember getting back on that airplane to come home. I thought, ''Today these people are a huge problem in the Middle East, and I bet it won't be long until they are a huge problem in the U.S.'' They are today.

The second thing I would like to talk a little bit about is how they work to achieve their goals on the battlefield. It is kind of unique, certainly unique in history. Their radical ideology breeds an unconventional strategy of violence, and they are not to be underestimated. This is the method to their violence:

They have recognized that it is difficult or impossible for them to achieve their goals through conventional warfare strategies and techniques. They have instituted as a substitute a four-stage process that replaces traditional warfare, at least traditional warfare as we know it in the West. Their strategy is well laid out and planned; it is called insurgency. Four steps.

First, they work quietly to gain the support of the population through social, charitable, and ideological groups and organizations, schools, hospitals, charities. They gain the support of the people.

Second, now that they have developed some strength in organization, they begin to develop strength in unconventional warfare capabilities. Unconventional warfare capabilities, terrorism, if you will, until their ability exists to severely harass their enemy, usually the superior legitimate force, the government of whatever country they happen to be operating in. This is often the traditional or newly created government, just like the one that we are dealing with in Iraq. And in this way, they build popular support through unconventional warfare successes as well as through charities.

Step three. They develop the ability to reconsider the danger of counter-attack posed by the stronger legitimate force or government, and the ability to fade away temporarily into the population until the pressure is off so they can come back and fight again, all the time getting stronger, all the time carrying out their work through the charities and the schools and the hospitals, and the terrorist acts against their enemy.

Finally, the fourth step, they develop it over time, the conventional capabilities that are necessary to be used against the stronger traditional force with the objective of defeating the legitimate government.

If that sounds familiar, it should, because it is exactly what is happening in Iraq. This is the traditional four-step insurgency process first used in China by Mao in the 1920s, and in Vietnam during the 1960s and 1970s.

Studying this concept, one can apply it to various theaters around the world in the global war on terror and identify various stages in various theaters in many places in the world. I believe, for example, Hezbollah in Lebanon has worked its way nearly to the fourth stage of the insurgency process. Other groups like al Qaeda in Iraq are following the same course elsewhere.

The third thing I would like to talk about a little bit is how they work to achieve superiority strategically internationally. Let's look at the process, the process that fosters the doubt that some citizens in the U.S. have today. That is why we are here tonight. Some people doubt our capabilities. And this is the type of thinking that brings us here tonight. This is the doubt that fuels the desire to disengage, to pretend that the danger doesn't exist, to discuss, as we are here today or tonight, solutions to limit our success and move toward disengagement.

The enemy has demonstrated a strong understanding and some success internationally in developing this unconventional strategy of warfare. It has evolved something like this:

In the early 19th century, armies met each other on the battlefield, frontline to frontline. We all remember looking at those old movies of wars in the 19th century. Warriors were trained in techniques aimed at defeating their foe's frontlines so as to prevail on the battlefield. There was little thought, planning, or training given to reaching beyond the frontlines in battle, much less to strike directly at central governments. Today, this strategy of warfare is called first-generation warfare.

Then, during the 20th century, specifically during World War I and World War II, two new generations of warfare evolved. During World War I, armies were trained to carry out tactics not only against frontlines but also against logistical supply lines. The intent was to damage the enemy's ability by reaching back beyond the battlefield frontline. This is called second-generation warfare.

World War II brought about third-generation warfare by using tactics to reach even further behind the lines to attack the industrial production facilities of the enemy's central governments.

Finally, the most recent evolution, strategic and tactical execution of warfare, designed as fourth-generation warfare. The goal, to destroy the determination of the enemy's decision-makers to continue the fight.

□ 2030

Today's decisionmakers are the citizens of Europe and the rest of the West, including, of course, the United States and the decisionmakers of the United States Congress. Unconventional tools have been used by al Qaeda through fourth-generation warfare and other groups to convince the decisionmakers to discontinue the effort. Unconventional tools such as the Western media, terrorist acts such as those on 9/11, and unconventional warfare such as killing Shiia citizens, Sunni citizens and coalition military participants with IEDs and car and truck bombs.

Through the media, every one of these acts which is reported has an effect and carries a message intentionally to discourage decisionmakers,

and that is precisely the plan. That is precisely why we are having this debate tonight.

That brings us to the debate today. Often American decisionmakers have been convinced through fourth-generation warfare used by al Qaeda and used by other groups, Shiia militias, Sunni insurgents, to convince some here to vote to discontinue necessary efforts in one of the central theaters of the global war on terror, Iraq, and hence convince us not to provide the level of national security so important to the citizens and children and future generations of the United States of America.

Fourth, let me talk about understanding the consequences of withdrawal and our record. Withdrawal under fire is unacceptable and history is replete with examples of harmful consequences in doing so. Lebanon and Somalia are two examples where we presently face increased threats to our national security as a result of previously ill-timed withdrawals.

As a result of the U.S. withdrawal in Lebanon, for example, after the Marine barracks bombing in 1983, the country, Lebanon, even today remains a terrorist hotbed. The withdrawal strengthened Hezbollah. It contributed to years of civil war in Lebanon. It diminished U.S. prestige in the region and influence throughout much of the world.

The lingering question: Could the U.S. have prevented the rise of Hezbollah and the influence of Tehran with sustained engagement in Lebanon? We will never know.

In 1993, we withdrew our forces from Somalia after a failed military operation in Mogadishu. A decade later an Islamic militia with ties to al Qaeda has controlled that country and is responsible for destabilizing the entire Horn of Africa. We didn't know it at the time. We decided to withdraw. It was a mistake. This radical movement briefly shows signs of regaining lost ground in Somalia, even today.

At the very least, Somalia remains a dangerous, ungoverned place, and the lingering question, could the United States have prevented the spread of radicalism in the Horn of Africa with a sustained engagement in Somalia, but we withdrew.

Further evidence of failure to respond to terrorism emboldened al Qaeda. In 1993, the World Trade Center was bombed. No response. In 1996, Khobar Towers were bombed. No response. In 1998, the U.S. Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania took place. No response. In 2000, the attack on the USS Cole took place. No response.

Result? September 11. We are not alone. The Soviet Union and Israel both paid heavy prices for implementing a precipitous withdrawal on two separate occasions. The Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989 and left behind the conditions of anarchy and warlordism, which ultimately led to the rise of the Taliban and provided safe haven for al Qaeda.

Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000 resulted in an empowered Hezbollah, weakened Lebanese moderates failed to keep peace. The best example was Hezbollah's naked aggression this past summer in delivering unbelievable attacks against Israel's civilian population. As one commentator has put it, this is from Victor Hanson in the National Review Online, December 1, 2006, ''By not responding to a decade of prior attacks in East Africa, New York, Saudi Arabia and Yemen and withdrawing precipitously from Lebanon and Mogadishu, we gave the fatal impression that terrorists could strike the U.S. with near impunity.'' That is what we are talking about doing now in Iraq.

The lesson here is obvious. We must remain engaged until we complete our mission. Finally, what is at stake? It is clear that al Qaeda and other groups constitute a serious threat to the citizens of the U.S. for this generation and, even more importantly, for the future generations. Our enemies have demonstrated significant success in carrying out activities to the detriment of the citizens of the U.S.

They have successfully attacked numerous targets overseas, mostly with explosives, and have used missiles known as jumbo jets to attack New York City and Pennsylvania and at the Pentagon, and they have used explosives in terror operations in Afghanistan, and even more successfully in Iraq to pit the minority Sunni population against the Shiia. They fueled the insurgency and have cost Sunni, Shiia, as well as the lives of U.S. soldiers.

Our choices may be difficult. It is not easy to be at war. It is even harder to stay at war, but it is clearly proven by history that we must not abandon the missions in the war on terror nor in the Iraqi theater. We have seen the results of the precipitous withdrawals. It would be unconscionable to vote and to do other than to support the administration's plan.

Mr. HUNTER. Would the gentleman yield briefly?

Mr. SAXTON. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HUNTER. I want to thank the gentleman for yielding briefly. I want to thank him for his statement and just clarify the record, while he has got some time, if I could.

Mr. Speaker, my good friend from California, the gentlelady, made the remark, as I understand it, that the Iraq Study Group did not agree with the President's so-called surge. I just would point to the statement that the Iraq Study Group published in their report. They said we could, however, support a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad or to speed up the training and equipping mission if the U.S. commander in Iraq determines that such steps would be effective.

We also rejected the immediate withdrawal of our troops because we believe that so much is at stake. So the Iraq Study Group did state that they would support a surge to effect the stabilization of Baghdad, and it is in the nine sectors of Baghdad with Iraqi battalions to the front, American battalions backing them up, that this operation is taking right now. So it appears to me that the President is, in fact, following and is on common ground with this recommendation by the Iraq Study Group. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. If the gentleman will yield, I just wanted to respond, since you were so nice to quote me.

Mr. Speaker, the truth is, as we all know, the Iraq Study Group had a very comprehensive strategy, but it was a radical departure from what the President is proposing today in this surge. I think there was some, you know, 70-plus recommendations in the Iraq Study Group, including shifting the mission to training of the Iraqi Security Forces and a big emphasis on diplomacy. So I don't think it is fair for the gentleman to cherry-pick a paragraph out of what the Iraq Study Group says.

But with all due respect, I will tell you what the Iraq Study Group recommended is not what the President is doing now. Frankly, the President has rejected the Iraq Study Group recommendations, and I think that to suggest that he is going along with the Iraq Study Group recommendations is really not correct.

Mr. HUNTER. I would just say to my friend from California, he is consistent with the Iraq Study Group to the extent of 21,500 troops, which has been described by your side of the debate as very substantial and such an important thing and such a major thing that it should be stopped. So that, obviously, is not an inconsequential aspect of the Iraq Study Group's statement.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Well, yielding myself some time, I don't disagree with you, but one recommendation out of some 70-odd does not make the Iraq Study Group what the President is doing.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I am going to yield myself 25 minutes, and at this time I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois, the chairman of the Aviation Subcommittee, Mr. COSTELLO.

Mr. COSTELLO. I want to thank my friend from California for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Skelton bipartisan resolution opposing President Bush's policy to send 21,500 additional troops to Iraq. I do so because I am strongly against escalating the war in Iraq.

This is not so much a policy as it is a hope that additional troops will somehow make right the long list of poor decisions by this administration regarding our involvement in Iraq. Putting 21,500 more soldiers on the

ground only gives President Bush little more time to resist the conclusion that the vast majority of Americans have already reached, and that is that the events in Iraq have moved beyond our ability to impact them in a meaningful way militarily.

It is important to note that we have reached this point not because of some failing of our men and women in uniform who continue to make sacrifices. Indeed, our respect and admiration for our troops is matched only by their bravery. Regrettably, but not unpredictably, the plan for postwar Iraq woefully was inadequate, and the Bush administration, instead of taking responsibility for its failings, continues to insist that victory is just around the corner. It is not. A civil war is raging in Iraq, and our troops are caught in the crossfire.

The grand designs of the Bush administration are not attainable now, if they ever were. It is time to admit it and move forward. This is not to say that we should abandon the region. Far from it. The United States must continue to work with countries of the Middle East and of the world to stabilize Iraq and its neighbors.

I have said for months that I believe the best way to get the rest of the world to take responsibility for what is happening on the ground in Iraq may be to remove our troops, and I am convinced that this is the necessary course of action now. We can maintain a strong presence in the region, but we cannot make the hard political decisions that the Sunnis, Shiites and others must make to save Iraq, and then they will not make them as long as our military is there.

Let me just reemphasize that. We cannot make the hard political decisions that the Sunnis and Shiites and others must make to save Iraq, and they will not make them as long as our military is there.

Mr. Speaker, the American people do not support sending more troops to Iraq. In fact, the American people want us out of Iraq, and the people of Iraq want us out as well.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the sacrifices and service of our men and women in uniform, and I commend Chairman SKELTON for bringing this bipartisan resolution to the floor of the House. I urge my colleagues to support the bipartisan resolution.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 6 minutes to my friend and colleague from California (Mrs. DAVIS).

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of our extraordinary troops and oppose sending over 20,000 additional U.S. forces into the middle of Iraq's violent sectarian conflict. I oppose the President's plan because it will not end the insurgency, halt military activity, or accelerate our departure from Iraq. The plan is not a strategic change.

Rather, it is the continuation of a failed policy. When Congress voted to authorize the use of military force, I voted ''no.'' I felt at that time that we had not exhausted all diplomatic avenues and that unilateral action would have a grave effect on our strategic position in the world. More significantly, it could undercut the broader long-term war against Islamic extremism. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, many of these predictions have come through. We now find ourselves in a position where only grim choices remain.

□ 2045

The war in Iraq has indeed strained our military, drained taxpayer dollars and damaged our credibility in the international community. As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I have heard from a number of administration officials and academic experts on the way forward in Iraq. And many of these experts have warned against increasing the number of troops.

Last November, General Abizaid told Congress that an increase in U.S. troop levels would only delay the ability of Iraqis to take the lead. Mr. Speaker, what changed between November and today? Even the most ardent proponents of the troop increase acknowledge that to work all pieces must come together.

First, the military must be able to quell sectarian and insurgent violence. And then if the violence subsides long enough for a window of opportunity to open, the economic and political components must be executed flawlessly.

Even if our forces are successful in reducing violence in the short term, assurances cannot be given that other parts of the government will be able to address the economic and political components of the President's plan.

Well, the track record of the administration and the Maliki government make it hard to believe that such a plan will bring real results. One of the most egregious errors of our entire experience in Iraq has been the failure to put trained experts in critical civilian positions.

To accomplish this new mission, civilian agencies have been asked to send several hundred experts to Iraq to carry out the plan. However, the military has reported that because of hiring delays, DOD will have to assign their own personnel because U.S. civilian agencies are unable to fill the much needed positions.

Mr. Speaker, it should not be the role of the military to rebuild nations on their own. We should have been leveraging our talented and experienced Federal workforce all along. Many of my colleagues have already discussed key issues such as readiness and equipment levels, but two of the greatest concerns I have with the President's plan are the effect on our volunteer force and the strategic risk that is created by putting more military assets into Iraq.

By adding more troops, the administration leaves our Nation with fewer resources to deal with Afghanistan and future contingencies. Will we be able to respond if our military is needed elsewhere? With more of our troops bogged down, will our allies around the world continue to have faith in our ability to respond to extremist and military threats around the globe?

We must answer these questions. But I have not heard satisfactory responses from the President or military officials. Mr. Speaker, I also oppose the surge because the present administration has not sufficiently answered questions about the impact on military personnel. For those in the military, this war hits close to home every day.

While we have asked few Americans to sacrifice during this conflict, servicemembers and their families continue to face the uncertainty of repeated deployments, injury and in some cases the death of a loved one. They deserve better.

Mr. Speaker, I told President Bush that veterans in my district have said, ''We are a military at war, not a Nation at war.'' And military leaders agree. Mr. Speaker, if we truly want to create a situation where we can withdraw our troops, we need to escalate our diplomatic efforts and call on Iraq's neighbors to help the Iraqi Government make the tough political decisions needed to reduce the violence.

We must not give in to the President's diversion, but develop a multipronged strategic plan the American and the Iraqi people deserve.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ZOE LOFGREN).

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution that supports our troops, but oppose the President's escalation plan. My opposition to this war has been clear and consistent. The night before I voted against the Iraq war resolution in October 2002, I stated on this floor that Congress should not grant the President power to pursue a war in Iraq for three reasons.

First, Iraq was not an imminent threat to the safety and security of America, something we now know to be true. There are no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Secondly, we were acting without real international support. And we now know that our unilateral action proved to be disastrous to our standing in the world community.

Finally, I questioned whether the President had an exit strategy. Now, 4½ years later, it is clear that President Bush did not have and still does not have an exit strategy for our troops.

Even though I voted against the invasion, I never dreamt that the President's policies and course of action would be as disastrous as they have been for Iraq, for the gulf region and for America.

Americans went to the polls in November to send a clear message to Congress and to the administration. They

are against this war and they want a successful exit plan. Americans see that we are spending 8 to $10 billion a month to fight this war, while in our own country we have 47 million Americans without health care insurance and our national debt is almost $9 trillion.

Mr. Speaker, my Democratic colleagues and I hear the American people loud and clear. They want oversight of this war. They want to know the hard facts of the situation on the ground in Iraq, instead of the rosy picture the Bush administration tries to paint. They want investigations of and an end to the shady contracting in Iraq that has given away billions of American dollars without so much as a receipt. They want assurances that our troops will be protected.

Mr. Speaker, even though it was a mistake of titanic proportions to initiate this war, now that Iraq has been destabilized, what are we to do? The answer cannot be more of the same, because what we are doing is failing to have a positive impact. Our troops have performed the difficult missions given to them in Iraq with courage.

Congress and the American people will continue to support them and provide them with every resource they need. 320 soldiers from my home State of California have died in this war. We can never repay our debt to their faithful service and the sacrifices made by their families.

The failure in Iraq is not a failure of our fighting men and women. It is a failure of command, a failure of political leadership. We must provide our troops and their families with a new exit strategy instead of a new deployment.

The civil war in Iraq is not the product of ad hoc, spur-of-the-moment individual violence. No. It is organized and it is a strategy of various political and sectarian factions in Iraq. Putting our troops in the middle of these warring factions will not end the violence. It will only put our troops in the middle of it. That notion is borne out by the fact that more than 60 percent of the Iraqi public believes that it is a good thing to attack and kill Americans stationed in Iraq.

Proponents of the President's escalation plan act as if the United States has but two options: one, increase the American troops at great cost, both in human lives and financial; or, two, do nothing. But those are not the only choices. We must step up our diplomatic efforts in the region as recommended by the bipartisan Iraq Study Group.

Americans should call upon neighboring states in the Middle East to take strong measures to avoid a spread of the conflict beyond Iraq. As Iraq disintegrates into sectarian violence, her neighbors must insist that the factions within Iraq halt their civil war.

We need to remind the countries in the region that stability in Iraq is vital to their interests. If they want to avoid having this war spill out across the Middle East, they must step up their diplomatic efforts. With the help of the entire region, we can push the Iraqis to help themselves.

Iraqi security forces must be trained in a faster pace so they can be responsible for their own country. There is no guarantee of success in Iraq, nor is there a clear definition of what success might look like; but we do have a moral obligation to make our best efforts to diffuse the chaos the war has created. The solution must be a political and a diplomatic one.

Unfortunately, the President refuses to pursue the diplomatic options endorsed by the bipartisan Iraq Study Group and his own military advisors. As we saw today with the welcome news that diplomatic efforts have led to the de-escalation of tensions in North Korea and an agreement to abandon their nuclear weapons ambition, a conflict is not always the right answer to world challenges.

Even General Abizaid, the outgoing top commander of the U.S. forces in Iraq, does not believe an escalation will increase our chances of American success. The American public has long been ahead of Congress in their opposition to this war.

I am here today to tell the American people that they are being heard. I stand with the majority of Americans who say they have had enough. In the coming weeks and days, Congress will give the President's plan the scrutiny the American people expect and our troops deserve. It is time to bring this war to an end and time to support this resolution.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT), my friend and colleague.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, America begins the fifth year of war in Iraq. I am pleased that Speaker PELOSI has scheduled such a thorough debate of the most important moral and political issue of the day. The war in Iraq was misguided from the outset, even illegal, and has been mismanaged consistently ever since.

The resolution we have before us today puts Congress on record opposing the escalation of troops in Iraq proposed by President Bush and expressing our steadfast support for our troops.

Let me say at the outset that I intend to vote for this resolution. It is an important first step. The President's escalation of forces in Iraq is worse than the stay-the-course strategy so clearly rejected by Americans. If we pass this resolution, we will be doing more than repudiating the President's disastrous policy. We will for the first time be putting Congress on record in a way that will allow us to bring this war to an end for Americans.

Mr. Speaker, U.S. Armed Forces who are serving in Iraq are heroes. They are the most finely trained and dedicated group of patriots any leader could want. But they now find themselves mired in the middle of intense violence, based on sectarian, political, social and cultural factors dating back 1,000 years.

The situation in Iraq cannot be solved militarily. Pretending otherwise only puts our soldiers, marines and others in greater danger. I have visited them in theater, in Iraq and other countries in the region and, yes, at Walter Reed Hospital here in Washington.

I have met with their families in New Jersey. The quality of these men and women, their earnest wish to serve their country makes this situation all the more tragic.

Mr. Speaker, they were sent to Iraq irresponsibly and in ignorance by leaders, sometimes improperly equipped, and are now asked to achieve an impossible mission. There is no way for us to resolve militarily the emerging multifaceted civil war that is engulfing Iraq.

When he ordered the invasion of Iraq, President Bush unleashed forces he did not understand and could not control. As the most recent National Intelligence Estimate attests: ''The term civil war does not adequately capture the complexity of the conflict in Iraq, which includes extensive Shia-on-Shia violence and al Qaeda and Sunni insurgent attacks on coalition forces and widespread criminally motivated violence.''

Whenever American forces leave Iraq, there will not be a stable American-style liberal democracy. Prolonging the occupation of Iraq whose stability has only declined by any measure as our presence goes on increases the costs we incur in lives, dollars, and international prestige.

No one will look back and say, if only the American military stayed a little longer. No, historians will look back and ask what took Congress so long to recognize a disaster and do something about it. Extracting American troops from this quagmire will dry up support for the various insurgencies operating in Iraq, and encourage other nations to take part in the process of stabilizing the country and promote the domestic processes necessary for long-term stability.

Given all of those factors, the burden should not be on those who believe that American forces should be withdrawn. The burden should be on those who want to continue this endeavor to show any compelling evidence that is worth sending more Americans to kill and to be killed.

Sending more troops should require the same high standard of evidence that should have been met to go to war in the first place.

□ 2100

But the President and, I am sorry to say, the previous Congresses did not apply that high standard. Some of us said 4 years ago that there was not evidence sufficiently compelling to send Americans to kill and to die. After the President went to war anyway, I called for withdrawal early.

Now, Congress must establish standards that we failed to set, standards of intelligence and evidence, standards of diplomacy, standards of legislative oversight, so that we do not go to war or escalate wars based on ideology rather than evidence, bravado rather than humility, patriotic fervor rather than patient diplomacy.

Congress failed in its constitutional role to exert a check and balance on the Executive. With this resolution we begin on a new course, under new legislative leadership. We will audit the books. We will review the procedures for detaining prisoners, for engaging civilians, for conducting intelligence.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for President Bush to catch up with the American people. The American people understand that American forces should not remain in Iraq to try to quell a civil war they cannot control. The American people understand that we must refocus our attention on our real interests. If the President did not, let us show at least that we do and pass this resolution.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. AL GREEN of Texas). Before recognition, the Chair announces that the gentlelady from California (Mrs. TAUSCHER) has 1 hour and 17 minutes, and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) has 1 hour and 18 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the debate taking place here in the House this week is long overdue. We are approaching our fifth year of this war, and this is the first time Congress is debating the strategy President Bush wants to implement in Iraq.

Congress can no longer stand on the sidelines, and the President has to know that to escalate the war in Iraq is simply not acceptable. We have lost too many American lives, seen too many soldiers seriously injured and spent too much of our hard-earned taxpayer money for no good reason. I am proud of my vote against the initial Iraq war resolution, and see this resolution before us tonight as the beginning of the end to U.S. military involvement in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this evening to commend our troops for the valiant work they have done over the last 5 years. I am thinking of them when I voice my strong opposition to the President's plan to send 21,500 additional troops to Iraq.

The President hopes this troop escalation plan will secure Baghdad and reduce the sectarian violence that is ripping the country apart. But there is no evidence to support those hopes.

In fact, on four different occasions the President increased troop levels in Iraq, and every time these plans failed to calm the violence in Iraq. Last summer the President moved more troops into Baghdad and said that he hoped to see some results in a matter of months. By October, General William Caldwell had publicly stated that the surge was a failure and the operations had ''not met our overall expectations of sustaining a reduction in the levels of violence.''

Additional troops are not going to make a difference because there simply is not a military solution to the war in Iraq. The devastating sectarian violence is going to continue, but our troops should no longer be asked to serve as referees in a battle between religious sects that have been fighting for centuries.

Mr. Speaker, many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim that if you speak out against the President's proposal, you are not supporting our troops, and this is nonsense. And if they listened to the troops, they would know that not even a majority of our troops support the President's plan. According to a poll conducted by Army Times, a weekly newspaper popular with Active Duty and retired Army personnel, only 41 percent of our troops support the President's plan. But they will do whatever is asked of them, regardless of whether or not they agree with the command.

Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of the war, our troops fought without the body armor they needed to protect themselves against improvised electronic devices. It now appears that the military doesn't have the protective equipment needed to properly outfit the troops the President plans to send to Iraq. According to the Army, it lacks not only armor kits for soldiers, but also trucks and vehicles needed to accommodate any escalation in troop levels. Lieutenant General Steven Speaks, the Army's deputy chief of staff for force development, said any additional units of troops sent to Iraq would have to share the trucks assigned to the units now there.

Do supporters of this plan really believe this Congress should allow the President to move ahead without properly investigating whether or not our troops will have all the necessary protective equipment they need?

Mr. Speaker, we also need to realistically look at the distraction that the Iraq war is causing in the overall war against terror. While the administration and the Pentagon focus their attention on Iraq, the war in Afghanistan has been forgotten. The Taliban has significantly grown in strength in Afghanistan, and America needs to focus its attention there, the source of the attacks on 9/11.

Mr. Speaker, I opposed this war from the very beginning, and want to see our troops home. The President should be putting forth a plan for withdrawal from Iraq, not escalation. I am willing to vote to cut off funding for the escalation. I have voted against the Iraq supplemental appropriation bills to send a message that we need to end U.S. military involvement in Iraq. With this resolution, we begin the process of getting out of a place where we should never have been from the beginning.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes to just make a brief response to a couple of statements that have been made.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. HOLT referred to our wounded folks in Walter Reed as tragic. They are not tragic. They are American heroes, and they are the people who have bought the freedom that allows us to have this debate today.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield some time to three unusual Americans on the Armed Services Committee who all have had sons serving in the Iraq theater. The first gentleman is the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE), whose son has been a helicopter pilot in Iraq, as much time as the gentleman wishes to consume.

Mr. KLINE of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, of course I rise today in strong opposition to this resolution.

It occurs to me, Mr. HUNTER, that I need to thank you not only for your service, but for your son's service in the Marine Corps. It is one of those little twists of those things that I served my whole life in the Marine Corps, and my son is serving in the Army. You served in the Army, and your son is serving in the Marine Corps. And I don't know if we will ever untwist this. But I thank you and him for his service.

Mr. Speaker, the proponents of this resolution will have us believe that this resolution supports and protects our military personnel while criticizing the President for changing course.

We have listened to several speakers today who, like me, served in Vietnam and witnessed firsthand the micromanagement of the war from Washington. Ironically, they stand here today endorsing the same incompetent policy of interference. Instead of President Johnson choosing bombing targets, however, we have 535 legislators dictating General Petraeus's reinforcement levels; yes, dictating his tactics. It was wrong in 1967, Mr. Speaker, and it is wrong in 2007.

I notice that the distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee has risen several times today to point out his belief that what the President is doing is not a change of strategy, it is a change of tactics. And I would say to my good friend, that great gentleman from Missouri, that if that is right, if this is tactics, then in fact this resolution is trying to do just that, micromanage the tactics of this war.

If congressional micromanagement were the only problem with this resolution, I would still argue vigorously for its defeat. But it is not the only problem. Understanding the purpose and intent of this resolution, its proponents have revealed their true intentions in the course of this debate. They intend for this resolution to be the first step on the path to defunding our troops, withdrawing them, and allowing Iraq to become a chaotic, ungoverned space that will act as a training ground for al Qaeda and the radical jihadists that we are at war with.

Though few in the West knew it, a new war had already begun during my days as commander of Marine aviation forces in Somalia. In the intense battle in the back alleys of Mogadishu that inspired the movie ''Blackhawk Down'' and the bombing of vulnerable U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya captured America's attention briefly, but it took an unprecedented attack on our homeland for the country to realize what Islamic extremists had long known: The United States was at war. And I think Mr. SAXTON did a very thorough and eloquent job of explaining the length and nature of this war. Every country was now a potential front and every city a battlefield in the enemy's war against Zionist crusaders and nonbelievers. Whether by design or not, Iraq has become the front in not only a physical war of attrition, but in the war of wills between free societies and Islamic jihadists who seek to destroy them.

The proponents of this flawed resolution prefer to ignore reality. They believe that repeating the mistaken belief that Iraq is not a central front in the war against Islamic jihadists will make that perception real. Unfortunately for those who hold this belief, the enemy, our enemy has a say in the matter. Al Qaeda's second in command, al-Zawahiri, in December 2006, made it quite clear where al Qaeda stands. In a video posted on jihadist Web sites, al-Zawahiri sent a clear message: ''The backing of Jihad in Afghanistan and Iraq today is to back the most important battlefields in which the crusade against Islam and Muslims is in progress. And the defeat of the Crusaders there, soon, Allah permitting, will have a far-reaching effect on the future of the Muslim Ummah, Allah willing.''

We have heard repeatedly that al Qaeda and the jihadist terrorists understand that Iraq is the central front in this war against radical Islam. Thankfully, the U.S. military leadership has also recognized this fact.

In his recent testimony before the Senate, General David Petraeus was asked if he believes that Iraq affects the overall war on terror. His response was clear and unequivocal: ''I do, sir.''

Clearly, there are elements of the greater al Qaeda network of international extremists that want something very different than most Iraqis want, and want something very different in that region and in the world.

Many mistakes have been made as our military, unparalleled in conventional strength and maneuver, has changed strategy and tactics to fight the counterinsurgency battle. In response to the frustration at the lack of progress felt by those in Iraq and at home, the American military demonstrated its greatest strength: the ability to adapt to new conditions on the ground and develop new strategy.

To those who have lived and studied the art of military strategy and tactics, the plan we debate this week, developed by American commanders in Iraq and here at home, represents a fundamental shift. In a study updated last week, Anthony Cordesman from the nonpartisan Center for Strategic and International Studies, declared that, ''Much of the criticism of the new Bush approach has been unfair. The new strategy is considerably more sophisticated and comprehensive than the details the President could fit into his 20-minute address,'' or, I might add, Mr. Speaker, than I can include in this 10-minute address, ''presuming it combines political, military and economic action in ways that do offer a significant hope of success.''

But rather than acknowledge the comprehensive nature of the new Baghdad and al-Anbar security plan, opponents prefer to ignore the pleas of General Petraeus to provide him with the troops necessary to turn the security situation in Iraq's capital city around. Instead, they pat him on the back, wish him ''Godspeed'' in his endeavor, and then promptly move to deny him that which he has requested and needs to succeed. As a Vietnam veteran, I cannot in good conscience watch as Congress once again undercuts the morale of those in uniform.

I will not stand idly by and watch others resurrect the ghost of that painful conflict, and we have heard it resurrected many times this day, Mr. Speaker, without acknowledging the slaughter and humanitarian disaster that resulted from the fall of Saigon. And it was a humanitarian disaster. Millions died. Just as in 1974, decisions we make today in this body will have consequences for entire nations and generations to come. History stands ready to judge the wisdom of this body, its ability to learn from past mistakes and its ability to comprehend the ramifications of its actions. In spite of countless warnings, I fear we will come up short in the eyes of posterity.

Opponents call for the administration to heed the advice of its generals, only to reject the commanders' pronouncement when such states are at odds with their own misguided perceptions. They criticize the ''cherry-picking'' of prewar intelligence, and then proceed to do just that, while reading the most recent National Intelligence Estimate, choosing to ignore the dire warnings of the Intelligence Community's most authoritative written judgments on national security issues.

But to those who criticize this new security plan and offer no solutions for success, only demands for capitulation, we must demand that they answer a vital question they choose to ignore: What will happen if the Iraqi Government does not succeed and we withdraw prematurely?

One critic of the administration's handling of Iraq, a very vocal critic, and a man who I knew and admired throughout my Marine Corps career, retired General Anthony Zinni, the former commander of Central Command, spelled it out bluntly when he noted that, ''We cannot simply pull out, as much as we may want to. The consequences of a destabilized and chaotic Iraq sitting in the center of a critical region in the world could have catastrophic implications.''

□ 2115

The recent National Intelligence Estimate was even more specific in its analysis. If the United States were to withdraw rapidly, the Iraqi security forces would likely collapse, neighboring countries might intervene openly in the conflict; massive civilian casualties and forced population displacement would be probable; and al Qaeda in Iraq would attempt to use parts of the country to plan increased attacks in and outside of Iraq.

It seems pretty clear to me, Mr. Speaker, what we are debating here is success or failure.

Let us not support that catastrophe. Let us not promote a humanitarian disaster which is almost unimaginable. Let us support success in Iraq. Let us support the new commander in Iraq and give him what he needs to succeed in this mission.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN).

(Ms. BALDWIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution expressing disapproval of the President's decision to escalate the war in Iraq.

During the past 4 years, I have embraced, stood by, and prayed with Wisconsin families as they said their last goodbyes to their brave sons and daughters and husbands and wives. Those fallen soldiers have served with the utmost loyalty and courage, trusting decision-makers in Washington, the President, his administration, and this Congress to do the right thing. Like almost all of my colleagues, I have visited with wounded troops at Walter Reed and at home and joined with families and communities to send troops off to war and to welcome them back home. All of them, all of them, the dead, the wounded, the deployed, the returned, and their families, deserve political leaders who will make decisions worthy of their enormous sacrifice. Mr. Speaker, we have fallen well short of that goal, and we will only honor their sacrifices when we acknowledge this and end the war.

I want to review just some of the things that we now know. We all know that this is a war of choice, not a war of necessity. We all know that Iraq posed no imminent danger to America that would justify what this administration called a ''preemptive'' war. We all know that Iraq had nothing to do with the tragic September 11 attacks that our Nation suffered. We know that few in the world stood with America as we undertook this nearly unilateral war. And we now know that our war in

Iraq has diverted our attention and our resources from efforts to combat terrorist threats to our Nation.

And beyond that, we know now that worldwide resentment of our military presence in Iraq has become a central recruiting tool for terrorist organizations worldwide. Therefore, we know that this war continues to make America less safe and more vulnerable.

What else do we now know? We now know that the planning and execution of this war was wrought with enormous miscalculations. We know that more than 3,000 American servicemembers have lost their lives in Iraq, and we know that between 56,000 and 61,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed since the war began. And based on polls released Monday, we know that 68 percent of Americans disapprove of the President's handling of this war.

Mr. Speaker, I was among the first group of House Members to speak out against the prospect of going to war in Iraq, and I voted against authorizing the use of force in Iraq; and as an early and consistent critic of the war, I understand the importance of offering a new course in Iraq. We must bring an end to our military occupation and replace it with a program of humanitarian relief, rebuilding political stabilization, and diplomatic engagement. We must participate in a robust regional diplomatic effort, including direct discussions with Syria and Iran, to promote stability in Iraq. And I think that this effort will be well received by Iraq's neighbors because regardless of whether these countries are close allies of the United States or not, Iraq's neighbors have more to gain if Iraq is stabilized and more to lose if it is not.

We must also heed the advice of many, including the Iraq Study Group, and acknowledge that other conflicts in the Middle East require our attention and leadership if the region is to achieve lasting stability. Therefore, we must also initiate a new push for Arab-Israeli peace. I believe that Congress has not only the right but the responsibility to assert its constitutional role as a co-equal branch of government in overseeing the conduct of this war and bringing it to an end. In doing so, I believe all options, including using the power of the purse, should be on the table.

The United States is the lone superpower in the world today. And along with that awesome power comes responsibility to humankind. America's reason for maintaining its superpower status must be to export the best of our democratic system of governance and the hope of the American Dream to the rest of the world. But these cherished ideals cannot be exported through force. We must teach and lead by example.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution expressing disapproval of the President's decision to escalate the war in Iraq.

During the past 4 years I have embraced, stood by, and prayed with Wisconsin families as they said their last goodbyes to their brave sons and daughters, husbands and wives. Those fallen soldiers have served with the utmost loyalty and courage, trusting decision-makers in Washington—the President; his administration and this Congress—to do the right thing. Like almost all of my colleagues, I have visited with wounded troops at Walter Reed and at home, and joined with families and communities to send troops off to war and to welcome them back home. All of them, all of them—the dead, the wounded, the deployed, the returned, their families—deserve political leaders who make decisions worthy of their enormous sacrifices. Mr. Speaker, we have fallen well short of that goal, and we will only honor their sacrifices when we acknowledge this and end the war.

I want to review just some of the things that we know. We all know that this is a war of choice, not a war of necessity. We all know that Iraq posed no imminent danger to America that would justify what this Administration called a "pre-emptive" war. We all know that Iraq had nothing to do with the tragic September 11 attacks that our Nation suffered. We know that few in the world stood with America as we undertook this nearly unilateral war. We now know that our war in and occupation of Iraq has diverted our attention and our resources from our multi-faceted efforts to combat terrorist threats to our Nation and its allies. And beyond that, we now know (based upon last year's declassified intelligence estimates) that worldwide resentment of our military presence in Iraq has become a central recruiting tool for terrorist organizations worldwide to increase their ranks. Therefore, we know that this war continues to make America less safe and more vulnerable as long as it persists.

What else do we now know? We now know that the planning and the execution of the war following our invasion were wrought with enormous miscalculations. We now know that billions of U.S. taxpayer dollars have been lost or squandered through no-bid contracts, lack of accountability measures and lack of Congressional oversight under the previous Republican majority. We know that more than 3,000 American service members have lost their lives in Iraq. We know that between 56,000 and 61,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed since the war began. And, based on polls released Monday, we know that 68 percent of Americans disapprove of the President's handling of the war in Iraq and 72 percent of Americans believe that things are going badly in Iraq.

The situation in Iraq today has variously been called an all-out civil war or more simply a state of chaos.

For years many Americans, including many members of this Congress from both parties, gave this war a chance. It is time for this administration to give peace a chance. It is time for the President to pay attention to the vast yet still growing majority of Americans that want us to get out of Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I was among the first group of House Members to speak out against the prospect of going to war in Iraq. I voted against authorizing the use of force in Iraq, and as an early and consistent critic of the war, I understand the importance of offering a new course in Iraq. Many of my colleagues have introduced bills that would redeploy our troops in a responsible manner within a reasonable time frame, while focusing on aggressive diplomatic efforts to stabilize the Middle East. A number of these bills and resolutions establish concrete benchmarks for the Iraqi government. It is long overdue for this Administration to start paying attention to these alternative proposals, that chart a new course in Iraq. I believe that we must redefine our mission in Iraq. We must bring an end to our military occupation and replace it with a program of humanitarian relief, political stabilization,and diplomatic engagement. We must participate in a robust regional diplomatic effort, including direct discussions with Syria and Iran, to promote stability in Iraq. And I think that effort would be well received by all Iraq's neighbors, because regardless of whether these countries are close allies of the United States, or not, Iraq's neighbors have more to gain if Iraq is stabilized and more to lose if it is not.

We must also heed the advice of many, including the Iraq Study Group, and acknowledge that other conflicts in the Middle East require our attention and leadership, if the region is to achieve lasting stability. Therefore, we must also initiate a new push for Arab-Israeli peace.

I believe Congress not only has the right, but the responsibility, to assert its constitutional role as a co-equal branch of government in overseeing the conduct of this war and bringing it to an end. Our Constitution explicitly authorizes Congress the power to declare war and to raise and support armies. If Congress is given the power to make wars, we must also exercise our power to end wars. In doing so, I believe all options, including using "the power of the purse," should be on the table.

The United States is the lone superpower in the world today. Along with that awesome and unprecedented power comes responsibilities to humankind. America's reason for maintaining her superpower status must be to export the best of our democratic system of governance and the hope of the American Dream to the rest of the world. But these cherished ideals can't be exported through force. We must teach and lead by example.

Mr. Speaker, while I support the resolution, I strongly believe Congress needs to do more to represent the will of the people and pursue all options that would lead to an end to this occupation and this war.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 10 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. AKIN) and note that he has a son who has served as a U.S. Marine in Iraq.

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

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, we come here today, we have spent most of the day on this, to discuss a resolution. It has two parts. The first says that we support our troops, and the second says that we are opposed to the mission that the troops are sent on.

Now, the problem with the resolution is that it is self-contradictory right up front. If we were going to say we are supporting our troops, we would give them body armor. We would give them up-armored Humvees. We would give them tanks. But would we withhold the most important in our arsenal and that is other American fighting men and women? So to say that we are going to support our troops, but we are not

going to send them any reinforcements is on the face of it contradictory. Could you picture Davy Crockett at the Alamo looking at his BlackBerry, getting a message from Congress: Davy Crockett, we support you. The only thing is we are not going to send any troops. I am sure that would really be impressive to Davy Crockett.

The second problem with this resolution is that it really misses the job of what Congressmen should be doing. Look, I am an engineer by training. If we are about to make a mistake or we are doing something wrong, I am open minded to my Democrat colleagues saying to me, TODD, we are going down the wrong path. That is a bad idea. You should do it this way instead. I was always trained that if you are ready to criticize somebody, you at least offer an alternative. But the problem with this nifty little resolution is that it says we support the troops, but we are not going to give them any reinforcements, and then it is blank. There is no recommendation. There is no leadership. They are just saying we are going to stand on the sidelines and say, It won't work. But don't we owe our soldiers something positive, something specific, a positive recommendation?

The Democrats have been elected to majority. That means leadership. That means if you have got a better idea, put it on the table; but if you don't, shut up and don't undermine the morale of our troops and encourage our enemies. That isn't very helpful.

Now, I have heard people talking about the fact that this is a civil war. This isn't a civil war. If we leave, it will be what is a real civil war. Right now there is a lot of ethnic clashing and violence, and what is that caused by? Guess what, terrorists. They said they are doing it intentionally. They blow up a holy place of the Shias, and the Shias react and they go shoot up a bunch of Sunnis, and so, yes. But who started all of this? Well, of course, it is the terrorists. It is their intention. And do we think if they can destabilize Iraq by fomenting strife between racial groups that they won't take the same strategy to the other barely stable nations in the Middle East, nations where you have a Sunni leadership and a Shia majority? Are they not going to do the same? Or are you going to say, oh, but it is a civil war, so we can wash our hands of it, it is nothing to worry about?

Now, we had the ambassadors to Egypt and to Jordan, and they pleaded with us today, do not rapidly withdraw your troops. So we started to ask, well, what would happen if we were to do this? Well, nobody knows. But there is one thing we can kind of assume. All the way through history, the history of mankind, whenever there is anarchy, it lasts but a short time; and it is immediately filled with some kind of very strong dictator. Now, do we think that the dictator is going to be a moderate, reasonable sort of guy, or if we pull out of Iraq immediately, is it not likely that we are going to get an Islamoterrorist dictator? I think that that makes at least some sense. So then now what do we have? Now we have Iraq with the oil money supporting it, with this crazy dictator spreading this same kind of radical Islam all over the Middle East. That is a minimum for the scenario of what we are potentially looking at if we rapidly withdraw.

Now, it seems to me that all of us, as Americans, need a little bit of a direction check. And I think sometimes when we need direction, it is helpful to look at the people who came and founded this great Nation before us. And so I go back to a question that I ask audiences, not only school kids but adults. I ask them, What is it that makes America so unique and so precious? If you take America like an onion and take all the outer layers off, when you get down to the heart, what makes us who we are as a people? And invariably I hear the word ''freedom.'' But that is not quite sufficient because it isn't quite complete. You see, the people at Tiananmen Square, those little kids in college, wanted freedom, but they greased the treads of Chinese tanks. Just because you want freedom doesn't mean you can have it.

There was more to what our Founders understood, and they set it forth before we embarked on our first war as a Nation eloquently in our Declaration of Independence. It says: ''We hold these truths to be self-evident.'' Rather flowery language. Any idiot should know this: ''That all men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these is Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.'' And our job in government is to protect those God-given rights. It is not just an idea; it was a conviction. People say ideas have consequences. Many idiots have ideas, but an idea that you die for has consequences. And this idea was powerful. It is the engine that has driven America. It has guided us in times of war because we will say, yes, we believe there are certain fundamental God-given rights that all people are given.

And that is what I taught my son when he was a little kid. Here he is with the Marine Club, just a little guy, saluting Old Glory with a whole bunch of little kids in some motley uniforms they bought from the used equipment store for military services. Here he is posing just as proud as can be. Founder of the Marine Club, taught, taught that there are some things in this world that are worth dying for, and those convictions are the fact that God gives us life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness. And I believe America still believes that.

There is the little marine. He has grown up now. That is the cache of terrorist arms that was found in Fallujah. That is the gang that he had the proud opportunity to lead as a second lieutenant in Fallujah because he believes that there is nothing particularly strange for us to be fighting terrorists.

Why would it be so odd for us to fight terrorists? What do terrorists believe? They believe that you blow up innocent people. What do we believe? That life is a gift from God.

□ 2130

What do terrorists do terrorism for? To take your liberty away, to compel you to do something you don't want to do, to make women into slaves, to take away people's freedom, to take away your liberty. That is what terrorism is for, and that is fundamentally against the idea that God made people to be free. That is why he fights.

That is why America has always fought. There is nothing weird or unusual about this. Is it worth fighting terrorists? Is it worth risking your life for freedom? I taught my son yes. When I went over to visit him, together we reaffirmed what we were doing in Iraq.

What? Is it so unusual that we have a debate about whether we should be going to war or not? That very first war was over the Declaration of Independence. There was a gentleman from Virginia who said, What has there been in the conduct? But perhaps maybe we could adjust his words.

What has there been in the conduct of the terrorists that gives us any room for hope? The terrorists say the only good Jew is a dead Jew, the only good Christian is a dead Christian. That doesn't leave you a lot of room for negotiation.

If we want to stay free, we must fight. Millions of Americans that are armed in the holy cause of liberty are invincible by any force which the terrorists may send against us. A just God presides over the destinies of nations. Is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of the terrorists running the world? Forbid it, Almighty God.

I know not what course others may take, but as for me, and as for my son, we will choose liberty.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to my friend, colleague, and neighbor from California (Mr. MCNERNEY).

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, the young men and women who joined the Armed Forces after 9/11 out of a sense of duty and love for our country are just like my son Michael, who joined the military because of those terrible attacks. I am proud and heartened by their commitment to service and patriotism, just as I am proud of my own son's commitment, and I am concerned about their safety and well-being, just as I was about Michael's when he was in the service.

When I talk about supporting our troops, it is not rhetorical, it is personal. And it is with great sadness and steely resolve that I stand up here tonight on the issue of Iraq and the President's plan to escalate that conflict. I am saddened because the misguided and mismanaged conflict has become a tragic disaster and a genuine

threat to Mideast stability and global security. The escalation will cause more violence in the Middle East and will weaken our Nation.

I am resolved, because it is our duty as the Congress of this great Nation to check and balance the power of the President on any issue we believe harmful to this country. This administration insists on finding a military answer rather than changing this failed approach and pursuing the diplomatic and political solutions necessary to bring an end to the violence.

Unfortunately, the President's plan to escalate the war in Iraq will not bring success there, nor make the United States more secure. In fact, the proposal means a further distraction from the mission in Afghanistan and the need for a tougher, smarter approach to the global war on terrorism. The President's proposal puts more U.S. lives at risk, further stretching the readiness of our ground forces and increasing the drain on our Treasury.

President Bush's plan is opposed by military experts, by Republicans and Democrats in both Chambers of Congress, and by the vast majority of our country. That is why I rise in strong support of the resolution under consideration in this body.

The resolution has two straightforward provisions: continuing support for those American soldiers who have served or are currently serving in Iraq; and disagreeing with the President's plan to escalate the conflict.

Supporting our troops is my top priority, not just because it is our duty and responsibility, but because it is personal to me and my family.

Recently the Washington Post reported that the Marine Corps and Army brigades that would be sent to Iraq under the President's plan are short of body armor, vehicles, and other important equipment. That shows just how desperate the President's misguided plan is. Military action should never be executed in desperation.

We must transfer the responsibility for establishing and maintaining law and order on the streets of Iraq to the Iraqis. Training those Iraqi units must be done outside of Iraq. This will mean more troops trained more quickly and will lessen the likelihood that Iraqi army and police turn to dangerous militias and death squads.

The members of our Armed Forces who have served in Iraq have done so, bravely and honorably. Unfortunately, the President's strategy in Iraq has not matched the commitment with which our troops have served in that country.

We must begin a responsible redeployment of our troops out of Iraq on a public timeline that makes sense, while pursuing political and diplomatic solutions. Yet the President has steadfastly refused to engage in the political and diplomatic efforts necessary to bring a resolution to the violence in Iraq.

Both Republicans and Democrats agree that we need a new direction in Iraq. I will continue to push for that new direction while always putting our troops first.

This resolution is an important first step. I stand with resolve in opposing President Bush's plan for an escalation in Iraq.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. AL GREEN of Texas). The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings or other audible conversation is in violation of the rules of the House.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY).

Ms. HOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the discussion on Iraq that is taking place in this Chamber, across this country, in classrooms, coffee shops, living rooms and across back fences. This resolution asks whether the House of Representatives believes with regard to the war in Iraq that doing more of the same is a correct strategy to adopt.

Since this war began, 3,125 American soldiers have died and 23,417 have been wounded. There have been over 100,000 Iraqi casualties and nearly $500 billion has been spent. We have tried troop surges before in this war and we have seen the results. In November of 2004, the United States increased the troop levels by approximately 18,000. And guess what happened? Insurgent attacks went up by 17 percent. Did that surge work? No.

In June of 2005, we increased troop levels again, this time by 21,500 troops. Guess what happened? Insurgent attacks went up 29 percent. Did that surge work? No.

If we allow to surge troop levels again, by how much can we expect insurgent attacks to rise this time? Einstein once suggested that insanity is doing something over and over and over again and expecting different results.

Mr. Speaker, I voted against going to war in Iraq, but ever since the President committed our first soldier, I have done everything in my power to support our troops and give them equipment to keep them safe. Our warrior soldiers have done everything we have asked of them and more, and I remain committed to our troops until the very last soldier leaves Iraq, and I will do whatever it takes to protect our soldiers. But putting an additional 37,000 American troops in harm's way when there hasn't been a change in strategy is not how we as a country support our troops.

Last November, the American people spoke loud and clear. They said that the current tactics in Iraq weren't working and they don't support more of the same. An escalation of troops will not quell the violence, but will lead to increased violence, more American casualties and a further destabilized Iraq.

There is a moment when wisdom requires change, and I believe that the time has come to say enough is enough. America's military involvement in Iraq needs to draw to a close and it is time for the Iraqi people to assume control over their own country.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in voting ''yes'' on this resolution.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, to complete this triad of veterans' fathers, fathers of sons who have served in Iraq, is JOE WILSON, whose son Alan has received the Combat Action Badge for service in Iraq and the Palmetto Cross, which is a high award for the National Guard in South Carolina, and who has a son in the Signal Corps, Julian, a doctor in the Navy, and a son Hunter, a well-named son, Hunter, in the ROTC.

The reason I am going through these members of the Wilson clan, Mr. Speaker, is because inspired by his wife Roxanne, all these young men are serving in the military, and if the Wilson family does not re-up, we are in trouble.

I yield such time as he may consume to the great gentleman from South Carolina, JOE WILSON, to follow that wonderful presentation by Mr. AKIN.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Thank you, Congressman HUNTER, for your leadership for our troops and for your son's service in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of our men and women serving in the United States Armed Forces and in opposition to House Concurrent Resolution 63, a resolution that claims to support the troops but opposes reinforcements. To truly support our troops, we must provide the equipment and sufficient personnel requested by their commander, General David Petraeus.

I believe that we must triumph in the global war on terrorism, that victory in Iraq is the only option, and that America's survival is at stake. My convictions are deeply derived from personal experience and from historical perspective.

My concerns have been developed as a member of the Armed Services Committee, through which I have visited Iraq six times, as a 31-year veteran of the Army Reserves and Army National Guard, and as the proud parent of an Iraq veteran.

Less than a year after the war in Iraq began, my eldest son, Captain Alan Wilson, was deployed across Iraq, where he served honorably for 1 year. Alan worked for young girls to be able to attend schools. He has been a trusted military advisor to me regarding life on the front lines in Iraq. Alan today continues to serve in the South Carolina Army National Guard.

In addition to Alan, my younger three sons are also in the military. My wife Roxanne and I appreciate their dedication to protecting American families.

The decision to support continued efforts in Iraq is not one I made lightly. In the end, however, it is the only viable solution. Retreat is not an option.

Defeat is not an option. There is no end but victory.

I was truly transformed by September 11th, and I live with its ramifications every day. I sincerely believe we are faced with fighting the terrorists overseas today, or we will face them in the streets of America tomorrow.

The attacks of September 11th were not isolated, random events. Our enemy is highly intelligent, well financed, and committed to the destruction of our freedoms.

Terrorists have declared war on the American people. We have a choice of opposing them overseas or fighting them again here in America. The concept that America's retreat in Iraq will bring an end to sectarian violence and terrorist activity in the region ignores history. Premature retreat will embolden the enemy and make us more vulnerable to attacks.

□ 2145

We have seen it happen before. Withdrawals from Beirut and Mogadishu led to the 1993 World Trade Center attack, the 1998 embassy bombings across Africa, the 2000 bombings of the USS *Cole* and ultimately September 11, 2001.

Al Qaeda has openly stated Iraq is the central front in the war on terrorism. Osama bin Laden himself has said, ''The issue is big and the misfortune is momentous. The most important and serious issue today for the whole world is this third world war. I say to you that the war will be won either by us or by you. If it's the former, loss and disgrace will be your lot for all eternity, and, Allah be praised, this is the way the wind is blowing. If it is the latter, you should read the history books. We are a nation that does not remain silent over injustice, and we will seek blood vengeance all lifelong. Not many days and nights will pass before we take blood vengeance, like we did on 9/11,'' end of quote of Osama bin Laden.

We ignore bin Laden's words to the peril of American families.

All of this is not to say that Members of Congress do not have an obligation to question foreign policy. As elected public officials, it is our duty to do so. If by conscience one disagrees with our direction, he or she has a responsibility to put forth an alternative plan.

An alternative plan, however, is not what we are debating today. Instead, the Democrat leadership has put aside 36 hours of debate for a resolution that provides no substantive solutions.

Our men and women in uniform deserve better. Their families deserve better. These men and women deserve to know that America supports them, that Congress will provide requested equipment and personnel, and that we are all committed to their victory.

There is no magic bullet, no cure-all pill, but the fact remains that we must endure. The stakes are too high, the consequences of defeat too catastrophic. As men and women elected to represent our constituencies and provide for their well-being, it is our responsibility to look out for the safety of American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops. We will never forget September 11. Our thoughts and prayers are with the late Congressman CHARLIE NORWOOD, his wife, Gloria, his family, his staff and his constituents.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 6 minutes to my friend and colleague from Tennessee, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COOPER).

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

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, I disapprove of the President's January 10 decision to surge 20,000 new troops into Iraq. I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, although the President says that the 20,000 new troops constitute a change in his strategy, all I am seeing are a repeat of the same failed policies of the past. America has sent additional troops to Iraq before, several times, without result. America has tried to work with the Maliki government, and it has not been very successful.

Mr. Speaker, we have to admit that this approach is not working. The President himself has admitted that his patience is running out with the Maliki government. It is really just a question of whether Congress should try to force President Bush and Vice President CHENEY to change course now or whether they will do it several months from now. I say that the time for change is now.

It is true that Congress has no business micromanaging a war. No one here in Congress is Commander in Chief. It is also true that we must not shirk from our responsibilities to support our brave men and women in uniform, and we need to support the brave Iraqis who have stood with us and the good people of the region, but we do deserve a better strategy. More of the same is just not good enough, either for our soldiers or for the good people of the region.

President Bush, we have to admit, has shown a distressing stubbornness regarding Iraq. Although former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld offered to resign twice due to his own embarrassment with his failures, President Bush refused to accept his resignation for years, and finally only accepted it the day after the last election. Colleagues on both sides of the aisle know that if the President had accepted that resignation earlier, not only would Pentagon policy have been different; the core of the war might well have been different.

I think that the President needs a nudge now, and this resolution will offer it. True, it is nonbinding, but that is a good thing. Congress is not cutting off money for the troops, nor should we. We are sending a message to the President.

Now, I will admit that it is a shame that we do have to do it this way; but on this issue, the President has refused to heed the advice of so many of his own top generals, of his own father, of the Iraq Study Group, of our few remaining allies, or of the leadership of this equal branch of government. It is also a shame that today in America there is a widespread fear that the President could even be establishing the preconditions for war with Iran. Regardless of that situation, I hope that this resolution will curb any reckless behavior.

Finally, why is a change in strategy necessary now? Iraq appears to be descending into a civil war that neither Congress nor the Pentagon predicted. Defense Secretary Gates has described no less than four separate conflicts going on in Iraq today. That has led stalwart Republicans like Senator John Warner, the former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, to question whether the 2002 authorization to use force in Iraq is even still valid today. American influence in the region has substantially diminished, while the influence of Iran has increased. It is time for a change.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with the original judgment of CENTCOM commander General Abizaid who testified before Congress not long ago, and he said, ''I do not believe that more American troops right now is the solution to the problem. I believe that the troop levels need to stay where they are.''

General Abizaid went on to say, ''I met with every divisional commander, General Casey, the corps commander, General Dempsey, we all talked together. And I said, 'In your professional opinion, if we were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq?' And they all said no.'' That is quoting General Abizaid.

Mr. Speaker, I would have been more inclined to support the President if he had asked for a much larger number of troops or for a sacrifice on the part of all Americans who do not have a loved one in our military. Such proposals would have led me to believe that the President was considering a serious change in strategy, but the President has not recommended either.

Instead, he has consistently violated the so-called Powell doctrine by not waging war with an overwhelming military force, a clear objective, or a defined exit strategy. From the beginning of this conflict, we have skimped on the number of troops, the equipment for our soldiers, the commitment of our allies. It is simply too late to add on a few thousand more troops now.

Our brave troops and their families in the all-volunteer military have carried the entire burden of this war. Wall Street and Main Street have not been asked to help. Where are the war bonds to pay for this war? We have not even tried to pay for it. We have borrowed most of the money from nations like

China. Policies like that do not make the Nation more secure.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, Congress has already given the President more time to fight this war than it took to win World War II, more money than was spent in Korea and Vietnam, and the unfettered use of the finest military in history. We are spending more on our military than every other nation in the world combined, and yet we are bogged down in a Third World country embroiled in its own civil war. At this point in time, it is not unreasonable for Congress to say enough is enough. Voters certainly said so clearly in the last election.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute just to respond to my friend from Tennessee.

Let me just point out that we are spending roughly 4 percent of GDP on defense at this point. President Ronald Reagan spent 6 percent. President John Kennedy, 9 percent. Operations in the war against terror are not bankrupting this country.

With respect to the group of allies that the gentleman called our few remaining friends, I am reminded that there is a number of them like Poland and Moldavia and Herzegovina and Georgia and Bosnia and Azerbaijan and Armenia and Albania, lots of little countries that used to be behind the Iron Curtain or in the case of El Salvador, in what was called by the Democrat Party the unwinnable war in Central America in Salvador, those countries, which themselves were the beneficiaries of an American policy of expanding freedom are standing with our country in this operation in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT), who is a member of the Armed Services Committee.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the resolution offered by the majority expressing the disapproval of President Bush's decision to deploy more than 20,000 additional troops to Iraq.

This resolution, in my opinion, is nothing but politics. Opposition to a plan is not a plan. This resolution is using our service men and women in a debate that does not address policy. If this was an earnest debate about the administration's proposal, then the majority would have offered a bill that answers two pertinent questions: What is success, and how do we achieve it?

Instead, we stand here debating a bill that opposes sending reinforcements to Iraq. There are no amendments allowed, and there is certainly no plan offered in this bill.

In fact, this debate is incredibly ironic since many of those on the other side of the aisle were calling for more troops not too long ago. Once again, the debate was not about success, but about opposition to the administration's vision.

Let us talk about policy. First, nostalgic thoughts and longing for the times before the U.S. entered Iraq are not useful nor can they be used as a vision for the future. We are in this war. We must win. Anything less than an honest discussion on how to proceed forward is a disservice to this Nation and to our military.

Second, if our policy is to support a stable Iraq, then we must employ a strategy to achieve that goal. The President and our military commanders have stated that in order to fulfill that policy objective, Baghdad must be secured. In order to secure Baghdad, the Iraqi security forces need more American troops to reinforce their operations. President Bush agreed to this on the condition that the Iraqis lead the fight and that the Iraq Government take more responsibility for securing their country.

If the majority party disagrees with this policy objective and the strategy to achieve it, then I ask them, what is their policy objective, and how do they plan to achieve it? I have yet to hear a consensus from my friends on the other side of the aisle on what they believe our policy should be. They certainly cannot suggest that this resolution even faintly resembles a plan or vision for a successful resolution to the current conflict.

I will tell you what the debate is. It is a sound bite. It is a quick and easy way to feed the defeatists in this country. More than anything it is a disappointment. The majority would rather score political points than have a real discussion on the most important question of this generation, how to win the war against our enemies and keep our country safe.

We should be asking ourselves, what would failure in the Middle East mean?

Our enemies have stated that they believe that Western Civilization is rotten to the core. Unless we get out of the Middle East entirely and convert to Islam, we will always be their enemy. In chapter 2 of the 9/11 report, the authors answer what the terrorists want from America:

''To the second question, what America could do, al Qaeda's answer was that America should abandon the Middle East, convert to Islam, and end the immorality and godlessness of its society and culture.''

Al Qaeda is closely watching Iraq, sending fighters and weapons and doing most everything in its power to bring about an American retreat. If we leave Iraq before it is secure, what will that do to our enemy, an enemy who has already stated that they seek to destroy us not for being in Iraq but for being in the Middle East and for being non-Muslim?

An American failure would bolster al Qaeda and every other terrorist organization in the world. It would give them a reason to believe that they can win and that it could give them confidence so they could surely breach our shores one day. It would let them believe that their plan, a plan to destroy Western culture for its godlessness, is correct.

As 9/11 taught us, warfare is no longer limited to the enemies within our region. Geographic boundaries and long distances do not keep us safe.

□ 2200

An enemy encouraged by a retreat in Iraq will be close to our heels. That is exactly why we must stay and confront our enemies.

So how is this enemy, who is at a military and financial disadvantage, seeking to win? They simply studied a little American history. Both Osama bin Laden and al-Zarqawi have referenced the Vietnam conflict in forming their strategy to defeat us.

Many in this body often rush to compare this conflict with Vietnam, and in one respect it is very similar: both enemies understood the way to victory was through American politicians. If they can weaken the American political will, they knew they could achieve victory. The majority often invokes the number of our war dead as the reason to leave or the fact that this conflict has gone longer than our involvement in World War II. These arguments play right into the hands of the enemy and their propaganda machine.

What people don't seem to understand is that we cannot fall into the trap of comparisons, or we risk losing sight of what our men and women in the Armed Forces need from us: they need our support. They need a coherent policy and strategy that does not make politics the long pole in the tent.

Courage to do the right thing is not always easy. I will not abandon those who have fought and given their lives in this conflict. I will not abandon the Iraqis who long for peace. Instead, I support the President's call for more troops. I believe it is the right thing to do. It is illogical to say you support the troops that are there, but not the reinforcements that they need.

In closing, I would like to remember those who have lost their lives to the acts of terrorism:

The Beirut embassy and Marine barracks bombing in 1983; the bombing of Pan Am 103, 1988; the first bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993; the bombing of the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires in Argentina in 1994; the bombing of the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia 1996; the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998; the bombings of the USS Cole in Yemen in the year 2000; the attacks on New York City and the Pentagon, September 11, 2001; the Madrid train bombings, March 11, 2004; the London bombings, July 7, 2005.

Do not doubt that if they were given the chance, our enemies would come in this Chamber tonight and kill us all.

This resolution is not a solution. It is nothing but doubt, fear, and weakness. I urge my colleagues to vote against this resolution and stand up for victory.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 7 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL).

Mr. ISRAEL. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by setting the record straight. I have heard my friends on the other side talk about this resolution as calling for withdrawal, as calling for retreat. There is nothing in this resolution that says withdraw; there is nothing in this resolution that says retreat; there is nothing in this resolution that says exit.

What this resolution says is that we support our troops, and we do not believe that it is a good idea to add 20,000 more troops to a policy that has not worked.

In October of 2002, I voted to authorize the use of force in Iraq. I believed then, as I believe now, that the Middle East is a dangerous place and that you have to use a combination of hard power and soft power to help change the trajectory of the Middle East from a place that teaches kids how to blow things up to a place that teaches kids how to put things together.

In January of 2005, I visited our troops in Iraq, and I remember sitting with General Casey and asking him, How many foreign fighters are here and how many insurgents? And at that point, January 2005, the General said, Congressman, there are about 500 foreign fighters and there are about 5,000 insurgents. And so what to do? We committed more force to try and solve that problem.

And then I went back to Iraq in April of 2006, 15 months later, and I asked General Casey, How many foreign fighters are there and how many insurgents? And General Casey said, Congressman, there are 5,000 foreign fighters, there used to be 500, now 5,000; there used to be 5,000 insurgents, now there are 20,000 insurgents. And so what did we do? We threw in more force.

And now a year after that we stand here debating a resolution on whether we should commit another 20,000 troops to a mission that is poorly planned, from a military that has been strained by that poor planning and that is ill conceived.

Now, I want to be very clear, Mr. Speaker. If the President of the United States asked me to support additional troops into Afghanistan tonight to find Osama bin Laden, who by the way was the one who killed over 100 of my constituents, or to stop the resurgence of the Taliban, which by the way was the group of people who really gave aid and comfort to the enemy, I would vote for that tonight. I absolutely would vote for that tonight. But this decision by the President to put 20,000 more people into Iraq is the wrong number at the wrong place at the wrong time.

Mr. Speaker, during this debate I have heard my colleagues talk about the messages that we are sending our troops and how it will affect their morale, and I have an obligation as somebody who supports our military to suggest that if we had given our troops up-armor for their Humvees, Kevlar for their vests, night-vision goggles that work, and consistent rotations, their morale would be much better.

Our troops are not afraid of democracy being waged on the floor of the House of Representatives. And, in fact, on the chance that our enemies are listening to this debate, let me suggest that this debate doesn't give aid and comfort to our enemies. It tells our enemies what democracy is about. So for our enemies who may be listening: welcome to democracy. This is what it sounds like, this is what it looks like, and this is what we are willing to fight for.

What our servicemembers deserve to hear is the truth. What they deserve is a government that confronts reality rather than simply hoping for the best. So here is the truth, Mr. Speaker: somewhere between those who believe that we can stay the course in Iraq indefinitely and those who believe that we should leave Iraq tomorrow is the painful truth. The truth is that neither of those options will work.

Now, if you agree with me that that is the painful reality, then you are left with a hard choice: add 20,000 troops to continue the administration's ineffective plan, or try something different. 20,000 additional troops to Iraq, or rebuild our readiness here at home to deal with the growing challenges of Iran or naval expansion in China or genocide in Darfur or the other dangers in the world. Hold the Iraqi Government accountable for accelerating the training of their troops, or continue hoping for the best while putting the burden on the backs of 20,000 more U.S. troops.

Let me make two other points. The gentleman who preceded me, my friend from California, said, what do you have to offer? We have offered ideas; we have offered ideas from day one. The problem has been the stubborn resistance by the administration to listen to our ideas.

I have been advocating with my friend from California (Mrs. TAUSCHER) a status of forces agreement in Iraq, so that we would send the message that we are not occupiers, that we don't want to be there for one day longer than we need to be. The administration has rejected that.

I have been advocating with my friend from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY) a one-for-one resolution. I and others have been advocating a formula, a one-for-one formula that says that for every Iraqi security force that stands up an American will be redeployed.

So we have provided ideas. And I want to once again offer a bipartisan invitation to my colleagues to work with us, because whether this resolution passes or not, the war is not going to end the next day. We still have many challenges ahead, and we are going to have to work together.

And, finally, Mr. Speaker, let me make a point about some of the characterizations that we have been listening to. As a Democrat, I know that there is not a single Republican who wakes up in the morning wanting this war to last for one day longer than it has to last. And in the same spirit, I am offended by anyone who would suggest that there is a Democrat who gives aid and comfort to the enemy, who wants us to be defeated, who wants us to lose. That is not what we are about.

We need to end the sound bites and the partisanship and the war rooms off the floor of the House that tell people what to say, and begin formulating effective policy for the troops that are listening to us tonight.

I visited my VA hospital yesterday, and I saw men and women in wheelchairs and gurneys. It didn't say Republican or Democrat on those wheelchairs and gurneys. When the time came, they went to fight for us. Our obligation is to stand by them, not with sound bites, not with policies that haven't worked before, but with new ideas for a stronger country.

Mr. HUNTER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes to respond to my colleague, my good friend who just spoke, Mr. ISRAEL.

Let me just make a couple of points. With respect to up-armored Humvees, when we entered this administration, the Humvee is a successor to the Jeep, it is a tactical vehicle, we had 1,200 up-armored Humvees. That was in the year 2000. Today, we have got 15,000 up-armored 114s, plus thousands of Humvees that have the so-called MAC kits which are also protective armor kits.

We had virtually no body armor in the year 2000. I don't believe we had a single set that was available for any line units in any American division in the world. Today, we have over 400,000 of those.

I just want to make a point, if there are American moms and dads, and we have had a few who have thought that their sons and daughters were going to Iraq without body armor, I have said, Call me personally at the office, and I have not had a single phone call in 2 years. So they have plenty of body armor.

And, lastly, I just want to make one other point with respect to what America has, because there has been an implication I think throughout the debate that we are stretched too thin, that others may attack us, may take advantage of the fact that we have deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan. Since the year 2000, we have more than doubled the precision firepower of this country. That means the ability of this country, and Republicans and Democrats have supported the funding that has done this; but if any country in the world should think they are going to take advantage of an America that is, in their estimation, stretched too thin, the precision firepower, that means the ability to send a smart weapon on target to thread a goal post at many, many miles, has more than doubled since the year 2000. And so no country

that feels that there is that implication in our situation in Iraq and Afghanistan should bet their life on it, because they will lose.

Madam Speaker, I yield 10 minutes to Mr. COLE, the outstanding gentleman from Fort Sill.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about the challenges we face as a Nation, and to urge the Members of this House to confront those challenges honestly and forthrightly.

As I do, I remind my colleagues that this House is not a debating society. It is not a place to merely score political points or rhetorical points. It is a place where we should confront the issues that face our country and then act accordingly. This responsibility rests not just with the Members individually, but with the majority especially. We come to this floor not just to speak, opine, and orate. We come here to set policy, to legislate and, most importantly, to act.

This resolution the majority, the Democrats, put before us today presents us with a choice; but after we make that choice, nothing will happen, nothing will change. We will have chosen to state our opinion, but we will refuse to act on that opinion. Some will see this as a tragedy; some, Madam Speaker, will see it as a farce.

This resolution is not serious. It is a political ploy rather than a principled position. It is sound and fury that signifies nothing. It is a cruel joke on those who sincerely want to leave Iraq before our mission is finished, and it is an affront to those of us who wish to succeed in Iraq. But while this politically motivated resolution achieves nothing, it does have real and lasting consequences. Passing this resolution will embolden our enemies, it will discourage our friends, and it will disappoint our troops. It will raise questions about our seriousness as a legislative body to anyone who actually pays attention to our proceedings, and it will lead our enemies to question our resolve and it will leave our men and women in uniform wondering why we are sending them on a mission in which we do not believe, but lack the political courage to cancel.

Mr. Speaker, I am surprised and disappointed that the majority party would bring a resolution to the floor which condemns an action directed by our Commander in Chief and his military advisers yet which neither forbids that action nor offers an alternative course.

□ 2215

If the majority party, the Democratic Party, was being honest with their supporters and with the American people, they would have a straight up-or-down vote on whether or not to fund the initiative ordered by the President. This is the way in which we should approach our constitutionally defined responsibility in regard to war and peace.

Madam Speaker, I have often voiced my respect for my Democratic colleagues on the floor, and as individuals I do respect and admire them. However, I neither respect nor admire the manner in which their leadership has chosen to frame the issue which they now place before the House. My friends on the other side of the aisle have abdicated the responsibilities of being in the majority.

They do not want to legislate. They do not want to act, they just want to state an opinion. But they are stating it in a fashion that will lead many to question our sincerity as Members of this House and to doubt the effectiveness of the institution which we all love, and they are now privileged to lead.

Madam Speaker, the majority in this body has the responsibility to do more than just criticize. So, I ask, what is their plan? We don't know. How will they achieve a stable Iraq? They won't say.

It is time for Democrats to step up and answer these questions. It is easy to second-guess the decisions of former Congresses and the President. It is easy to reconsider one's support and the support many in this Congress and in their majority have voiced in the past of placing additional troops in Iraq. But, what is easy isn't always right and certainly not in this case.

Let there be no mistake. Our soldiers are engaged in combat this very minute. Our military commanders have voiced support for the mission that they have been asked to complete. General Petraeus, our commander in Iraq, supports the surge of forces. Indeed he says he needs these additional troops to succeed. Moreover, the declassified National Intelligence Estimate makes clear the disaster that would result from failure in Iraq.

Madam Speaker, let us consider what will happen if the Democrats are successful in undermining the mission and the objectives of the surge. What would it mean? What effect would this have on our forces? What would be the implications for our Nation and the region?

Well, Madam Speaker, at a practical level, it would certainly mean that our enemies would know they have weakened the will and resolve of the American people. They would take this as a lesson and a guide for the future. At a tactical level, it would likely increase the level of insurgent activity aimed at destroying our forces. Additionally, it would also mean that, lacking reinforcement, our current forces would be stretched even further.

Strategically adopting this resolution would undermine the credibility of the United States. It will make the region more chaotic and dangerous than it is today. I remember many Members of the majority party calling for an increase in the size of our force in Iraq not so long ago. I remember numerous statements by Members from the other side of the aisle that said the alternatives to success were too horrible to contemplate. They were right, but now those concerns seem to be no longer operative.

I am under no illusions that we face an easy road ahead in Iraq. Quite frankly, it is the greatest challenge our Nation has faced in a generation. However, the alternative to showing resolve in Iraq is defeat in the central front in the war on terror. That will be disastrous for the Iraqis, threatening for our friends in the region, and dangerous for the security of our own country.

That is why this resolution is so disturbing. Democrats want to have it three ways. They want to criticize the President's plan, offer none of their own, and then refuse to let our side of the aisle offer a proposal for consideration by this body. A nonbinding resolution is no plan for the future. It is a plan for the next election.

In the next few days, I will continue to engage in this debate and outline what I believe to be the real challenges and choices that we face, and why we must support the surge in forces. I hope that in this debate my side persuades my colleagues to reject this resolution.

But if they are not persuaded, then I hope they will have the political courage to act, as opposed to just talk; that they will legislate as opposed to just debate. I hope they will discharge their duties as a majority by laying out and enacting their strategy, as opposed to merely criticizing the President and complicating a dangerous situation faced by our forces in the field.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, may I inquire about the time remaining on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlelady from California has 47½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from California has 33 minutes remaining.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, at this time I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I was interested in my colleague, the last speaker's questions, the question about why do we have a nonbinding resolution and does it have any significance. I should say, no one should minimize the significance of this resolution. Passage by a bipartisan majority of the House of Representatives of this resolution opposing the President's plan to escalate the war in Iraq would be a major turning point in the war debate.

Despite the fact that it is nonbinding, passage would have enormous significance. This bipartisan resolution is serving as the basis for the first real debate on the President's flawed Iraq war policy since the war began nearly 4 years ago. Last November, the voters sent President Bush a loud and unmistakable message about Iraq, but the President didn't listen.

As his announcement of an escalation of the war showed, passage of this bipartisan resolution is a second

chance for the President to hear a strong, clear message that cannot be ignored. Passage of this bipartisan resolution will send another clear message: No more blank checks for the President on Iraq.

In addition, passage of a nonbinding resolution opposing the President's escalation plan is only the first step in the Congress, demanding a changing of course in Iraq. When this resolution containing fewer than 100 words passes, we will take the country in a new direction in Iraq. A vote of disapproval will set the stage for additional legislation, which will be coming to the House floor.

Furthermore, what is surprising, as I see my colleagues from the other side trot forward one after another, I have to remind them that in their 12 years in the majority, House Republicans passed hundreds, hundreds of nonbinding resolutions, including in very similar situations.

For example, on October 30, 1995, the House Republican leadership brought to the floor and passed H. Res. 247, a nonbinding resolution repudiating President Clinton's pledge to deploy up to 20,000 troops to Bosnia as part of a peacekeeping force. I will remind my colleagues, Kosovo is about to be declared independent because the United States and NATO countries interceded and stopped the genocide there. That is a perfect example of wrongheaded policy that Democrats were able to put forward.

Madam Speaker, at this time, I am happy to yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN).

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I am proud to join my colleagues in appreciation of our troops' exceptional service and sacrifice, and to voice my opposition to President Bush's plan to send more forces into what amounts to a civil war.

As a former member of the House Armed Services Committee and a new member of the Intelligence Committee, I recognize that our next steps in Iraq present one of the greatest security decisions our Nation has faced in decades.

The Iraq Study Group called the situation grave and deteriorating and said it requires a new approach. I agree. We can all conclude that an unstable Iraq, torn by sectarian conflict, would lead to continued violence and civilian casualties, provide combat training opportunities to those who would do us harm, and pose increased challenges to the region.

Yet I disagree with President Bush's misguided belief that sending more Americans into combat will solve the problem.

Our military has served valiantly for nearly 4 years, particularly in some very challenging and nontraditional missions, in some cases for which they were never trained. However, we have done all that we could do militarily to help the Iraqi people, and their problems no longer require a U.S. military solution. The underlying causes of violence are primarily political and must be addressed in that framework. Sending more troops would simply be a continuation of the same failed strategy.

In October of 2002, I expressed my concerns that President Bush's approach to Iraq could have dangerous ramifications in the region and America's own efforts in the war on terrorism. For those reasons and many others, I voted against authorizing use of force against Iraq, a war that was mismanaged by civilian leadership from the start.

Now, to address our troops' lack of protective gear and up-armored Humvees, I supported legislation to provide additional funding for proper equipment, as well as other efforts to assure our forces would be safe and effective. Now, however, we can best support our troops by changing our mission in Iraq and adopting a new strategy that reflects the realities on the ground. The Iraqis must now take the lead in providing for their own security, and we must reduce our presence to let them do so.

The President's claim that by adding 21,500 additional combat troops we can force a greater stability in Iraq is an argument that ignores some basic truths. Not only have past surges of U.S. forces proved unnecessary in reducing sectarian violence among Iraqis, but the addition of more troops would further inflame anti-American sentiment and turn popular opinion even more against us in our efforts. We have no proof that another surge would lead to a different outcome than in the past, but we do know that it would have negative consequences.

Now, perhaps of greatest concern is the impact of the surge on our military readiness. The President's estimate of 21,500 more combat troops does not count the additional 15,000 to 28,000 support troops that would be needed, spreading our military even more dangerously thin.

Madam Speaker, we have asked much of our forces, included repeated deployments, and a surge will only exacerbate that problem. Operations in Iraq have also taken their toll on our equipment.

According to the Government Accountability Office, 40 percent of the Army's and Marine Corps' equipment is now located in the Central Command theater of operations. Our National Guard/Reserve units are underequipped to deal with emergencies, and we have depleted our preposition stocks, which we need to respond quickly to other contingencies.

Now, in testimony before the Armed Services Committee in January, General Conway, Commandant of the Marine Corps, noted that an increase in forces in Iraq would increase our strategic risk and possibly lead to slower and less effective response to another potential threat.

Madam Speaker, sending more troops to Iraq is a dangerous gamble with our national security, and we need a new approach. A number of experts, including the Iraq Study Group, had made important recommendations, and they must not be ignored.

It is clear that the President's plan for escalation would harm our national security and ignores the will of the American people. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution so that we can promote a new strategy for Iraq and bring our troops home.

Mr. HUNTER. Madam Speaker, let me just respond to my good friend from Rhode Island, he is a great friend of mine and a former colleague on the Armed Services Committee, the estimate that has been given, that has been bandied around, that we would need some 20,000 support troops to support the 21,500 troops that are involved in the President's plan, some of whom are already in theater, has been rebutted by DOD, which said it is not 1 for 1 support to line troops, it is about 1 in 10, which in the estimate that they gave us was about 2,000 to 2,300, not 20,000 support troops.

Using that number, even with the 21,500 troops that are involved in the Baghdad plan, adding them to the 138 that we have right now, still brings us to a number that is lower than the 160,000 that we had December a year ago. I know that number has not been absolutely resolved, but I would just tell my friend that I believe it is going to be much lower than the number that has been put out there.

To my good friend from California, who talked about the Kosovo vote and the resolution to disapprove it, my recollection is that vote was undertaken before troops were moved. In this case, the 82nd Airborne is not already over the line in Iraq, but they actually have a brigade deployed in this operation, and the Baghdad operation that is being undertaken right now has a combination of Iraqi troops and American troops in each of nine sectors.

Madam Speaker, I yield as much time as he would like to take to Mr. CONAWAY from Texas, who is a gentleman that represents a great base at Fort Hood.

□ 2230

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Chairman, thank you for yielding me this time. Let me correct that record just a bit. I have got the area just west of Fort Hood. So I have got a lot of civilian contractors and retirees and active duty personnel who live in my district, but serve in Fort Hood.

Mr. HUNTER. I will stipulate that the gentleman would like to represent Fort Hood.

Mr. CONAWAY. Absolutely. I certainly would. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this time tonight.

I am opposed to this nonbinding resolution. This is a vehicle that the majority is using to bring us to this debate tonight. The resolution is pretty

simple in its language. It simply says that Congress disapproves of the decision President George W. Bush announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional troops, U.S. combat troops to Iraq. It says this twice, in the preamble and then once again in the resolved.

It also says once that Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect the members of the United States Armed Forces who are serving or who have bravely and honorably served in Iraq. We must assume, of course, that, because it is not stated, that Congress and the American people will also support and protect those additional troops that are headed into harm's way who will serve in Iraq, even though the resolution disapproves of the decision that sends those young men and women into harm's way.

The majority knows that this resolution will pass. They would not have brought it to the floor if their leadership had not be assured that they had the minimum 218 votes needed to pass this resolution. Since passage is assured, we have to ask, why this language? Why something so like this, that simply says what they are against, as opposed to something that is perhaps more meaningful, like what you are for.

It allows those who would vote in favor of this, and like I said I am quite confident it will pass, to set themselves up in that very enviable position to say I told you so if things do not go exactly as planned. And no plan in war has ever done that. So our colleagues who vote in favor of this resolution will be in that position to be able to say I told you so across a variety of circumstances.

I do not believe that either side of the aisle believes that it is the role of this or any other Congress to tell the President how not to deploy 20,000 troops. I believe there is another reason for this language. One explanation may be that it sets the stage for something that will really have an impact on the War in Iraq, the way that war is being fought, and I think that has to do with the power of the purse.

In spite of the language that says we will continue to support and protect our troops, I believe we will see in the not too distant future attempts by the majority to cut off funding for this war. I think we got a preview of this tactic last week when we passed the continuing resolution which cut $3.1 billion in spending for military quality of life projects and infrastructure that is needed to support the various BRAC decisions.

A lot has been made as to whether or not this debate will have an impact on the morale of our troops. Last week in a hearing with the Armed Services Committee, General Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff told us, as well as Bob Gates, that this debate in and of itself will not directly hurt or harm the morale of the young men and women who are fighting this fight.

I think that is generous. But what Pace did tell us was that if this Congress begins to cut funding, cut financial support, begin to go back on the promises made to those young men and woman, that that will in fact have a deleterious impact on the troops' morale and their families who serve here. I think that the debate tonight and the next 4 days will have a direct impact on the families who support these young men and women, who allow them to do what they do on behalf of this country.

And that is certainly is regrettable, if that support is hurt and harmed, and that hurt and harm is then transmitted to our young men and women who are fighting this fight every single day.

I also do not believe it is the role of 535 independent contractors that make up the House and Senate to become five-star generals and make decisions on how to fight this fight or any other war. I do believe it is our job to look as far into the future as we can, and make decisions and then pass laws that lead this Nation.

I do not know of anyone who believes that a failure in Iraq is in our national interest. Both sides have been saying this. There are no good results for such a failure. General Petraeus has listed out a couple of the possibilities that he talks about. One is that sectarian groups would begin to stake out turf. This would generally involve ethnic cleansing. The humanitarian suffering that would go on while that was happening is totally unacceptable.

He also mentions that international terrorist organizations might gain control of Iraq, and therefore use their bases in Iraq to further their interests.

The disruption to the oil markets and the impact that that will have not only on our economy but economies around the world would certainly occur if we have a failure in Iraq.

None of these guesses as to what would happen for failure in Iraq, that failure would almost automatically happen with an untimely withdrawal of our troops, none of them are positive, none of these scenarios make Iraq a safer place, none of them make the Middle East a safer place, and they certainly do not make America and the United States safer.

There are no guarantees, of course, that any plan will work. But telling the President what not to do is clearly not in the interest interests of moving this debate forward. My personal view of that future that I spoke about is that the effort in Iraq is a major part of the overall global war against Islamic Jihadists. Other Members have eloquently stated tonight that this war will last for decades.

I take very seriously the threats that the Islamic Jihadists have made and are making to kill Americans and to hurt American interests. I do not understand why they take these positions, but I certainly believe them when they tell us they are coming to hurt us.

This fight, this global war against Islamic Jihadists is really a fight for the heart of Islam. We must begin imploring moderate Muslims to stand against those few who seek to hijack the religion, and who are prosecuting this fight.

Let me preface my next remarks by saying that I am a Christian, and I believe that God is always in the business of changing men's hearts, and that the hearts of these Islamist Jihadists can be changed by the God I serve. But short of that, I believe we have only two choices, either we lock these people up forever or we kill them.

That is pretty harsh for a Christian to say, but those are our only options. I don't believe we can compromise with them and I don't believe they will compromise with us. I don't believe that they will alter their beliefs to peacefully coexist with us.

So we are in a fight that will last for years and for decades. There is no guarantee as to how this fight is being prosecuted and how we win this fight, I just know that we cannot lose it. And this resolution tonight does not move that process forward in a positive way.

We are in a long and hard struggle to protect freedom and liberty here and around the world. We are blessed by men and women who are willing to risk everything to defend you and me every minute of every day.

This resolution does not help in that struggle. And I urge my colleagues to vote against it.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER).

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, this is a very important debate. Four long years and we are searching our souls. We have sent our finest and our bravest soldiers on a mission that made no sense from the beginning. Our Nation was attacked by evil people who trained in Afghanistan.

We have a right to go into Afghanistan to remove the terrorist training camps. As a matter of fact, we should be working even harder there to make sure our Afghanistan mission does not fail. We must not allow the Taliban and other terrorist groups to control Afghanistan again.

However, we are unable to give Afghanistan our full attention because our President has led us into a war with Iraq. Why? There are no Iraqis on the plane that day. The Iraqis had no weapons of mass destruction. And they never asked us to come to their country. They do ask us to leave, though. And yet we will not leave.

The President will not listen to the Iraqis. The President will not listen to the American people. The President will not listen to the world. But Congress will. We are ready to go in a new direction and say no to the President, and no to his plan to escalate this war.

I was a military spouse. I am very, very proud of my husband's service. I am also on the Armed Services Committee. I know our troops need our support and they have it. But troops also

need to know that their leaders will make sure that their mission is in the best interests of the United States before they are asked to go fight and die for their country.

I watched a young soldier walk down a ramp on the way to Iraq. He was looking at all of us, and we were looking hard back at him. And I think most of us had the same thoughts in our hearts, that we could not look him in the eye and tell him that his mission was so essential to the security of the United States and the freedom of the world that he had to go and he had to die if necessary.

Why could we not tell him that? Because the mission had changed. Several times the President told us why we were there, and it was always a different reason. The mission had changed. And therefore the soldier looked confused and we certainly felt confused also, because we could not tell him why we were there.

I wanted to run up to him and tell him I support you, I support you by making sure that you never get sent to a war against unless we know why you are there.

What is this talk I have heard tonight about freedom and liberty? This talk of glory that I heard on the floor. This romanticized language, this talk about Davy Crockett. There is no Davy Crockett in Iraq. Our troops need clear-eyed leaders, not this romantic rabble that we have been hearing. This war has cost us. We have paid a terrible price.

Our military troops are strained. Yes, they are strained. Their families are strained. Our brave soldiers have died or they have been injured. The Iraqis have lost their lives. They have lost their society. They have lost their infrastructure. They are losing their middle class who are moving to other countries to keep their children safe.

Their people are fleeing from their own country. We are wary, they are wary, the world is now more dangerous. Iraqis were polled and the majority of them said they wanted the Americans to go home and let them work out their problems. For 4 years the administration and its supporters here have made no plan for them to do that.

Now they ask us on this side of the aisle what our plan is. This is a strange question. But it shows how confused this administration's supporters are, if they are looking to us and ask us what our plan is. They have been offered plans. They even commissioned a plan, and they do not follow any plans. The President follows his own way.

We have offered plans. They will not listen. I for one want the United States to succeed in this world. Therefore, I am going to listen to all of the generals who have pled with the President and pled with the President's supporters in this administration to do the right thing here.

But the President does not listen. Now, I am going to vote to tell the President that I am against his escalation.

Mr. HUNTER. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS).

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time. I appreciate him letting me go out of order. I am not a member of his committee. But when my committee has time on Thursday night, I am hoping to be able to attend the memorial service for our comrade, CHARLES NORWOOD, whom we lost today.

Madam Speaker, I rise to speak against H. Con. Res. 63. I think it is a mistake. It is the first step of this new Congress, the first step this new Congress is going to make towards cutting off the funding for our troops.

You do not have to take my word for it. Yesterday's CQ Today, a magazine widely read up here in Washington, and I am quoting, ''It is a foot in the door toward limiting military involvement in Iraq. The Democrats want to do this by the Congressional power of the checkbook.''

Further in the article it says, ''Democrats are well on their way toward planning more aggressive measures in an attempt to force redeployment beginning by blocking funding, and ending in the supplemental spending request.

And then finally, Democrats said, ''The resolution would just be a first step in the process that could result in a reduction or reconditioning of funds slated for our troops in Iraq.''

Well, we do not have to go too very far back in our past to see the consequences of that type of action. When I was in Iraq in August of 2005 General Casey told myself and a group of us who were there that there is no group in the world that can stand up to the American military. In fact, the only organized body in the world capable of defeating the American military was the American Congress.

I believe he was right. The CRS has done a report for this Congress, a report for Congress about restrictions of military operations in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Somalia and Kosovo, funding and non funding approaches. I reference particularly, I urge my colleagues, this is easy to download from the Internet on the CRS, simply type in Cooper-Church amendment, and you will get this well-researched product.

□ 2245

It details the Mansfield amendment, the Cooper/Church amendment of 1970 and 1973, the Cranston amendment, the McGovern/Hatfield amendment. It also talks about the funding for Somalia. In fact, in this House, in 1999, when President Clinton was President, a bipartisan group in this House came together to defeat a motion to block funding for the troops in Kosovo. So congressional actions regarding funding do have a real world impact.

And I would submit that much of the chaos that ensued after we left Vietnam, and I would include the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in that chaos, I would include the militant jihadist takeover of our Embassy in Iran in that chaos, much of that ensued because of congressional action that was taken on the floor of this House in cutting off funding for our troops.

And I am not a big one on process. I haven't been here that long. I don't know that I understand process all that well. But why in the world would we not allow a vote or even a motion to recommit on, say, SAM JOHNSON'S bill, H.R. 511. SAM JOHNSON'S bill, a simple two-page bill that details all of the fine things done by our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, and ends with this simple paragraph: Faithful support of Congress. Congress will not cut off or restrict funding for units and members in the Armed Forces that the Commander in Chief has deployed in harm's way.

Wow, that is pretty simple. I don't understand. I frankly, do not understand why this House could not vote on this simple measure submitted by my fellow Texan, SAM JOHNSON, a legitimate war hero in his own right. I simply do not understand why we wouldn't have an opportunity to vote on that bill or offer it as a motion to recommit before we vote on the resolution.

And the resolution itself, it is a shame that we weren't offered a chance to amend the bill, to amend the resolution, to perhaps make it better. I urge people to go on line and read it for themselves. It is only two lines. It is not a very heavy lift to read this particular piece of legislation.

Line 1, Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect Members of the United States Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably in Iraq. That is sentence one. Remarkable for what it leaves out. What about a comma, and who will serve? Would it be so wrong to include those individuals who will serve in whatever time is left in the country of Iraq, to include them in as being worthy of our support in Congress?

Line 2 is so vague as to almost defy description. Line 2 reads: Congress disapproves of the decision of President George W. Bush, announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional troops.

Well, would 19,995 troops be okay? Would Congress then not cock an eyebrow to say we don't like that either? Well, what does that second statement actually, what point are we trying to make by that second statement, other than we don't support the Commander in Chief, we don't support the mission, and as a consequence, you do have to ask if we support the troops.

Now, we are all sent here in Congress, we are all elected by 600- to 700,000 people, back in our districts, back in our States, to make hard decisions. We are not sent here to read the polls, stick our fingers in the wind and then decide which direction to go. We are not sent here to shift tactics because we think we may become more

popular back home if we do that. I fully recognize that by voting against this resolution, I put myself in jeopardy of reelection, and I am willing to do that because I believe a vote for this resolution puts my country's fate in significant jeopardy for decades to come.

Now, I was not here when this House voted in October of 2002 to give the President the power he needed to deploy the troops. But I have always voted for funding for the troops. And I appreciate so much the chairman standing up here and offering his telephone number to any family who is concerned whether or not their loved one will have access to body armor in Iraq.

I remember those first hearings when I came here in March of 2003, we were instructed on how quickly our men and women in the field could get into their chemical suits. This was an object of great concern to everyone in this body. In fact, most of us sit on top of a chair which has a gas mask underneath it, just in case we need to leave this body in a hurry because of the deployment of chemical weapons. We were all concerned about chemical weapons back in 2003.

Now, I have made five trips to Iraq, and I know that what is reported on our television news services here in the States is not always accurately reflective of what is happening on the ground back in Iraq. I referenced Dr. NORWOOD a moment ago. My last trip to Iraq was in July of 2006. Dr. NORWOOD, Chairman Deal and I, and GENE GREEN from our Health Subcommittee went over to see the status of health care for our troops. I was very impressed with what I saw that day.

But, Madam Speaker, I think everyone in this body has to answer two fundamental questions on this resolution before us: Is it in our broad national interest to win this fight? The second question: Can we prevail? Can we provide a modicum of security in the country of Iraq? Can we provide a modicum of sovereignty in the country of Iraq? For me, the answer to those two questions is yes. Yes and yes. And I recognize that people of goodwill can disagree about these issues. But if your answer is no, and no, then please stand up, show some courage.

This is a nonbinding resolution, for crying out loud. Even a Democratic Presidential candidate said it is equivalent to standing in the corner and stomping your feet.

We have heard a lot about moral obligations tonight. Well, I would submit that we have a moral obligation that if we can't answer both of those questions in the affirmative, bring the troops home now. Don't wait till April. Don't wait till September. If we haven't the resolve to see this thing through, or if we no longer feel that it is in our broad national interest to continue this fight, why in the world would you ask any man or woman to continue to serve in that country under those conditions?

It is our moral obligation to ensure that our troops know our intentions and they know that we are going to provide continued support for them, and that continued support, whether it is bullets for their gun, whether it is the M–16, whether it is the Humvee, or whether it is reinforcements, we are going to continue to provide the things that the generals on the ground say they need for their men and women to get the job done.

When the President invited me down to the White House right before his Oval Office speech, he asked me what the constituents in my district would say. And I said, Mr. President, it is pretty clear. My constituents would say to you, if they were standing here today, fight the war or bring the boys home.

The rules of engagement sometimes, frankly, I don't understand. If we capture someone in Sadr City and we get a call from the Prime Minister's Office and we have got to take him back and let him go, that doesn't make sense, good sense, if you are fighting a war.

Well, it looks as if a lot of those restrictions have been removed. In fact, on the Drudge Report on Fox News earlier this evening they broke the story that Moqtada al-Sadr is now living is Iran. That is a good thing. That reflects the change in tactics on the ground brought to you by our men and women who are fighting for our freedom abroad.

Madam Speaker, I suggest that we commit together to support the future, the future support of our troops in the country of Iraq, or simply get them out of harm's way now. Again, Moqtada al-Sadr has fled to Iran.

I think we can prevail. I think it is in our broad national interest. I think the price of defeat is simply too steep, not just for us today, but for generations in the future.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I would like to pose a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. HERSETH). The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, would it be wrong to propose an amendment that would ask that we add support for troops that will be in harm's way in the future in line 1 of this bill?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would entertain such requests only from the majority manager of the concurrent resolution.

Mr. BURGESS. Well, then I would call on the majority manager of the concurrent resolution to consider adding future support for our troops, or those troops who will be in harm's way in the months to come.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I am happy today, right now, to yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MATHESON).

Mr. MATHESON. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution. This afternoon I went to Walter Reed and I visited some injured soldiers. One of them was from my congressional district in the State of Utah; had a number of serious injuries. He has been in intensive care at Walter Reed for about 3 weeks now. His wife was there with him. There were pictures of his 2-year old daughter plastered up all over the wall. His daughter is back in Utah with a set of grandparents.

I wish everyone could have the experience of going and meeting the soldiers and the families. They inspire me, and they also tell me how serious this issue is about putting people in harm's way, because the lives of that family are changed forever based on these severe injuries that this soldier undertook.

With regard to the situation in Iraq, our military personnel have done everything we have asked. We can never thank our troops enough, and we owe them. We have an obligation to them to give them the best opportunity for success.

The problem is that we have never really stood here and talked about a strategy for success. A successful strategy has to be comprehensive. That is what has been needed from the outset of the conflict in Iraq, and it is still needed today as Iraq descends into civil war.

A strategy for success in Iraq requires more than a military strategy. We have the most powerful military in the world, without a doubt. If military might alone could succeed, we would be done by now.

The situation in Iraq has always required a more comprehensive effort. We need a plan for political and diplomatic and economic success.

Now, just a couple of months ago, Congress was actually handed just such a strategy in the report from the bipartisan Iraq Study Group. The report was put together by some of the greatest statesmen, diplomats and military minds of our generation. This was a bipartisan group led by former Secretary of State James Baker and former 9/11 Commission Chairman Lee Hamilton. These venerable men and women painstakingly considered all the available options. They talked to military strategists, generals, Iraqis and each and every type of individual who might hold the key to a way forward. They acknowledge that each recommendation of the Iraq Study Group carries its own risk factors. But in the end, this bipartisan group unanimously endorsed a plan to move forward. And in doing so, they rejected the overly simplistic discussion that seemed to dominate the 2006 election season when the primary options that were discussed were either stay the course or cut and run. In fact, the Iraq Study Group report provides reasoned arguments against both of these options.

As for staying the course, the Iraq Study Group states that, and I quote, ''The longer the United States remains in Iraq without progress, the more resentment will grow among Iraqis who

believe they are the subjects of a repressive American occupation. As one U.S. official said to us, 'Our leaving would make it worse. The current approach without modification will not make it better.' ''

As for an immediate withdrawal, the Iraq Study Group states that if we left tomorrow we would simply leave an immense power vacuum in Iraq. The results would have devastating effects on the global economy, the region and the Iraqi people themselves. And specifically, the report says that ''a premature American departure from Iraq would almost certainly produce greater sectarian violence and further deterioration of conditions.''

Now, the resolution we are debating right now addresses the proposal to increase the number of U.S. troops in Iraq by just over 20,000. Let's remember that the Iraq Study Group specifically took a hard look at the surge option. In discussing the merits of a surge the Iraq Study Group report said that a surge ''might temporarily help limit violence in a highly localized area. However, past experience indicates that the violence would simply rekindle as soon as U.S. forces are moved to another area.''

Furthermore, many generals and other military strategists have roundly criticized the surge strategy.

Now, I have long believed that the lack of independent, accurate assessments of our progress has hampered our efforts to secure Iraq and assist in its reconstruction. I strongly believe that the U.S. cannot linger in making the important policy and strategic decisions recommended in the report.

That is why we need to follow the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group report. U.S. forces should be redeployed from combat missions to support functions. Our troops should be supplementing the Iraqi Army. And at the same time, we have to move forward on the economic development front and the political front and the regional diplomacy front.

The resolution we are debating today is very simple. We support our troops and we oppose the surge strategy. I will vote for this resolution.

As I said before, our troops have done everything we have asked of them. Their performance is a source of great admiration and pride for everyone in America. At a minimum, we owe them a new approach and a thoughtful approach to the situation in Iraq and the pursuit of a comprehensive strategy for success.

□ 2300

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I am happy to yield such time as he may consume to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER).

Mr. WEINER. Madam Speaker, first of all, I think that I speak for all of our colleagues and all of us here in paying tribute to the 137,000-some-odd American men and women who are fighting in Iraq, the 25,000 or so that are fighting in Afghanistan. We are here to do what we can to honor them. We are trying to express our patriotism. We are trying to do what we are obligated to do by standing up here.

The notion that it is our patriotic duty, our obligation to sit silent and to do whatever the President thinks is best and blindly walk in that direction, that is not the way to honor the troops that are there. I can imagine the challenges that they face every single day, and would the message going back to them be most appropriate that just as often as they wake up in the deserts of Iraq trying to figure out why people are shooting at them and what they can do to stop it, they should know that every single day we here in Congress are trying to think about ways to make their mission safer and make it more possible for them to accomplish their mission and to extract them as soon as possible. We pray that they are successful. Although I strongly oppose the President's initiative, that I am going to vote ''yes'' on this resolution, I pray that they are successful. I pray we don't lose another life. We want them to be successful. But it is not enough just to be silent and to be prayerful. We also have to act.

Some in this Chamber have objected to this resolution because what it seeks to do is to do two things: one is the thing that I have done already, which is to pay tribute to the troops, something we all share in doing; and two is begin on a path of oversight. It is not surprising at all to hear my friends on the other side of the aisle have such a difficult concept with this idea of doing oversight over something the President proposes. They have done no oversight over how the money has been spent over there, and so as a result, we found out in the first month of the Democratic Congress that a $12 billion pallet of currency was delivered to Iraq and promptly disappeared. We had hearings last week that showed that even Mr. Bremer and officials on the ground from the administration have no idea where $12 billion disappeared to. So it is not surprising that my Republic friends have a difficult time figuring out what it is we are doing here. We are doing oversight, and we are going to do more of it.

We are doing oversight over the equipment that the troops had. This weekend there were stories coming outside of Iraq that Iranian-built armor-piercing projectiles were being used in roadside bombs. It reminded us again that the troops had been sent there without sufficient hardware, without sufficient protective gear, without sufficient armor-plated vehicles to be able to do their job. We are going to do oversight on that as well.

And I have to say that as part of the oversight that we are doing today, we are doing oversight on how the troops are being used. And let us not kid ourselves. The troops have done a remarkable job. They have done just about every single thing we have asked. They brought down a dictator. They set up a trial. They allowed a government to be stood up. They built roads and bridges. They have done an extraordinary job, and we in this House support them in that work.

But now what is their mission? Their mission is essentially to stand in the middle of a shooting match of the worst order. It is not over a patch of land. It is not a shooting match over what a border is going to be. It is not a shooting match even over oil. It is a shooting match of the most ingrained type between Shia and Sunni that goes back hundreds of years. Are our troops going to solve that conflict with 20,000 troops or 40,000 troops? I don't believe so. And even worse, I believe it is an untenable mission to be giving them. They are essentially in a schoolyard where everyone wants to fight.

And I have to say to my friends on the other side of the aisle, over and over and over again today I have heard this dynamic being described that if we were to leave or to support this resolution, we would let down our allies, we would embolden our enemies, and we would betray the Iraqi people. In fact, this policy does all of those things. Let us look at it.

What does this policy say to our allies? Well, it says to our allies in Afghanistan we are not going to devote the resources there necessary for you to do the job. This isn't an abstract notion. You can watch it happen every single day. So long as we have 140,000 troops or 130,000 troops in this shooting match largely in Baghdad, we are watching as Afghanistan slips further and further back into the hands of the Taliban.

We have heard, for example, from our so-called ally the Saudis, and what have they said? They have been most telling. They said recently, well, to you, the citizens of the United States, if you pull your troops out, we are going to be forced to put resources in to support our Sunni brethren. So the Saudis have said if the American troops leave, we are going to have to jump in on the side of our Sunni brethren in Baghdad. What does that say? What does that say? That says they will jump into a blood-letting, but they won't come in now to help us stabilize Baghdad. They have argued, essentially, that the only reason they are not involved is our troops are. Some ally. Some message we are sending to our ally Saudi Arabia. What they are saying is, You had better keep your boys dying because otherwise we are going to have to send ours in.

That is exactly what we want. We want them to send they resources in. We want them to take ownership of this.

And the same is true with Egypt and other allies in the region. They have said to us, You had better keep doing what you are doing, Mr. President. We are getting exactly the wrong message.

And I have also heard my colleagues speak frequently today about

emboldening our enemies. Well, it seems like just about anything Democrats propose is emboldening our enemies.

Let us take a closer look at this. Is Iran truly upset about what is going on in Iraq? Are the Iranians truly wringing their hands every day saying, Boy oh boy, I hope the United States does not pull out of there? No. They have never been happier with this existing policy. Their worst elements, their worst Shia elements, are crossing over the border practically at will, joining the fight. The President of the United States himself has said it. I have heard people here on the floor say it. They like this confrontation that is going on. They want it to be like this.

But they are happy for another reason, and I say this particularly to my friends on the other side of the aisle. They are happy because I am truly concerned about the threat that Iran poses not only to the United States but to the world. Do you think we are in a position right now with our military stretched so thin that if we needed to act against Iran, we could? No. Our engagement in Baghdad, adding more and more and more troops, has stretched us thinner and thinner and thinner. And the most happy people in the world are the tyrants in Iran because they know they can get away with just about anything. And if you think I am wrong about that, take a look at the war back last year on the northern border of Israel. Hezbollah felt completely unencumbered, which is essentially, as we all know, an agent of Iran. They felt completely unencumbered again just to attack a democracy in the region because they knew that all of us were stretched entirely too thin to be able to respond. So this notion that we are going to send the wrong message to our enemies is completely wrong.

Do you know what would send the right message to our enemies, I say to my colleagues? You take some of those troops out of Baghdad, you put them on the Iranian border. That is how you send them a message. You get them out of the shooting match, but you keep them in the neighborhood. You keep them right on the border of Iran and you say, We don't need 140,000, but we are going to make sure you don't export any more problems. We are going to seal off the schoolyard.

And, finally, I have heard it said that this will be an abandonment of the Iraqi people. Well, ladies and gentlemen, there is no element here that I am more disappointed with, and I think I speak virtually for all of us. Our troops are in there trying to create stability in Iraq, and for some reason, overwhelming numbers of Iraqis say that they think it is okay to shoot at our troops. It is outrageous. It is outrageous. Our troops are in there trying as best they can to build this country, put it back together, and the Iraqi people over and over again are saying, You know what, it is kind of okay when I read stories about snipers shooting at our troops.

The Iraqi people have to have a moment where they confront the reality of the situation. Everyone agrees, I think, and whenever I say that, I hear someone come to the floor and think that everything is going just fine in Iraq, but just about everyone agrees that the Iraqi people themselves ultimately have to take responsibility for their own country.

Are we creating an environment that is more likely to happen or less likely to happen? Well, there is no sign that it is happening; so the de facto response to my own question is that it is not happening. But I would argue that every time we stand up and put additional troops in, we push the Iraqi people further from the point where they have to confront that they have to take control. Might it be messy? Yes. Might it even be bloody? Yes. But one thing is for sure: up to now the Iraqi people have simply said, We are not going to. We don't have to. We have got our boys from the United States of America, and now we have another 20, 30, 40,000 that are going to be rolling into town.

My colleagues, I have heard my friends on the other side of the aisle complain, and I have to say, present company excluded, it sounded a little like whining most of the day. I have heard, well, we need more choices. I have heard we need more bills. I have heard we need more language. There are going to be plenty of opportunities to confront these issues, but today my colleagues have to confront the choice in front of them. Sometimes in this job you have to say ''yea'' or ''nay.'' And this week what you have to say ''yea'' or ''nay'' on is a resolution that is exquisite in its simplicity. It says two things and two things only. It says we support the troops. We are going to keep them safe. We are going to keep them secure. We are going to do anything that they need to show our support. And, two, we disapprove of the way the President wants to increase the number of troops going there. That is it. You are going to get to vote on other things later on because we are not done. Many of us believe very strongly that we need major tactical changes, and I know Mr. MURTHA has a plan. The Blue Dog Caucus has a plan for more transparency. There are going to be plenty of choices. You are going to get oversight.

I know it has been years, I say to my colleagues, since you have seen any around here, but you are going to get it. But today what we have is a simple proposition. It is the same proposition that is being discussed in coffee shops, in church socials, in corner stores all around this country, and that is: Do we support what the President is doing by increasing our engagement rather than reducing it? That is what this is about. And all of the foot stamping and all of the complaining and all of the whining, I want another bill, I want different language, I want to deal with something different, I want a hug, well, for the time being this is the choice that you are confronted with.

If you believe that this surge is the right policy, you have a simple vote. You can vote ''no.'' If you believe that you don't want to support the troops, and there is no one like that, you can vote ''no.'' But this resolution is the beginning of finally starting to do what the American people are thirsting for, and that is this Chamber is a place where we stand up and say whether we support these things or not.

I urge a ''yes'' vote.

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

I want to take a couple of minutes to answer a couple of things that my friend said.

First Mr. WEINER said, ''We aren't done.'' Madam Speaker, that is one thing that I am worried about. He said that we want more choices, more bills, more language. Not this Member. I will settle for a ''no'' on this resolution. I haven't asked for more bills, more choices, or different language.

And the problem with this resolution, the gentleman said this is a very good resolution because it is very clear, very concise, and gives us clear choices. This resolution retroactively condemns an action that has already been taken. That is the movement of reinforcements into the theater. You already have the 82nd Airborne in the theater. That is part of the reinforcing force. They are already in there. You already have a brigade from the 82nd Airborne in one of the nine sectors right now, operating, boots on the ground as we talk. So you aren't prohibiting the President from sending reinforcements.

He said that American forces are being stretched thinner and thinner and thinner.

We have 2½ million Americans in uniform. We have roughly 138,000 before the surge. Now a little more than 140,000 counting the ones that are already in country. When they are in country and the support troops are there and less the troops who will be rotating home at that point, you will have at the high point, we are told by DOD, about 157,000 troops. That is less than we had a year ago in country, I would say to the gentleman. So that is not a huge surge.

□ 2315

He stated that we are going to be drawn thinner, and I quote, ''thinner and thinner and thinner.''

So you have about 160,000 troops, a little less than that, max. That is not 10 percent of the 2.5 million persons who are presently wearing the uniform of the United States.

Secondly I will say to my friend, I want to say to folks who listen to this debate, because this statement about us being drawn thin and therefore being susceptible to problems and being vulnerable is a message that has come up several times in this debate.

We have more than doubled the precision firepower of this country since the last administration, that is the Clinton administration. You have more than doubled the precision firepower. That means the ability, if people should give the United States a need to respond militarily, the ability to send precision systems that can explode right straight through goalposts at long distances and handle lots of stuff.

Now, the gentleman is very concerned about Iran. I share that concern. And I share the concern the gentleman has about the centrifuge activity and the proposed centrifuge activity that Iran has discussed and may at some point develop with the aid of the Russians and the Chinese.

I would just remind the gentleman that those precision systems, that doubling of the precision firepower that we now have, is probably the right medicine if we should have to keep the military option open and on the table with respect to Iran. So we will watch them as they try to walk down this road to developing a nuclear weapon.

Mr. WEINER. Madam Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HUNTER. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. WEINER. Madam Speaker, I honor the gentleman for his mastery of the numbers. Perhaps you can enlighten me, what is the number of Reserves that are in country now?

Mr. HUNTER. We have been up as high as 40 percent National Guard and Reserve, and that is a deliberate policy of the United States. When we went to war in Vietnam, the Guard and Reserve for practical purposes stayed home. And we said from here on out, when we go to war, we go to war with what is known as a total force.

So you have a Reserve element that goes to war. If you were over in Iraq, as the gentlelady has been there a number of times, you will see Reservists flying C–130s, doing a lot of support missions, and you have National Guard units on the ground.

Mr. WEINER. If the gentleman will yield for a further question, are there any there doing second or third tours of duty?

Mr. HUNTER. Certainly. I can tell the gentleman, my son has done two tours of duty. There are a number of people that have done that.

Mr. WEINER. If the gentleman will further yield, is it not your view that that has a dramatic toll only those families and communities who are not regular army who are there as Reservists and are being called back tour after tour? You don't think that is stretching those communities thin?

Mr. HUNTER. I will just tell the gentleman, in the MOSs that our folks sign up for, especially the aerial supportive MOSs, that is always out there, that they are going to have to go, because where the armed services go, where the active folks go, let me just finish my answer to the gentleman. He asked me a question. I am going to ask answer it.

If you are in a supportive service that involves things likes aerial refueling, C–130 work, which is the workhorse of the U.S. military, you understand when you go in, you are going to be making probably multiple tours. If you join the U.S. Marines right now, the recruiter tells you as you sign up, you can be guaranteed that you will go to Iraq.

I would say to the gentleman another thing: Knowing those things, we are meeting all of our enlistment goals in the Guard and Reserve. So the active duty people who are undertaking multiple tours are coming back and reenlisting. And knowing that, knowing that you are exposed to multiple tours, we have more people signing up for the Guard, for the Reserve.

And interestingly, I will tell the gentleman, the place where we have had problems with recruiting in the last year from the information I have seen is the Naval Reserve, which doesn't do tours in Iraq. But the combat arms have multiple tours.

Mr. WEINER. If the gentleman will yield further, I thank the gentleman very much. I think what you have just described is a military stretched thin, my friend. I think when you have people in the Reserves doing three tours, that are being taken away from their communities, I think that is a military stretched thin.

Mr. HUNTER. Reclaiming my time, I will just tell the gentleman this: There is a difference between people in specialties spending more time doing multiple tours, and I will say to him again, almost all Marines know that they are going to do multiple tours, either in country or on the so-called float, which is the deployment around the world, because they are the 9/11 force for this country. So that is something that people do.

That is a far cry from not having enough firepower to respond to an Iranian crisis. We still have tons of firepower to respond to an Iranian breakout or surprise, a technological surprise, with respect to development of nuclear systems.

Madam Speaker, if the gentlewoman from California has more speakers, I will enjoy listening to them, and I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I am happy to yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague from North Carolina (Mr. MCINTYRE).

Mr. MCINTYRE. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight in support of the resolution before us that disapproves of the President's recent announcement to deploy more than 20,000 additional U.S. combat troops to Iraq.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I am committed to supporting our troops and making sure that they have the resources they need. I always have and I always will. There is no debate about supporting our troops. This resolution clearly and unequivocally states that both the Congress and the American people support our valiant men and women in uniform. Our troops have been and are continuing to do an excellent job, and they deserve our support.

Yet, overall, our military is being stretched thin, and now we face the prospect of not only sending over 20,000 more combat troops into Iraq, but also another 15,000 troops on top of that, at minimum, to support those troops, with additional military police, intelligence units and supply function personnel. In fact, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that it might take even more troops than that. So reality is that we are now looking at a total of 35,000 or more troops actually involved in this potential surge.

We need to be moving toward a successful conclusion in Iraq; not with a timetable, but with definite benchmarks of accountability that are meant to ensure that the Iraqis are taking control of their own security and future. The Iraqi army, the national police and the local police in Iraq must take responsibility for their own country and communities, and only by lessening the American footprint in Iraq will we empower the Iraqi people to take responsibility for their own self-governance and ultimately their own destiny.

Is not just my opinion or the opinion of some here, it is exactly what General John Abizaid, our U.S. Commander said, when I visited Iraq and when he testified before Congress.

We cannot continue to increase troop levels in Iraq at the expense of allowing the Taliban to come back into power in Afghanistan. The Global War on Terrorism is exactly what the name says. It is a global war, not just an Iraqi war, and we cannot let our troop strength be so focused on what is becoming a civil war in Iraq that we lose focus on threats that face us elsewhere in the world.

Previous surges have not solved the problems in Iraq. Let us not be fooled into thinking that this one will.

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

Madam Speaker, I have got one speaker left here, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, but let me just say one thing before he speaks. I appreciate the debate. I think we have had a good discussion this evening.

I wanted to say one thing about CHARLIE NORWOOD. He passed away. He was a Member of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. I was a member of that brigade. I had a very average tour, a very easy tour in Vietnam. I did nothing special. But CHARLIE NORWOOD was a real hero who won the Combat Medical Badge and two Bronze Stars in Vietnam.

I thought to commemorate CHARLIE, I have got my copy of General Douglas MacArthur's farewell speech that I quoted earlier, and let me just quote a paragraph about duty, honor and country that Douglas MacArthur thought so represented the fighting man in this country.

He said these of words, duty, honor and country, ''They teach to be proud and unbending in honest failure, but humble and gentle in success; not to substitute words for action; not to seek the path of comfort, but to face the stress and spur of difficulty and challenge; to learn to stand up in the storm, but to have compassion on those who fall; to master yourself before you seek to master others; to have a heart that is clean, a goal that is high; to learn to laugh, yet never forget how to weep; to reach into the future, yet never neglect the past; to be serious, yet never take yourself too seriously; to be modest so that you will remember the simplicity of true greatness; the open mind of true wisdom, the meekness of true strength.''

I think that largely represented our great friend CHARLIE NORWOOD.

Madam Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS).

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Thank you, Mr. HUNTER. I certainly add my own feelings toward the words that you just spoke on behalf of CHARLIE NORWOOD. None of us know when we have to step from this floor for the last time. This man, while he was here, maintained a sense of honor. He was always committed to doing those things that would bring better hope to future generations. He was honorable among us, and we can certainly salute that kind of brotherhood that he represented to all of us.

I certainly pass along my own condolences and also congratulations to his family, because in a sense CHARLIE NORWOOD's dreams were fulfilled in that he dreamed to be a statesman, and he certainly rose to that occasion in every way.

I suppose it is in a sense a little bit of a statement to all of us that the brief moments that we have here should be spent debating those things that would truly make a difference, not only for this generation, but for whatever generations remain to America.

Madam Speaker, tonight I think that is what I would like to talk about. There is an old Indian Iroquois quote that says that the secret to the universe is in the true naming of things, and as we debate tonight, it is easy for us to see each other as the opposition or as the enemy.

I think tonight, if all else should fail us, we must consider who the real enemy here is. This one is a little different than those that we faced in the past, because even though there are parallels, this is an ideology. This is not just a group of people that we face in Islamic jihadism. It is an ideology that I believe has the seeds of danger in it for the entire human family.

I think it becomes very, very important for us all to understand that one thing, because in a sense right now the battle that goes on across the world related to terrorism is a battle between those who are deeply committed with their lives to the destruction of the Western World on one side of the equation, and on the other side of the equation the opposition is largely asleep, and I think that nothing represents a greater danger to us than not only knowing what we face, but being completely oblivious to its potential.

I believe that the ideology of jihad has the ability and even the propensity to germinate and one day threaten the entire human family. And even though America is engaged in some type of fight against terrorism and jihadism in nearly 70 countries across the world, whether we realize it or not, in the eyes of the leaders of jihad, Iraq is the frontline of that conflict, and it becomes profoundly important that we recognize it from their perspective, because in any ideology, one must understand that to grow, it must somehow take root and resonate in the hearts of the potential recruits.

One of the things that causes this ideology to grow is a sense of victory on the battlefield, and leader after leader in the jihadist movement have said that Iraq is critical to the survival of their ultimate goal.

□ 2330

I know that we have faced dangerous ideologies before. There are a lot of people who have parents and family members that faced the Nazis down in World War II, and yet just a cursory glance at history helps us understand that the parallel here is real.

There was a time when the Nazis were just a bunch of lunatics riding bicycles across France, and nobody paid much attention to them. They spewed a hate and a sense of superiority over their fellow human beings and even a sense of being willing to subordinate the innocent life of others for their own ideology. We did not pay much attention to them until it began to grow and the fires of this ideology began to spread across Europe.

In the final analysis, the Western world and people of freedom did not wake up until this thing had become a monster, and when we finally did engage it, the ensuing war was so difficult and so horrible that at the end of the day, 50 million people had died.

I will just say this, Madam Speaker, Winston Churchill warned us in a way that I think is pretty profound. He said, If you will not fight, then you can easily win without bloodshed. If you will not fight, then your victory will be sure and not too costly. You may come to the moment when you will have to fight and all the odds against you with only a precarious chance of survival. There may even be a worse moment. You may have to fight when there is no hope for victory because it is still better to perish than to live as slaves.

I submit in the ideology that we face tonight that is the equation that is before us.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just want to rise to close this debate from our side and say how impressed I have been by the debate that I have heard today. It has been about 11 hours. We are going to have tomorrow and debate on Friday and Thursday, and this is the first real serious debate we have had about the President's policies in Iraq since the vote in October of 2002.

This week the House is considering a bipartisan resolution introduced by Representative IKE SKELTON of Missouri, TOM LANTOS of California, and WALTER JONES of North Carolina, which supports our troops and opposes the President's plan to add 21,500 more combat troops in Iraq.

People have talked quite a lot tonight about the size and the scope of the resolution, but it is elegant and it is certainly spare in the fact that it is about 100 words, but it is significant because of what it says.

The resolution is very straightforward. It says:

''Resolved by the House of Representatives that:

''(1) Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect the members of the United States Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably in Iraq; and

''(2) Congress disapproves of the decision by President George W. Bush announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq.''

Those supporting this bipartisan resolution strongly support our troops and our veterans. Let us be clear on this one fundamental principle. We are honoring the service of our troops by asking the difficult questions about this war. In conducting this debate, we must be ever mindful of the sacrifices our military personnel and their families are making during this war and the toll it is taking on them and their families and our veterans. Each Member must determine for themselves, in a manner worthy of our troop's sacrifice, whether the President's plan will succeed in making Iraq more stable.

I, for one, do not believe it will, and I strongly believe and hope that my colleagues will support this resolution and the debate that is coming forth in the next 2 days.

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, scripture tells us, "David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds and with every leader." Throughout the war in Iraq, the President has failed to adequately consult with the American people and their Congress or other countries in the region whose best interests are also served by a stable Iraq. He has long recognized that staying the course in Iraq is not working, yet he stubbornly stays the course.

The Congress has a duty to make sure once sent into harm's way for good cause, our troops are equipped and supplied with everything necessary to accomplish a given mission. The Congress has an equal duty to change or end a given mission, when circumstances, realities and rationales demand it.

We in Congress want to work with him to bring our troops home from a more stable

Iraq. We should not only ensure that the people are given a full accounting of what the President is expecting of our troops in the coming months, and how much it will cost our Treasury, but we must also demand accounting of what the war in Iraq has cost the U.S., and our men and women in uniform, over the last four years.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand today with my fellow veterans in the House of Representatives to register our opposition to the President's plan to escalate the war in Iraq and to show our support for our men and women in uniform.

Last November 7th, the American people sent a clear message to Congress and the President: we must end the war in Iraq.

Now, after nearly four years of bloodshed, death and destruction, Congress is likely to go on the record as opposing the plan for escalating the war. No longer will Congress stand by while the President wages a war that defies logic, common sense and human decency. This week, we shall take a stand. This week, we tell the administration: ''Enough is enough. Stop ignoring the American people. Stop ignoring your generals and retired generals, including Colin Powell. Stop ignoring the foreign policy experts. Stop wasting American lives and resources on this disastrous, unnecessary conflict.''

This debate represents an important turning point in the public dialogue about Iraq, and so I welcome it. But it is not enough. The escalation must be stopped, but we cannot let the momentum against the war subside after we deal with the escalation. Our priority must remain ending the fighting and dying in Iraq.

We must end the senseless deaths of service members like Marine Tarryl Hill of Southfield, Michigan, who died only last Wednesday when his vehicle drove over a bomb in Fallujah. Tarryl Hill was just 19 years old. He had joined the military to help finance his education to become a chemical engineer, but instead he became the 120th serviceman from Michigan to die in Iraq. I don't want to see one more promising life like Tarryl's extinguished on the altar of this administration's arrogance.

The loss of Tarryl's life brings to mind the bereavement of another patriot from Michigan, Lila Lipscomb of Flint, whose 26 year old son Michael died in Iraq in April 2003 when his helicopter was shot down. A member of a military family, Ms. Lipscomb initially believed President Bush when he told the nation that the war was necessary for our national security. But her son's letters from the front lines and his tragic death showed her that he never should have gone to Iraq.

I need not spend much time explaining my opposition to the troop surge, which is simply even more ''more of the same.'' This policy takes us in precisely the opposite direction recommended by the generals and the experts. It would simply expose GI's to more intense door-to-door fighting, in the vain hope that, in the meanwhile, the Iraqis will miraculously reconcile.

The real and underlying question is how we remove ourselves from this quagmire. As I have emphasized many times, our Constitution gives Congress the central role in decisions of war and peace. Last fall the American people spoke loudly with their votes. We should be here showing the voters that we heard them and that their trust in us was well placed.

The ultimate, unequivocal authority of the Congress is the power of the purse. We must use it. Supporters of the president's failed Iraq policy have argued that using Congress' spending power to end the war means that we don't ''support the troops.'' It is beyond absurd to suggest that those of us who favor ending funding for the war would simply abandon the troops in the field without the equipment and supplies they need. Every piece of legislation proposing cutting funds for combat operations would require the spending necessary to bring the troops home safely.

Cliches about supporting the troops are not really about our service members' best interests. The true purpose of these accusations is to distract us from the fact that we are bogged down in an unwinnable war with no end in sight. Keeping our troops out of harm's way, especially when war is unnecessary, is the best possible way to support them. The American people understand that marching ahead blindly into oblivion is no way to support our troops. That is why they have asked us to end this war.

Madam Speaker, the administration continues to live under the illusion that it can salvage its reputation by achieving a military victory in Iraq, when it is clear that diplomacy is the only effective means at our disposal. The recent National Intelligence Estimate reflecting the collective judgment of U.S. intelligence agencies only confirms what we have seen in the daily headlines for almost a year. It concludes that the civil war has reached an intensity that is ''self-sustaining'' and that there are no Iraqi national leaders with the ability to stop it. No wonder the Administration stalled completion of the NIE until after the election and the President's presentation of his latest proposal.

Most of the American people know that there is only one way to proceed in Iraq. We must begin the phased withdrawal of American troops in the next four to six months and conclude it within the year. Redeploying our armed forces does not mean ''cutting and running.'' On the contrary, we suggest continued and extensive involvement in the region through renewed diplomacy, a regional conference and reconstruction that is free from fraud and abuse. This sensible path is the only one that can lead us to victory.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 157, further proceedings on the concurrent resolution will be postponed.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to the following resolution.

S. RES. 79

Resolved, That the Senate has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of the honorable Charles W. Norwood, Jr., late a Representative from the State of Georgia.

Resolved, That the Secretary communicate these resolutions to the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy thereof to the family of the deceased.

Resolved, That when the Senate adjourns or recesses today, it stand adjourned or recessed as a further mark of respect to the memory of the deceased Representative.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HASTERT (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for the week of February 12.

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. 742. An act to amend the Antitrust Modernization Commission Act of 2002, to extend the term of the Antitrust Modernization Commission and to make a technical correction.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House reports that on February 9, 2007 she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill.

H.R. 434. An act to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 through July 31, 2007, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 35 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, February 14, 2007, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

598. A letter from the Interim Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Allocation of Assets in Single Employer Plans; Valuation of Benefits and Assets; Expected Retirement Age — received January 2, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and Labor.

599. A letter from the Interim Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans — received January 2, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and Labor.

600. A letter from the Interim Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Allocation of Assets in Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Valuing and Paying Benefits — received January 2, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and Labor.

601. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting certification that the export to the People's Republic of China of the specified items is not detrimental to the United States space launch industry, and that the material and equipment, including any indirect technical benefit that could be derived from such exports,

will not measurably improve the missile or space launch capabilities of the People's Republic of China, pursuant to Public Law 105-261, section 1512; (H. Doc. No. 110–14); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska (for himself and Mr. BROWN of South Carolina):

H.R. 1006. A bill to amend the provisions of law relating to the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska:

H.R. 1007. A bill to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to repeal the long-term goal for reducing to zero the incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals in commercial fishing operations, and to modify the goal of take reduction plans for reducing such takings; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. BEAN (for herself, Mr. HILL, Mr. ARCURI, Mr. BARROW, Mr. BERRY, Ms. BERKLEY, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. BOYD of Florida, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. COOPER, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. ELLSWORTH, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. HINCHEY, Ms. HOOLEY, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. KIND, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mrs. LOWEY, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MARSHALL, Ms. MATSUI, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. MELANCON, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROSS, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. SHULER, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. TANNER, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY):

H.R. 1008. A bill to improve public awareness in the United States regarding safe use of the Internet through the establishment of an Office of Internet Safety and Public Awareness within the Federal Trade Commission; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. PAUL (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. STARK, and Ms. WOOLSEY):

H.R. 1009. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to exclude industrial hemp from the definition of marihuana, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on 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. GEORGE MILLER of California (for himself and Mr. PETRI):

H.R. 1010. A bill to ensure that Federal student loans are delivered as efficiently as possible in order to provide additional grant aid to students; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. BOUCHER (for himself, Mr. WOLF, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, and Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia):

H.R. 1011. A bill to designate additional National Forest System lands in the State of Virginia as wilderness or a wilderness study area, to designate the Kimberling Creek Potential Wilderness Area for eventual incorporation in the Kimberling Creek Wilderness, to establish the Seng Mountain and Bear Creek Scenic Areas, to provide for the development of trail plans for the wilderness areas and scenic areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, 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. BUCHANAN (for himself, Ms. FALLIN, Mr. GILCHREST, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, and Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida):

H.R. 1012. A bill to reform laws and procedures affecting small business; to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committees on Small Business, the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, and 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. BURGESS:

H.R. 1013. A bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to prohibit the approval or continuation of section 1115 waivers insofar as they provide coverage of nonpregnant adults under the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. CAPPS (for herself and Mrs. CUBIN):

H.R. 1014. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and the Public Health Service Act to improve the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases in women; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CAPUANO (for himself, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. GONZALEZ, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 1015. A bill to require automobile dealers to disclose to consumers the presence of event data recorders, or ''black boxes'', on new automobiles, and to require manufacturers to provide the consumer with the option to enable and disable such devices on future automobiles; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DELAHUNT:

H.R. 1016. A bill to amend the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to enter into cooperative agreements with any of the management partners of the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DINGELL (for himself, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Mr. FARR):

H.R. 1017. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to improve requirements under the Medicaid Program for items and services furnished in or through an educational program or setting to children, including children with developmental, physical, or mental health needs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. EMERSON:

H.R. 1018. A bill to amend he Animal Health Protection Act to prohibit the Secretary of Agriculture from implementing or carrying out a National Animal Identification System or similar requirement and to require the Secretary to protect information obtained as part of any voluntary animal identification system; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. FORTUÑO:

H.R. 1019. A bill to designate the United States customhouse building located at 31 Gonzalez Clemente Avenue in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, as the ''Rafael Martinez Nadal United States Customhouse Building''; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. FOSSELLA (for himself, Mr. REYNOLDS, and Mr. CROWLEY):

H.R. 1020. A bill to authorize the Urban Areas Security Initiative Grants Program of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts:

H.R. 1021. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resources study regarding the suitability and feasibility of designating certain historic buildings and areas in Taunton, Massachusetts, as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York:

H.R. 1022. A bill to reauthorize the assault weapons ban, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MEEK of Florida (for himself and Mr. HERGER):

H.R. 1023. A bill to repeal the imposition of withholding on certain payments made to vendors by government entities; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 1024. A bill to provide for the issuance of a postage stamp commemorating the 450th anniversary of the founding of the first European settlement in the continental United States, at Pensacola, Florida, by Tristan de Luna in 1559; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. MORAN of Kansas (for himself and Mr. SMITH of Nebraska):

H.R. 1025. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of implementing a water supply and conservation project to improve water supply reliability, increase the capacity of water storage, and improve water management efficiency in the Republican River Basin between Harlan County Lake in Nebraska and Milford Lake in Kansas; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. MORAN of Kansas (for himself, Mrs. EMERSON, Ms. HERSETH, and Mr. ROSS):

H.R. 1026. A bill to facilitate the sale of United States agricultural products to Cuba, as authorized by the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, Financial Services, and Agriculture, 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. MURTHA:

H.R. 1027. A bill to amend title 36, United States Code, to authorize the spouse and siblings of a recipient of the Purple Heart medal to become associate members in the Military Order of the Purple Heart of the United States of America, Incorporated; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SALAZAR (for himself and Mr. UDALL of Colorado):

H.R. 1028. A bill to create a Rural Policing Institute as part of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. STEARNS (for himself, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

H.R. 1029. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to direct the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to require the disclosure of information relating to the fair market value and safety of damaged motor vehicles; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. WATERS (for herself, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. HONDA, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. STARK, and Ms. CARSON):

H.R. 1030. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a program to provide screenings and treatment for cancer to minority or underserved populations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. WATERS (for herself, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. SOLIS, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. KILDEE, and Ms. BORDALLO):

H.R. 1031. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize grants to provide treatment for diabetes in minority communities; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. WATERS (for herself, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. WOLF, and Mr. BECERRA):

H.R. 1032. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize grants for treatment and support services for Alzheimer's patients and their families; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. WEINER:

H.R. 1033. A bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a grant program to improve railroad safety by providing funds for the construction and maintenance of fencing and other protective structures along railroad tracks, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. HOLT, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. MELANCON, Mr. LAHOOD, and Mr. SPRATT):

H.R. 1034. A bill to amend the National Guard Youth Challenge Program under title 32, United States Code, to exclude non-defense funds made available by other Federal agencies for the Program from the matching requirements of the Program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina:

H.R. 1035. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a nonrefundable personal credit to individuals who donate certain life-saving organs; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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. YOUNG of Alaska:

H.R. 1036. A bill to authorize the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property to the Alaska Railroad Corporation; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. BECERRA (for himself, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas):

H.J. Res. 25. A joint resolution providing for the reappointment of Patricia Q. Stonesifer as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. BECERRA (for himself, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas):

H.J. Res. 26. A joint resolution providing for the reappointment of Walter E. Massey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. BECERRA (for himself, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas):

H.J. Res. 27. A joint resolution providing for the reappointment of Roger W. Sant as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. JACKSON of Illinois (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RUSH, Mr. STARK, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Mr. WYNN):

H.J. Res. 28. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States regarding the right to vote; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JACKSON of Illinois:

H.J. Res. 29. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States regarding the right of all citizens of the United States to a public education of equal high quality; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JACKSON of Illinois:

H.J. Res. 30. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States regarding the right of citizens of the United States to health care of equal high quality; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JACKSON of Illinois:

H.J. Res. 31. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to equality of rights and reproductive rights; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JACKSON of Illinois:

H.J. Res. 32. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States respecting the right to decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable housing; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JACKSON of Illinois:

H.J. Res. 33. A joint resolution proposing an amendment the Constitution of the United States respecting the right to a clean, safe, and sustainable environment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JACKSON of Illinois:

H.J. Res. 34. A joint resolution proposing an amendment the Constitution of the United States relative to taxing the people of the United States progressively; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JACKSON of Illinois:

H.J. Res. 35. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States respecting the right to full employment and balanced growth; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JACKSON of Illinois:

H.J. Res. 36. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to abolish the Electoral College and provide for the direct election of the President and Vice President by the popular vote of all citizens of the United States regardless of place of residence; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PITTS (for himself, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. WOLF, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. POE, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. PENCE, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. FORBES, Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, and Mr. SESSIONS):

H. Res. 158. A resolution observing the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the British slave trade and encouraging the people of the United States, particularly the youth of the United States, to remember the life and legacy of William Wilberforce, a member of the British House of Commons who devoted his life to the suppression and abolition of the institution of slavery, and to work for the protection of human rights throughout the world; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Ms. DEGETTE introduced a bill (H.R. 1037) for the relief of Rosa Isela Figueroa Rincon, Miguel Angel Figueroa Rincon, Blanca Azucena Figueroa Rincon, and Nancy Araceli Figueroa Rincon; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 24: Mr. BACA.

H.R. 39: Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. ALLEN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BERMAN, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BOUCHER, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. CLAY, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. FARR, Mr. FILNER, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. HARE, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. HINCHEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOLT, Ms. HOOLEY, Mr. HONDA, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LANTOS, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. LYNCH, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MCNULTY, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. MICHAUD, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. NADLER, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Ms. NORTON, Mr. OLVER, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. ROTHMAN, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. STARK, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. WEINER, Mr. WELCH of Vermont, Mr. WEXLER, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. WU, Mr. WYNN, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, and Mr. UDALL of New Mexico.

H.R. 73: Ms. FOXX, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. CONAWAY.
H.R. 89: Ms. GIFFORDS.
H.R. 100: Mr. FILNER.
H.R. 192: Mr. PICKERING.
H.R. 217: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. DELAURO, and Ms. LEE.
H.R. 232: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 241: Mr. TIBERI.
H.R. 249: Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. DELAHUNT, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, and Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 293: Mr. KUHL of New York.
H.R. 303: Ms. GIFFORDS and Mr. SHULER.
H.R. 343: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 358: Mr. GONZALEZ and Mr. HARE.
H.R. 359: Mr. PAYNE, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. KILPATRICK, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
H.R. 395: Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky.
H.R. 410: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas and Mr. JEFFERSON.
H.R. 458: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Ms. CARSON, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
H.R. 460: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 471: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. CAMPbell of California, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. PENCE, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 473: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 488: Mr. MORAN of Virginia.
H.R. 491: Mr. WEXLER and Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas.
H.R. 493: Mr. LOEBSACK, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, and Ms. BERKLEY.
H.R. 503: Mr. COHEN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. ARCURI, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, and Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida.
H.R. 511: Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia.
H.R. 526: Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 549: Mr. PICKERING, Mr. KIND, and Mr. MARSHALL.
H.R. 556: Mr. COURTNEY.
H.R. 563: Mr. FEENEY and Mr. GORDON.
H.R. 588: Mr. BAIRD, Mr. BOSWELL, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. FILNER, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. ROSS, Mr. TANNER, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. KIND, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. BEAN, Mr. WYNN, and Mr. BERRY.
H.R. 592: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida.
H.R. 600: Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Mr. GONZALEZ.
H.R. 623: Ms. LEE, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. GONZALEZ.
H.R. 624: Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. BERRY, Ms. WATSON, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mrs. CAPPS, and Mr. DOYLE.
H.R. 629: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 634: Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, and Mr. BUYER.
H.R. 636: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS and Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky.
H.R. 654: Mr. CLAY, Mr. RUSH, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. GORDON, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Mr. DOYLE.
H.R. 676: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 678: Mr. MCCAUL of Texas and Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 682: Mr. CLEAVER.
H.R. 684: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 687: Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. GORDON, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. KIND, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 688: Mr. PALLONE, Mr. MURTHA, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. LATOURETTE, and Mr. WHITFIELD.
H.R. 690: Mr. PLATTS.
H.R. 691: Ms. WOOLSEY and Ms. CASTOR.
H.R. 694: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia and Mr. BAKER.
H.R. 697: Mr. KLINE of Minnesota.
H.R. 701: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 710: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. WALDEN of Oregon, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, and Mr. MARKEY.
H.R. 711: Mr. ETHERIDGE.
H.R. 718: Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Ms. HERSETH, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. HOLT, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. REHBERG, Mr. ROSS, Ms. SCHWARTZ, and Mr. LATHAM.
H.R. 720: Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. WELLER, and Ms. WOOLSEY.
H.R. 724: Mr. LEWIS of California.
H.R. 725: Mr. JINDAL.
H.R. 731: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia and Mr. FOSSELLA.
H.R. 759: Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 775: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 776: Mr. DOGGETT.
H.R. 782: Mr. BACHUS, Mr. GOODE, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. HOLDEN, and Mr. GILLMOR.
H.R. 784: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida and Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico.
H.R. 787: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
H.R. 797: Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, and Mr. REYES.
H.R. 808: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. OLVER, and Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota.
H.R. 811: Mr. GERLACH.
H.R. 821: Ms. HERSETH, Mr. HOLT, and Ms. HIRONO.
H.R. 826: Mrs. MYRICK.
H.R. 840: Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. FATTAH, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms. CASTOR, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. SIRES, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. SCHWARTZ, and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 854: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 861: Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. CARTER, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. RENZI, Mr. MATHESON, Mrs. MYRICK, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. WICKER, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CANNON, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. ISSA, Mr. SALI, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. GORDON, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. MURTHA, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. WAMP, and Mr. PLATTS.
H.R. 866: Mr. BUYER.
H.R. 876: Mr. GERLACH.
H.R. 891: Mr. CONAWAY.
H.R. 897: Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.
H.R. 901: Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 923: Mr. OLVER and Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 943: Mr. HODES, Mr. DONNELLY, and Mr. GILCHREST.
H.R. 972: Mr. HARE.
H.R. 976: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. HULSHOF, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. WELLER, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. PORTER, Mr. LINDER, Mr. REYNOLDS, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. WELCH of Vermont.
H.R. 980: Mr. HOLT and Mr. SAXTON.
H.R. 984: Mr. CUMMINGS, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Ms. NORTON, Mr. KUCINICH, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. COOPER, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. CLAY, Mr. KANJORSKI, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. SHAYS.
H.R. 985: Mr. CUMMINGS, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Ms. NORTON, Mr. KUCINICH, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Ms. WATSON, Mr. COOPER, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. CLAY, Mr. KANJORSKI, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. SHAYS.
H.R. 997: Mr. BUYER, Mr. BARTON of Texas, and Mr. TIAHRT.
H.R. 999: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.
H.R. 1003: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.J. Res. 1: Mr. BOREN, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. BUYER, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. KLINE of Minnesota, Mr. LINDER, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. RENZI, and Mr. TIBERI.
H.J. Res. 14: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H. Con. Res. 9: Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. CLYBURN.
H. Con. Res. 23: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina and Mr. ELLISON.
H. Con. Res. 24: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. GONZALEZ.
H. Con. Res. 26: Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mrs. LOWEY.
H. Con. Res. 48: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas and Mr. KUHL of New York.
H. Con. Res. 49: Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. SHULER, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. SIRES, Mr. GONZALEZ, and Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California.
H. Res. 37: Mr. SHERMAN, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. GONZALEZ, and Mr. SCHIFF.
H. Res. 41: Mr. TIERNEY.
H. Res. 64: Mr. BERMAN, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. CHABOT.
H. Res. 67: Mr. JEFFERSON.
H. Res. 89: Mr. EHLERS, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. UPTON, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, and Mr. ROGERS of Michigan.
H. Res. 98: Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. SIRES, and Mr. BERMAN.
H. Res. 100: Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. CLAY, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. OLVER, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. DOGGETT.
H. Res. 107: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H. Res. 113: Mr. STARK.
H. Res. 119: Mr. EMANUEL and Mr. GONZALEZ.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BILL NELSON, a Senator from the State of Florida.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God of mystery and clarity, open our eyes to see the unexpected ways You come to us. Reveal to us Your presence in the beauties of nature, in the promises of sacred Scriptures, and in the challenges that deepen our dependence on You.

Manifest Your purposes to our Senators. Make clear Your plans to them and infuse them with confidence in Your power. Inspire them to use their talents as instruments of liberation and healing. Keep them purposeful and expectant so they will experience a deeper friendship with You in the living of their days. We pray in Your abiding Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BILL NELSON 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 13, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BILL NELSON, a Senator from the State of Florida, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. NELSON thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senate will be in morning business until 12:30, at which time we will recess for our conference work. All time during this period is equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

Members of the Committee on Appropriations will be speaking this morning with respect to the continuing funding resolution. It is my understanding that the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, Senator BYRD, will be here to speak shortly. The Senate will be in recess from 12:30 to 2:15 today, and when we reconvene at 2:15, we have 15 minutes remaining for debate prior to the 2:30 cloture vote on the continuing funding resolution, H.J. Res. 20. As a reminder, Senators have until 12 noon to file second-degree amendments to the resolution.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

A PRODUCTIVE WEEK

Mr. MCCONNELL. I do not have an opening statement. I indicate to the majority leader that we had a good discussion yesterday about the agenda ahead, not only for the balance of the week but upon our return, and look forward to having a very productive week, including the confirmation of some judges tomorrow or the next day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein and with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask unanimous consent that the time be equally charged to each side.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I want to spend a few minutes talking about the importance of what we are doing with this bill and why amendments ought to be allowed in order. I have a very specific amendment I have filed that has to do with health care in this country. Basically, it has to do with the health care of the most vulnerable in this country, babies.

In the early 1980s, an epidemic of an unknown virus started in this country.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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We now know it as HIV/AIDS, and a lot of progress has been made in that fight. During the Reagan Presidency, his AIDS Commission recommended routine testing. That was in 1986. In 2005, the CDC finally recognized the wisdom of that AIDS Commission recommendation, and it is now CDC policy that routine testing from the ages of 17 to 64 be carried out on everybody in this country who encounters health care.

The Ryan White bill, which was recently passed in the 109th Congress, took note of those recommendations. And within the HIV community, there has been debate about the CDC guidelines. But some of that was put to rest on the basis of what we know has been an exemplary program in two States that have all but eliminated HIV transmission to babies.

The policies in many States in this country require extensive counseling before anybody can be tested. What was found by the CDC, and many other organizations, is that a small number of people who are pregnant will actually get tested. New York, led by a courageous Democratic legislator by the name of Nettie Mayersohn, passed a law in 1996. In that year they had 500 babies born with HIV. In the last 2 years, since that law has been passed, they have had less than 7.

Now, what happened? What did they do? What they did was they used commonsense public health, and they said: we test women who are pregnant for lots of diseases antenatally so we can know how to handle them and take care of their infant should they have one of those problems. They applied that same common sense to HIV, and hundreds of babies are born every year in New York who do not get HIV because commonsense public health policies were applied.

It is very simple. If we know your HIV status, and you are positive, 99 percent of the time we can keep your child from getting HIV. There is not hardly any other disease we have in obstetrics—and I am an obstetrician—that is that effective.

What we have done in the bill before us is take away all the money for that, take all the money away the CDC says now is the guideline, their recommendation, the recommendation of the American Medical Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Why are we doing that? There is a claim it was an earmark. I will not spend the time to bore everybody with the definition of an ''earmark.'' This came as part of the Enzi-Kennedy Ryan White bill because it is good public health policy and it applies as an incentive to every State out there to start doing something that will make a difference in someone's life.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that HIV be a routine testing procedure. Washington, DC, has a wonderful Director of their AIDS Commission, Marsha Martin. Last June they started routine testing in this city. This city has 3.5 percent, it would seem, of its population infected with HIV—about three and half to four times the rest of the Nation. They have identified almost 1,600 HIV patients.

Now, why is that important? The reason that is important is because 70 percent of the infections that are now occurring in HIV are occurring in people who do not know they are infected. And if they do not know they are infected, they will transmit the disease without knowing they are transmitting it.

Before the Nettie Mayersohn law in New York State, only 62 percent of the women who were pregnant knew their HIV status. After that, we are at almost 96 percent. The difference is 500 babies a year born with HIV versus 7—a very significant difference.

What does that mean in terms of the children? It means a life not having a disease, not being stuck, not being given medicine, and having a life expectancy of less than 25 years of age. That is what that means.

So with that leadership in the State of New York, what has been accomplished is 99 percent of the prenatal transmission of HIV has been prevented. It also means those pregnant women who are HIV positive are now being treated at a much earlier stage in their disease, which gives them far greater—probably the same life expectancy as you or I because of the tremendous advances in medicine. What we do know is the later the diagnosis, the shorter their life expectancy and the higher the cost.

Now, let me walk you through, for a minute, what others say about this. CDC also recommends prenatal testing and treatment of newborns. Here is what they have said:

> Considering the potential for preventing transmission, no child in this country should be born whose HIV status or whose mother's status is unknown.

It costs $10 to test, it costs $75 to treat, to prevent 99 percent of them. It makes a major difference in thousands of children's lives every year. It makes a major difference in thousands and thousands of women's lives every year to have this diagnosis.

What happens if we do not do it, if we do not encourage it? And this part of the Ryan White Act was meant to incentivize States to move to the CDC recommendation. It costs $10,000 a year to treat a newborn who is infected with HIV.

One of the problems with this tremendous epidemic that we face is it narrows in on a group of people, a large percentage of whom happen to be African-American women. They account for two-thirds of the infection in women yet are 13 percent of our population. How dare us take this away.

Multiple organizations have supported this policy. The Early Diagnosis Grant Program was established by the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act. It provides $30 million for grants that will be utilized for States that become eligible to do the testing and the treatment for both mothers and their infants.

To be eligible for the funds, they have to offer a voluntary opt-out HIV testing program for pregnant women. They have to commit to universal HIV testing of newborns when the HIV status of their mother is unknown. They have to offer voluntary opt-out HIV testing of clients at sexually transmitted disease clinics. And they have to offer voluntary opt-out HIV testing of clients at substance abuse treatment centers, where we know most of the disease tends to be seen.

This is current CDC policy—the people whom we trust to tell us what to do. Funding for this grant is provided out of existing HIV moneys at CDC, prevention funds that are already there, which they know will have tremendous positive effects.

Now, think about it: 500 infants at $10,000 a year, every year. Multiply it, multiply it, multiply it, and it only takes 4½ years to spend $30 million if we do not do this. These funds are targeted for those most at risk of infection, as well as those most likely to benefit from treatment.

President Bush, in his budget, asked for this money to be directed as well. So this is not something that does not have broad support, both in the health community, with the President, and many of those most active in the HIV community.

The point we should not forget is baby AIDS can be virtually eliminated if expectant mothers with HIV are identified and treated for HIV during their pregnancy. When treatment is provided during pregnancy, labor, and delivery, and to infants after birth, the risk of transmission goes down to less than 1 percent. Without treatment, 25 percent of the infants will become HIV infected.

But how do we treat? We cannot treat unless we know they have it. We cannot know they have it unless they are tested. We cannot test unless we have the incentives to test. So this creates the incentive programs for States to copy what both New York and Connecticut did. Connecticut has not had an HIV-infected baby since 2001.

They have eliminated it in Connecticut. Why should we not do the same thing? Why should we disallow an amendment to restore this funding that goes to the heart of those most vulnerable in our country? It also goes to help those who are most disaffected, those who are on the poorer spectrum, those who have less opportunity because that is where we see more infection.

For the 1 percent who would not be cured, what we know is, we are treating early. We are not waiting until they get the disease in a full-blown state. What we know is, your likelihood of dying, if you are diagnosed when your CD 4 count is below 50, exponentially goes up. So early diagnosis with HIV is of paramount importance.

It also needs to be said that one out of every four people in this country who have HIV don't know it. They have no knowledge that they have it. That one out of four accounts for 70 percent of the new infections in this country. So the CDC policy of frequent testing, opt-out testing, more testing is a policy that makes absolute sense from a public health perspective.

Because only a few States have similar laws to Connecticut and New York, hundreds of babies will still become infected this year. To take this money out, to say none of the money can be spent for this program, condemns hundreds of newborn babies to a life of HIV infection and AIDS. That is what this bill does. It condemns hundreds of babies in this country to a life with HIV. It is a preventable disease. Why would we do that? Why would we come anywhere close to that?

I mentioned Marsha Martin. Since last year, they started a policy of routine frequent testing, and 16,000 individuals in Washington, DC, have been tested. Five hundred eighty people who would not have otherwise been tested have been diagnosed with HIV at a stage at which we can save their life. Some of those were pregnant women. People say: You don't need to do this. Why is it important for every woman to know whether she is HIV positive or negative if she gives birth to a baby? Because only 25 percent of the time does this virus get transmitted to the baby at birth. But what they don't think about is, if they breast-feed the baby, they will transmit the virus as well. So your baby may not be infected at birth, but if you breast-feed your baby and you are carrying HIV, it is a death sentence for the baby. So to not know your status puts your baby at risk, even though it was not infected at birth.

Here is what happened in Connecticut. They went from 28 percent of the women who knew their HIV status before they passed the law to 90 percent of the women. What does that translate into? That translates into saving lives, not just the women who were HIV positive who found out and had early treatment but their children as well. Why would we not want to incentivize the rest of the States to do what has been successful in New York and Connecticut and several other States?

The health commissioner of New York is pushing to change State law to make testing more convenient for patients and health care providers:

> We are aggressively offering testing to patients who come to us for routine physicals, heart disease, a sprained ankle. We are lessening the stigma sometimes associated with HIV and helping connect many more HIV-positive individuals with early treatment.

Here is the other difference I would hope the esteemed Members of the Senate would recognize. By doing early testing, the cost to treat is $10,000 a year. By doing late testing, the cost to treat is $40,000 a year, with much more in terms of complications. Again, to test costs $10, to treat a newborn is $75, versus $10,000 a year at a minimum.

Women, children, and African Americans will be most affected by the termination of this program. Since the beginning of the HIV epidemic, African Americans have accounted for almost 400,000 of the estimated 1 million AIDS diagnoses in our country. According to the 2000 census, African Americans made up 13 percent of our population. However, in 2005, 49 percent of the estimated 40,000 new cases were African American. It is 24 times the rate in African-American women than it is in white women. Why would we not want to intercede with testing to save their lives?

Between 120 and 160,000 women in the United States are infected with HIV. In 2001, the National Congress of Black Women issued a report entitled ''African American Women and the HIV/AIDS Initiative,'' that outlined that group's strategy to combat HIV/AIDS among black women. Among their recommendations: Every State should be required to screen all pregnant women for HIV and test all newborns for the virus and Congress should appropriate funds for such initiatives. Every year that passes results in hundreds of more cases of baby AIDS that could have been prevented.

Who supports doing this perinatal testing and treatment? The American Medical Association, the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force, the AIDS Health Care Foundation, the Children's AIDS Fund, multiple medical groups, and, yes, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the one agency we fund to tell us what we should do. It is their policy. We are denying their policy. We are denying infants the right to live without HIV.

Here is what they said:

> Based on information presented in the MMWR, the available data indicate that both ''opt-out'' prenatal maternal screening and mandatory newborn screening achieve higher maternal screening rates than ''opt-in'' prenatal screening.

The status quo.

> Accordingly, CDC recommends that clinicians routinely screen all women for HIV infection, using an ''opt-out'' approach and that jurisdictions with statutory barriers to such prenatal screening consider revising them. In addition, CDC encourages clinicians to test for HIV any newborn whose mother's HIV status is unknown . . . CDC recommends rapid testing of the infant immediately postpartum so that antiretroviral prophylactics can be offered to HIV-exposed infants.

Ninety-nine percent, we can prevent. We have taken out the capability for other States what New York and Connecticut have done, and we are refusing to allow the replacement of that to save the weakest and most vulnerable in our country.

What are the claims we have heard? Here is the first claim: Even without funding for this particular HIV testing grant program, Federal funds will still be available for HIV testing. What is true is that other Federal funds can provide HIV testing. As written, section 20613(b)(1) of this bill specifies that none of the funds appropriated for 2007 can be used for any early diagnosis grants. This would specifically forbid Federal funding for HIV testing of pregnant women in any area—newborns, patients receiving treatment for substance abuse, and those accessing services at STD clinics. These populations include those most at risk for HIV, as well as those who can most benefit from early treatment and intervention. It is counterintuitive that this would be a part of this bill.

What are the activities that are supported by this $30 million that are going to be prohibited, including HIV AIDS testing, including rapid testing? It only costs $10. It precludes prevention counseling. It excludes treatment of newborns exposed to HIV. It excludes treatment of mothers infected with HIV or AIDS and the costs associated with linking the diagnosis of AIDS to care and treatment for that disease. The $30 million instead will revert to other CDC HIV/AIDS program activities which in recent years have included the following: Beachside conferences, flirting classes, erotic writing seminars, zoo trips, and other dubious initiatives that do not have any lifesaving impact or near lifesaving impact as early diagnosis and treatment.

This $30 million is either going to be spent effectively or it is going to be wasted. President Reagan's AIDS Commission was right. They said it in 1986. The CDC caught up last year in 2005 to the policies that were recommended to this Congress in 1985–1986.

Few, if any, States would benefit from the funding provided by this program. The point of this program is to encourage States to update their policies to reflect CDC's recommendations for HIV testing and baby AIDS treatment. That is the whole purpose. That is part of the whole Ryan White grant. It is to improve our approach to HIV, to eliminate newborn infections, and to eliminate transmission from those who don't know. While few States would immediately qualify for early diagnosis grants, the availability of the funds was intended to get them to move to the point where they would take advantage of that, which means they would be saving hundreds of babies' lives every year and protecting the lives of the mothers who were there to nurture them. It makes no sense that we would prohibit money for this process.

Many States, including Illinois, are already moving in this direction. States such as New York and Connecticut have had the policies in place for over a decade. And the proof is there.

What is the other claim? This bill defunds all earmarks. The Early Diagnosis Grant Program is an earmark and, therefore, has not been singled out but has been removed, along with other special funding projects.

Fact: The Early Diagnosis Grant Program is not an earmark. All States

with routine testing policies are eligible for the funding provided by this grant. Those which are not currently eligible can become eligible by passing the law or implementing State regulations to meet funding eligibility.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, will the distinguished Senator yield for a question?

Mr. COBURN. I am happy to yield to the senior Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. May I inquire as to how much longer the distinguished Senator will be speaking?

Mr. COBURN. About 10 minutes.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Senator. If the Senator will yield further momentarily, I ask the Chair, what is the parliamentary situation?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. We are in morning business. The minority has 41 minutes; the majority has 66 minutes.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair and the distinguished Senator for yielding.

Mr. COBURN. This program doesn't match the definition or criteria of an earmark approved by the Senate in January or used by the Congressional Research Service. On January 16, 2007, the Senate approved an amendment by a vote of 98 to zero, defining the term ''earmark'' as a provision or report language included primarily at the request of a Member, delegate, resident commissioner, or Senator, providing, authorizing or recommending a specific amount of discretionary budget authority, credit authority or spending authority for a contract loan, loan guarantee, loan authority or other expenditure with or to an entity or targeted to a specific State, a specific locality or a specific congressional district, other than through a statutory or administrative formally driven competitive war process.

This doesn't come anywhere close to that definition. It doesn't meet any of criteria that the Senate has defined as earmark. It is not directed to any specific State, any entity, any location, and does not bypass the statutory award process.

CRS defines an earmark as funds set aside with an account for specific organization or location, either in the appropriations act or the joint explanatory statement of the conference committee. CRS notes that such designations generally bypass the usual competitive distribution of awards by a Federal agency. This doesn't meet any of that. It is hogwash to call this an earmark, and everybody knows it. Everybody knows it.

Claim: This program would violate the privacy rights of women by requiring mandatory HIV testing.

This doesn't require mandatory HIV testing. It offers women to have testing and they can say, ''I don't want to be tested,'' rather than for them to have to ask to be tested.

Current laws mandating extensive pre- and post-test counseling make HIV testing the most overregulated diagnostic and thereby discourage health providers from offering patients screening for HIV.

Testing newborns for HIV is too little too late. That is the other point I have heard. The science doesn't support that at all. If the baby has HIV antibiotics, 99 percent of the time we can prevent them from becoming infected. Of those who do, the 1 percent who do become infected, we can treat so much better by knowing it at an early stage. We can extend their life for years at less than $40,000 a year, at $10,000 a year. By not knowing and waiting until their CD4 counts come down precipitously low, we go from $10,000 a year in treatment to $40,000 a year in treatment.

I will finish with a couple of comments.

In the early eighties, I delivered a little girl. Her name was Megan. Two years later, her mother re-presented to me with full-blown AIDS. The mother died 3 weeks later. Megan lived an additional 8 years.

Had we done this and had we known to have done this, Megan would be alive and flourishing. Her mother would be alive with HIV. Megan would have never gotten HIV.

I will never have that little girl's face removed from my memory. We, by this bill and not allowing the reestablishment, are creating thousands of Megans in this country—thousands, thousands. If this body wants that on their shoulders, continue what we are doing today. But if we claim to be here to help the helpless, to put in place policies that, No. 1, the best of the science tells us are the right policies, and No. 2, makes a massive difference in individual lives, then make in order this amendment to restore this money. By not doing so, you walk out of here condemning hundreds of infants, thousands of infants to death, at worst, and a life on medicines for the rest of their life.

You also condemn a large group of African-American women to the lack of knowledge and the lack of effective drugs that can give them a normal life. You can decide. The power is on the majority side. They get to decide this issue. But you dare not come back into this Chamber saying that you care for children, that you care for minorities, and at the same time have gutted one of the programs that will give hope to those same groups of people. You can't have it both ways. You can't single out good medicine, good public health care, and true compassion for those most at risk, and then come back and claim you care.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, for how long am I recognized?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has under morning business up to 65 minutes.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, today marks the 136th day of the fiscal year. The fiscal year is over one-third complete. We will be debating House Joint Resolution 20, a joint funding resolution for the nine remaining appropriations bills that were not completed during the 109th Congress. The Republican leadership during the 109th Congress left us with a great deal of unfinished appropriations business. Only 2 of the 11 appropriations bills were enacted into law; 13 of the 15 Federal Departments are struggling to cope with a very restrictive continuing resolution which expires at midnight this coming Thursday.

As I noted last week, this was not the fault of the Appropriations Committee. Under the able leadership of Chairman THAD COCHRAN, all of the fiscal year 2007 appropriations bills were reported from the committee by July 20. All—a-l-l—all of the bills were bipartisan bills approved by unanimous votes. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership of the 109th Congress chose not to bring domestic appropriations bills to the floor before the election and then chose not to finish those bills after the election. Instead, Congress passed a series of restrictive continuing resolutions.

If Congress were to simply extend the existing continuing resolutions, we would leave huge problems for veterans and military medical care, for education programs, law enforcement programs, funding for global AIDS, funding for energy independence, and funding for agencies that provide key services to the elderly, such as the Social Security Administration and the 1–800–Medicare call center.

In December, the new House of Representatives appropriations chairman, DAVID OBEY, and I plotted a bipartisan and bicameral course for dealing with this problem. Based on that plan, there were intense negotiations—intense negotiations—in January which included the majority and the minority in the House and the Senate.

I, as chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, consulted with several Senators, and especially with Senator THAD COCHRAN, several times during that process, and his ranking members and their staffs were included throughout the process.

The resolution that is now before the Senate is the product of these efforts. The resolution, which totals $463.5 billion, meets several goals. Let me repeat the figure: $463.5 billion. That would be $463.50 for every minute that has passed since our Lord, Jesus Christ, was born.

Get this. These are the goals: First, funding stays within the $873.8 billion statutory cap on spending, the cap which was set during the 109th Congress and which equals the President's request.

Second, the legislation does not—does not—include earmarks. We eliminated over 9,300 earmarks. Hopefully, the ethics reform bill will establish greater transparency and accountability in the earmarking process. Once the ethics reform bill is in place, we will establish a more open, disciplined,

and accountable process for congressional directives in the fiscal year 2008 bill.

Third, there is no—there is no—emergency spending in this resolution.

Finally—finally—essential national priorities receive a boost in the legislation. To help pay for these priorities, we cut over $11 billion from 125 different accounts and we froze spending at the 2006 level for 450 accounts. These national priorities have broad bipartisan support, as noted in the White House Statement of Administration Policy. Many of these increases reflect administration priorities.

For veterans care, we include $32.3 billion, an increase of $3.6 billion over the fiscal year 2006 level. For defense health initiatives, we include $21.2 billion, an increase of $1.4 billion over fiscal year 2006. To provide care for military members and their families, including treating servicemembers wounded in action in Iraq and Afghanistan, for the Labor, HHS, and Education bill, funding is increased by $2.3 billion.

Title I grants for our schools are funded at $12.8 billion, an increase of $125 million over fiscal year 2006, which will provide approximately 38,000 additional low-income children with intensive reading and math instruction. The legislation also funds the title I school improvement fund at $125 million to target assistance to the 6,700 schools that failed to meet No Child Left Behind requirements in the 2005–2006 school year. For the first time in 4 years, we will have an increase in the maximum Pell higher education grant from $260 to $431.

The National Institutes of Health are funded at $28.9 billion, an increase of $620 million over fiscal year 2006.

Three hundred million dollars is included for the Federal Mine Safety and Health Administration. Let me say that again. Three hundred million dollars is included for the Federal Mine Safety and Health Administration, an increase of $23 million over fiscal year 2006, to allow the agency to continue its national efforts to hire and train new mine safety inspectors for safety in the Nation's 2,000 coal mines.

The legislation increases funding for Federal, State, and local law enforcement by $1.6 billion. According to the FBI, last year violent crime rose—went up—in America for the first time in 15 years.

Under the continuing resolution now in law, highway funding is frozen—frozen—at the 2006 level. Under this joint funding resolution, the Federal-Aid Highway Program is fully funded at the level guaranteed in the highway law.

The joint resolution includes $4.8 billion for global AIDS and malaria programs, an increase of $1.4 billion over fiscal year 2006.

Last week there was debate concerning the level of funding for the 2005 base closure and realignment program. The resolution that is before the Senate provides $2.5 billion for the base closure and realignment 2005 program. This level is $1 billion—I say again—this level is $1 billion higher than the level available in the current continuing resolution the President signed on December 9. However, this level is $3.1 billion below the level requested by the President. I assure all Senators that the Appropriations Committee, of which I have the honor of being chairman, intends to address the $3.1 billion increase when the Senate takes up the $100 billion supplemental the President sent to the Congress last week. Last week. I have every expectation that the supplemental will be before the Senate next month. This being February, I have every expectation that the supplemental will be before the Senate next month.

Now, let me take a moment to review how we came to be where we are on funding the base closure account. Last year, under the very able and competent leadership of Chairman THAD COCHRAN, Senator HUTCHISON, and Senator FEINSTEIN, the Senate Appropriations Committee reported out the Military Construction bill on July 20, which was over 6 months ago, and the bill included $5.2 billion for the base closure account. Unfortunately—I say unfortunately—that bill was never sent to the President. The President triggered the problem when he vowed to veto the fiscal year 2007 Defense bill unless the Senate added $5 billion—$5 billion; that is $5 for every minute since Jesus Christ was born—$5 billion to the Senate version of the Defense bill. This is the same $5 billion the Senate Appropriations Committee had put toward addressing needs, such as funding the base closure account and funding veterans medical care.

The Republican leadership of the 109th Congress followed the President's lead, appropriated the $5 billion to the Defense bill, and did not send to the President the Military Construction-Veterans bill or eight of the other appropriations bills. Funding for BRAC was among the many victims of that decision. Thus, and therefore, it was left to the 110th Congress to solve the budgetary mess left by that decision.

While the extra $1 billion added to BRAC in this resolution does not bring the program up to the level of the President's budget request, it is sufficient—it is sufficient—to address one of the Defense Department's most urgent BRAC priorities; namely, the construction of facilities needed to bring U.S. troops back from Europe. The remaining $3.1 billion for the base closure effort can and will be addressed through the supplemental next month.

This is not a perfect resolution, but it is a thoughtful resolution. By complying with the statutory cap on spending, it is a fiscally disciplined resolution. By eliminating earmarks, it provides Congress with time to pass ethics reform legislation to increase transparency and accountability. By targeting resources toward national priorities, such as veterans and military medical care, we—the pronoun ''we''—solve the most distressing of the problems created by the existing continuing resolution.

Now, looking ahead to the fiscal year 2008 bill, I am committed to working with my friend and colleague, Senator THAD COCHRAN, the ranking member from Mississippi, to bring—hear me—to bring 12 individual bipartisan and fiscally responsible fiscal year 2008 appropriation bills to the floor. When? When? This year.

However, on this, the 136th day of fiscal year 2007, adoption of House Joint Resolution 20 will ensure that we answer some of our Nation's most pressing needs and avoid an unnecessary Government shutdown. It is time to act. I urge swift—not Tom Swift, but swift adoption of the resolution.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum and I ask unanimous consent that the time be charged equally against both sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TESTER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be dispensed with, that the Senate resume consideration of H.J. Res. 20, the continuing resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. In my capacity as a Senator from the State of Pennsylvania, I object.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I came to the Senate yesterday to spend several hours speaking to the Senate to describe the loss of a program critical to rural counties in my State. The Secure Rural School and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 benefits more than Oregon. In fact, there are 38 other States and 700 counties nationwide that are affected. The safety net program it embodies protected 8.5 million schoolchildren, 557,000 teachers, and 18,000 schools from Washington State to California to Mississippi and West Virginia. That safety net was removed through expiration last September.

Last week, I filed an amendment to the continuing resolution that would have extended the Secure Rural School and Community Self-Determination Act by 1 year. This time is needed to keep these 700 counties whole while Congress writes and enacts a longer term program.

Yesterday, I was allowed to speak but not as long as I had hoped to speak. In fairness to other colleagues and at the request of the majority leader, I ended up only taking up a couple of hours. I thought it was necessary yesterday and, still, to describe fairly the severe impacts the expiration of the

Secure Rural School Fund will have upon my State and upon many others. Likewise, the amendment tree has been filled to prevent the Senate from considering amendments such as mine.

The CR is critical to my State and others to have this amendment on it simply because of the operation of time. There is one other vehicle coming up—the emergency supplemental—that could also serve to mitigate the damage which is being done. But that bill is not expected to pass until sometime in April. Between now and then, thousands of public employees will be laid off. Public libraries will be closed, public services curtailed, public safety put in jeopardy.

While this bill will keep the Federal Government afloat, the most basic elements of our extended democracy in places such as Oregon will be in peril. That is not fair. It is not something I will condone or bless with my vote on this bill.

I will continue to come to the Senate and speak to this, even after cloture is invoked, to try to appeal to my colleagues that this continuing resolution, which is the continued work product of the 109th Congress, should include this indispensable provision, this funding, that is so vital to the most basic services which Government is called upon to provide.

Some may wonder why we are at this juncture, why it has taken so long, where there has been no action. As a former Member of the majority, I cannot begin to count the numbers of meetings I attended, pleading the case of my State, asking for consideration and being met with warm words but no commitments. My colleague now, Senator WYDEN, is undertaking nobly to do the same thing as a Member of the current majority. Together, we are both committed to doing everything that is possible, that this business not be left undone because it is so critical to the State of Oregon and others.

It affects Oregon disproportionately because the formula for the Secure Rural School and Community Self-Determination Act was based on historic timber levels. Many Americans do not realize that Oregon is over half owned by the Federal Government. The Federal Government created the western expansion in large measure because of the Railroad Act, incentivizing people to go and settle. California had the gold, but Oregon had the green gold in the form of timber, logs, raw material for building homes and structures throughout America and, frankly, throughout the world.

The relationship that was developed between Oregon and the Federal Government was based upon timber. Because local and State governments are constitutionally prohibited from taxing the Federal Government, the Federal Government realized, as the greatest landowner, it had to provide some opportunity for local communities to have things such as schools, paved roads, police officers, and the like, the things which are normally in the general funds of counties. What it did, when the Federal Government would put up timber for sale, it would do it on a bid basis; 75 percent of the money received from bidding Federal timber would come to Washington, DC; 25 percent would go to the local communities. This was in lieu of property taxes because they had no other recourse to tax the Federal Government. This went on for well over 100 years and it worked wonderfully.

But the ethic in the United States has changed as it relates to the harvesting of trees and the extraction of natural resources. The spotted owl was held up as an emblem that its survival was imperiled by the harvesting of trees. After 15 years of the Endangered Species Act listing of the spotted owl, it has now become clear the threat to the spotted owl was not logging; it was, in fact, the barred owl, which is not native to Oregon but which eats the spotted owl. In addition to that because timber harvest was ended on public lands, we now suffer extraordinary nonhistoriclike wildfires that consume millions of acres, destroying spotted owl habitat.

But in all of this, through the decade of the 1990s, President Clinton generously recognized the forest policies he had implemented were doing great harm to rural communities, to timber-dependent towns, so we established the Secure Rural School and Community Self-Determination Act. In establishing that, it made up the difference, a bandaid, if you will, until we could write Federal timber policy in a way that would allow for these communities to survive in the interim.

President Bush was elected to office. He has tried mightily, through the Healthy Forest Initiative, through supporting and, for the first time, funding the Northwest Forest Act, to try to free up timber so the funds are not necessary. But despite his best efforts, the courts and the laws of Congress have prevented that from occurring.

So with the expiration of this act, we desperately need its continuance, its reenactment, as we continue to work to rebalance the environmental and economic equation.

The irony is we are losing spotted owls through natural predation and through catastrophic wildfire. And all of the 30,000 jobs lost in my State—family wage jobs—those have not been replaced and Americans still need timber.

So where do we get our timber? We get it from Canada. Canada has spotted owls as well. But what Canada does to fill the void America created for American consumers is to overcut its lands without near the environmental protections we have on our own forest lands. As a result of that, the question ought to be asked: Does the spotted owl know the difference between the border of the United States and the Canadian border? I believe the answer is no.

As science and evidence is proving more all the time, the peril to the spotted owl is not humankind, it is its own kind, the barred owl, and then, of course, catastrophic wildfire.

Congress needs to live up to this. This is an obligation that comes when the Federal Government, as the biggest land owner, has said you can't cut trees. But when it says you can't cut trees, that comes with a cost. It is a cost with a price, and it is a price which the Federal Treasury owes as a matter of a moral obligation.

The time to act is now. Yes, we can wait for the emergency supplemental, but if we do, much of the damage will already have begun to take place. It is not necessary that we wait. It is necessary that we act now. That is my appeal. That is my message. That will continue to be the reason why I come to the Senate to inform my colleagues of this problem and of this moral obligation. If we can't have the resources in terms of dollars, then allow Oregonians to restore its timber industry so it can produce jobs, produce timber, produce the tax base so these communities can live. It is basic fairness.

The time to show it is now on the continuing resolution, at this time and today.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SMITH. 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. SMITH. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be equally divided.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I am out here again today to urge the Senate to pass the bipartisan joint funding resolution that is before us. It is H.J. Res. 20. As I mentioned yesterday evening when I was out here on the Senate floor, President Bush's Transportation Secretary, Mary Peters, testified before us last week that we will see ''drastic consequences'' if we fail to pass this funding resolution that is now in front of us. We are going to see painful cuts to aviation safety, highway safety, and highway construction. I also can tell my colleagues we will see painful and unnecessary cuts in housing, law enforcement, and veterans health care.

I want to make sure every Senator understands the importance of the vote

we are going to have and understands the difference between the continuing resolution that our Government is currently running on and the joint funding resolution, H.J. Res. 20, that we are currently debating.

If we fail to pass H.J. Res. 20, the bill before us, and, instead, extend the current continuing resolution for the rest of this year, we are going to see families across this country lose their housing. We are going to see airline safety inspectors who are furloughed. We are going to see air traffic controllers who will be furloughed, highway construction will be cut, and, as a result, some States are going to have to wait until the next construction season to deal with very critical safety and congestion problems.

In short, failing to pass H.J. Res. 20, the issue before us, we are going to hurt our communities severely. That is why it is so important we pass this resolution, which is a bipartisan bill, that has been very carefully crafted to address the most critical funding shortfalls across our entire Government. We have to pass H.J. Res. 20, and we need to do it this week, by this Thursday.

Communities across our country need more help in fighting crime, and that is one reason we have to pass this joint funding resolution. Without this resolution, without this bill, our State and local law enforcement will be cut by $1.2 billion. The joint funding resolution we have before us will prevent that drastic cut, and our resolution adds money for Byrne grants and COPS grants, providing a $176 million increase over last year for those two programs. That money will go straight to our local communities to help them fight crime.

When I go home and sit down with our law enforcement officials in my home State of Washington, they tell me they need more help from all of us in the Federal Government.

A few months ago, I was out in Yakima, WA, listening to our local law enforcement officials talk about their tremendous efforts to fight meth and gangs. They told me that Byrne grants are absolutely critical to their efforts.

There is a huge difference for Byrne grant funding under a continuing resolution—that we would be under if we do not pass this joint funding resolution—and the joint funding resolution. Under the joint funding resolution, the Byrne Grant Assistance Program is funded at $519 million. That is an increase of $108.7 million over fiscal year 2006. Under our bill, the COPS Program is funded at $541.7 million. That is an increase of $67.9 million over fiscal year 2006.

Those programs are exactly the type of support that our local law enforcement officials need. But they will only get that—they will only get that—if we pass the joint funding resolution that is now before the Senate.

Our resolution also supports national efforts to fight crime. Under a continuing resolution, the FBI would have to lay off 4,000 special agents. Let me repeat that for my colleagues. If we go under a continuing resolution and fail to pass the funding resolution that is before us, the FBI will have to lay off 4,000 special agents.

Now, at a time when violent crime is rising, when robberies are up nearly 10 percent nationwide, when the FBI is working very hard to fight crime, do we really want to lay off 4,000 FBI agents? Of course not. That is why the resolution provides the FBI with an additional $216 million over fiscal year 2006. That means the FBI will not have to lay off those special agents if we pass this funding resolution. If we do not pass H.J. Res. 20, those FBI agents will be furloughed, sitting at home, unpaid, rather than out working to fight crime.

Also the Justice Department's Violence Against Women office is funded at $382.5 million in our resolution. That is nearly $1 million over their funding of fiscal year 2006, critical dollars for a very important initiative to fight violence against women.

The joint funding resolution will also help us to cut off funding to terrorists. The Treasury Department today is working very hard to block the flow of money to terrorists. Last year, Treasury hired new intelligence analysts in that effort. Under a CR, those new analysts would be furloughed. Talk about a step backwards in the fight against terror. Our joint funding resolution, however, ensures that those analysts will stay on the job and keep disrupting terror financing.

In short, we have to pass H. J. Res. 20 so we prevent cuts in local law enforcement, so we prevent the layoffs of thousands of FBI agents, and we keep our Federal law enforcement efforts on track. This vote coming up is very critical. Either you vote to support funding law enforcement at an appropriate level or you are voting to cut funding to your local law enforcement community. That is the choice every Senator will have to make.

America's veterans also have a great deal at stake when the Senate votes on this joint funding resolution. I just came from a hearing with VA Secretary Nicholson this morning. It is absolutely clear to me that we are not doing enough yet to meet the needs of those who have served our country so honorably. Veterans today are facing long lines for health care. Veterans who need mental health care are being told they have to wait to see a doctor. The VA is not prepared for the many veterans who are coming home with serious physical challenges. We need a VA budget for the current year that meets their needs. If we pass a continuing resolution, veterans are going to get less funding and, with it, fewer medical services, less funding for medical facilities, and more delays in getting the benefits they have earned. We owe our veterans more than cuts and delays. Under the joint funding resolution, total funding for VA medical care is $32 billion. That is an increase of about $3.5 billion over the fiscal year 2006 appropriated level.

Let me talk about one other VA account in particular. Under the joint funding resolution we have before us, VA medical services are funded at about $25 billion. That is an increase of $2.965 billion over the fiscal year 2006 appropriated level. That money is going to help our veterans with medical care, including inpatient and outpatient care, mental health care, and long-term care. Under our bill, there is an extra $70 million for the VA's general operating expenses, and some of that money is going to help our Veterans Benefits Administration deal with the massive backlog of benefit claims. The VA has told us they wanted to hire a net of 300 more employees so we can cut down this waiting time all of us are hearing about from our veterans when we go home who can't get the benefits they need. Without the joint funding resolution, the VA will not be able to hire those new employees, and veterans are going to continue to tell us they face long delays for the benefits they have earned and deserve.

I also want to talk about the effect that not passing the joint funding resolution would have on critical programs under my own jurisdiction in the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Subcommittee. If we do not pass the joint funding bill, our air traffic controllers are going to be furloughed. Our air safety inspectors will be furloughed. If we fail to pass this bipartisan bill, we are going to see a decline in our ability to provide railroad inspections, pipeline safety inspections, and to make sure we get truck safety inspections across the country. Simply put, if we don't pass this bipartisan bill, the safety of the people we represent is going to be put in danger.

We are also going to feel the consequences in the critical area of housing. If we don't pass this funding resolution, hundreds of thousands of Americans are going to face a housing crisis. In fact, 157,000 low-income people could lose their housing; 70,000 people could lose their housing vouchers; and 11,500 housing units that are housing the homeless could be lost.

Those are only some of the consequences Americans will face if this Congress fails to act in the next 2 days to pass this joint funding resolution. Don't take my word for it. Last Thursday I held a hearing with President Bush's very able Secretary of Transportation Mary Peters. At that hearing, she talked in very clear terms about the consequences of not passing this joint funding resolution. I asked Secretary Peters what it would mean for safety and hiring if we did not pass this joint funding resolution. She said to me:

> [W]e will see a serious decline in the number of safety inspectors: truck safety inspectors, rail safety inspectors, aviation inspectors across the broad range in our program.

That is directly from the Transportation Secretary.

Does any Senator want to be responsible for voting for a serious decline in the number of truck safety inspectors, rail safety inspectors, aviation safety inspectors? How would you ever explain that to your constituents, that you voted to undermine their safety as they travel by car or train or plane?

We also need to pass this joint funding resolution because without it, our States will not be able to address their most pressing highway, bridge, and road problems. In fact, Secretary Peters, President Bush's Transportation Secretary, warned us last week that some States could miss an entire construction season if we do not pass this bill this week. She said:

It is especially important to those States who have a construction season that will be upon us very, very shortly, and if they are not able to know that this funding is coming and be able to let contracts accordingly we could easily miss an entire construction season.

All of us better recognize that our constituents are going to feel the impact of this vote on their roads and bridges and highways if we do not pass the joint funding resolution. The bill before the Senate provides an additional $3.75 billion in formula funding for our Nation's highway and transit systems. That funding will serve to create almost 160,000 new jobs, and it will help us alleviate congestion, an issue many of us face in our States. It is going to be an important infusion of cash for the States to address their needs.

I ask unanimous consent that a table that has been provided to me by the Federal Highway Administration which displays the highway funding increases that will be seen by each of our States be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION—COMPARISON OF ACTUAL FY 2006 OBLIGATION LIMITATION AND ESTIMATED FY 2007 OBLIGATION LIMITATION INCLUDING REVENUE ALIGNED BUDGET AUTHORITY

[Including takedowns for NHTSA Operations and Research]

State	Actual FY 2006 obligation limitation	Estimated FY 2007	Delta
Alabama	$535,056,170	$600,869,788	$65,813,618
Alaska	228,288,252	270,731,918	42,443,666
Arizona	499,506,758	593,277,405	93,770,647
Arkansas	330,837,555	381,949,909	51,112,354
California	2,381,267,388	2,680,526,468	299,259,080
Colorado	338,198,419	400,663,892	62,465,473
Connecticut	376,937,736	402,325,874	25,388,138
Delaware	104,178,113	121,131,724	16,953,611
District of Columbia	112,407,878	123,804,359	11,396,481
Florida	1,289,559,918	1,544,927,499	255,367,581
Georgia	940,654,903	1,067,010,791	126,355,888
Hawaii	120,644,520	127,596,268	6,951,748
Idaho	197,536,278	222,829,360	25,293,082
Illinois	898,006,320	1,010,811,302	112,804,982
Indiana	661,150,145	775,353,318	114,203,173
Iowa	288,499,793	330,589,700	42,089,907
Kansas	292,376,091	309,772,956	17,396,865
Kentucky	460,544,276	520,949,132	60,404,856
Louisiana	404,683,450	474,862,364	70,178,914
Maine	128,192,073	136,355,671	8,163,598
Maryland	418,246,584	490,032,577	71,785,993
Massachusetts	466,003,994	501,926,732	35,922,738
Michigan	828,533,266	909,761,902	81,228,636
Minnesota	425,664,013	485,442,279	59,778,266
Mississippi	310,973,491	367,059,847	56,086,356
Missouri	618,465,606	711,268,494	92,802,888
Montana	255,215,718	287,386,573	32,170,855
Nebraska	197,252,237	223,867,736	26,615,499
Nevada	172,076,917	210,350,302	38,273,385
New Hampshire	130,407,725	137,769,576	7,361,851
New Jersey	695,744,922	822,265,394	126,520,472
New Mexico	250,952,902	290,194,749	39,241,847
New York	1,292,715,319	1,366,155,757	73,440,438
North Carolina	755,312,308	872,183,722	116,871,414
North Dakota	166,994,190	189,098,718	22,104,528
Ohio	951,965,833	1,109,710,100	157,744,267
Oklahoma	413,931,430	459,904,524	45,973,094
Oregon	299,292,210	347,410,836	48,118,626
Pennsylvania	1,287,067,418	1,357,719,130	70,651,712
Rhode Island	134,484,666	154,154,462	19,669,796
South Carolina	424,589,865	511,384,433	86,794,568
South Dakota	174,696,675	202,845,805	28,149,130
Tennessee	572,103,666	672,761,834	100,658,168
Texas	2,183,334,526	2,574,558,747	391,224,221
Utah	190,146,092	220,645,255	30,499,163
Vermont	115,678,528	129,379,891	13,701,363
Virginia	697,407,933	830,852,486	133,444,553
Washington	448,545,807	519,595,013	71,049,206
West Virginia	285,867,458	325,592,845	39,725,387
Wisconsin	520,781,728	586,036,437	65,254,709
Wyoming	174,357,693	207,256,184	32,898,491
Subtotal	26,447,336,756	30,170,912,038	3,723,575,282
Allocated programs	9,103,451,278	8,794,320,215	−309,131,063
Total	35,550,788,034	38,965,232,253	3,414,444,219

Amounts include formula limitation, special limitation for equity bonus and Appalachia Development Highway System. Amounts exclude exempt equity bonus and emergency relief.

Allocated programs amount reflect NHTSA transfer of $121M.

Mrs. MURRAY. It is very important that we each understand the impact of not passing this joint funding resolution with the additional $3.75 billion in funding formula to each and every one of our States.

The failure to pass this resolution is also going to have a painful impact on hundreds of thousands of Americans when it comes to housing. In this bipartisan bill, we worked to make sure our vulnerable families would not be thrown out in the streets or face out-of-reach rent increases. We provided critical support for section 8 homeless assistance grants, housing equity conversion loans, HOPE VI, and public housing operating funds. If we do not pass this joint funding resolution and continue on a CR, that would mean housing vouchers are going to be lost, many of our low-income residents will become homeless, renters will be displaced or face unaffordable rent increases, and many of our seniors are going to lose a valuable source of equity. And importantly, efforts to replace deteriorating public housing units will be eliminated.

Clearly, for all I have walked through, the consequences of not passing the joint funding resolution are going to be severe for some of our country's most vulnerable families. It is clear that our communities across the board are going to pay a very high price unless we pass H.J. Res. 20 before us. I urge my colleagues to vote to allow our low-income families to keep

a roof over their heads. I urge my colleagues to vote to keep our safety inspectors on the job, to keep highway construction projects moving forward, to help our local law enforcement fight crime, and I urge Senate colleagues to vote to give our veterans the care and benefits they have earned.

I urge my colleagues to support H.J. Res. 20; otherwise, you will have to tell your veterans and your police officers, your commuters, your air traffic controllers, your public housing tenants, your housing advocates, and your airline passengers, pilots, and flight attendants why you voted against them.

I urge my colleagues this afternoon to vote for cloture and then allow us to finish H.J. Res. 20 so we can put the funding in place that is sorely needed in every area in our local communities and for the people we represent.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized for up to 5 minutes, and that following my remarks, the remaining time until 12:30 p.m. be provided to the Republican side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, today I have the unenviable task of encouraging my colleagues to support the continuing resolution that lies before the Senate. Loading all of the unfinished bills from last year into a continuing resolution that barely funds programs at adequate levels is not my idea of a job well done by the Senate. The Senate should have worked its will last year and passed these bills separately before the end of the fiscal year. But that is now water under the bridge. Our task today is to finish off this process so that we can move forward with a fresh start in a new year.

The continuing resolution before us is a stripped down, bare bones version of a funding bill. It contains no earmarks—not a one. It provides the minimum funding needed to protect our rural communities, and keep our farming economy going. It provides support for critical research that helps keep our agriculture sector productive and put food on our tables—but we have left it up to the USDA to apportion these funds. Critical efforts to protect rural drinking water and grow rural housing were also maintained. In short, we did the best we could to protect rural America, save small farms, and maintain a safe and reliable food supply.

I understand that some Members may not be happy with some of the difficult choices that we had to make. But the alternative is much worse. Continuing to live under the current funding agreement would have been devastating to rural America, agribusiness, and would have shaken consumers' faith in the food they buy at the local grocery store.

Without this continuing resolution, the Food Safety and Inspection Service would not have enough funds to get through the rest of the year. Without it, FSIS would have to lay off employees beginning in September. Without inspectors, 6,000 meat and poultry facilities would be shut down across the country. Do any of my colleagues want to explain to their constituents why they can't buy meat during the month of September? Without this CR, 700,000 people connected to the food industry will be laid off once the USDA can no longer inspect the meat produced in this country.

The proposal before us may not be perfect, but I believe it is a better alternative than endangering our food supply.

The cuts threatened by the current funding agreement will hurt more than just our grocery shopping habits. They will also be felt in doctor's offices and hospitals around the country. Continuation of the current CR will force the Food and Drug Administration to lay off 652 personnel. Some of these employees have the job of approving new medical devices. Does the Senate really want to force patients to wait up to 20 percent longer for the medical care that will help them recover? Does the Senate really want to stand in the way of these kinds of life and death decisions?

Sometimes in this body we can get caught up in the dollars and cents of the decisions we make, and lose track of the impact our votes have on real peoples lives. I understand that there are many of my colleagues that are concerned about the budget deficit. I am as well. I came to the Senate when there were record deficits, and we took difficult votes to get this country back into financial shape and create budget surpluses. I know what it takes to balance a budget. But not funding food inspections and delaying life saving medical care is not the way we should balance the budget. We have a responsibility to protect the health and welfare of the people back home. The current CR fails to fulfill that mission, but the bill we are going to pass succeeds.

Mr. President I yield the remainder of the time to my colleague from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, inquiry: Can you advise me how much time remains in morning business on both sides?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republicans now control 16 minutes.

Mr. CORNYN. I thank the Chair. I thank the Senator from Wisconsin for his courtesy.

Mr. President, I would like to speak for no more than the next 10 minutes. If the Chair will advise me after the expiration of that time, then I will yield to the senior Senator from Texas.

The House passed a continuing resolution that is before the Senate. In fact, it is a $464 billion omnibus spending bill that makes major policy changes and shifts billions of dollars away from important national priorities.

The omnibus, I believe, is a flawed proposal and should be fixed before it becomes law, which means that amendments should be offered and voted on by the Senate.

Unfortunately, the majority leader has decided not to allow the usual process for amendments to be offered and voted on to occur and, in fact, has blocked those amendments, and it is unlikely we will have an opportunity to improve this Omnibus appropriations bill before it is voted on.

We have several amendments we are prepared to offer on this omnibus bill, if allowed to do so, which I do believe would measurably improve it. While our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have pledged, as we have, to support our troops, this bill will delay the return of many U.S. troops from overseas. We are prepared to offer a budget-neutral amendment to restore more than $3 billion in funding for the U.S. military. More than 12,000 American troops serving overseas will be unable to come home if the plan on the floor now becomes law without any amendments. The barracks necessary to house these returning troops will not be funded in this spending plan.

To have the majority not allow the Senate to vote on the proposed amendment which would restore this funding and support our troops and to prevent our troops from coming home to the facilities they need in order to accommodate them, to me, is simply a bad way to do business and is difficult for me to explain to my colleagues and my constituents back home.

The majority promised not to change policy through a spending bill but now have eliminated a bipartisan baby AIDS prevention program. We have an amendment by Senator COBURN that will ensure that more than $30 million dedicated to this lifesaving baby AIDS program is not blocked by this omnibus.

We were also told by the majority they believe in earmark reform, special projects that are funded through an earmark in the budget process, but they are in this Omnibus appropriations bill allowing what I would call back-door earmarking.

We have an amendment we are prepared to offer that would protect taxpayers' funds by guaranteeing that the omnibus is truly earmark free and by preventing back-room deals to fund wasteful programs after this bill is passed.

Finally, in a general sense, talking about the kinds of amendments that need to be offered and voted on on this bill, the majority promised to be sensitive to those who are in the most need of assistance, but this Omnibus appropriations bill takes money from crime victims, $1.2 billion, and spends it on other Government programs. This is simply, I believe, a bad way to do business and I think is inconsistent with the spirit of bipartisanship with

which this Congress started with the work we have been able to do on lobby and ethics reform, on minimum wage, and small business tax and regulatory relief.

I also have two other amendments I would like to call up to this bill that I wish to mention briefly, but unfortunately, as I already mentioned, the majority leader has seen fit to deny any Senator the opportunity, in this the world's greatest deliberative body, to even offer any additional amendments. Nevertheless, I wish to take a moment to highlight them.

The first amendment would restore funding to the Department of Energy's FutureGen Program and do so without busting the budget. FutureGen, as my colleagues know, is a demonstration project launched by President Bush in 2003 to test new technology in refining coal in generating electricity. If successful, FutureGen technologies could help lower energy costs, increase domestic energy resources, and eliminate harmful air pollutants.

On the Senate floor, we talk a lot about ending our reliance on foreign sources of energy, as well as our need to produce energy in the cheapest way possible.

The Omnibus appropriations bill that is on the floor, to which we are being denied an opportunity to offer amendments, pulls the carpet from under the FutureGen Program which seeks to address both of those needs.

Solutions to our energy future must be made by utilizing a variety of technologies, both traditional and new, innovative technology. We cannot turn our back on our most abundant domestic resource, coal, but we can make sure that the kind of innovation and research that this FutureGen project is designed to do can make sure we can use that domestic energy resource in a way that is entirely consistent with our universal desire to have a clean environment.

One other amendment I would offer would restore the cuts that the omnibus bill makes from the U.S. Marshals Service. This amendment also does not bust the budget. The Omnibus appropriations bill shortchanges the men and women in the U.S. Marshals Service who are on the frontlines protecting the safety of our Federal judges and our court personnel.

Every day the Marshals Service protects more than 2,000 sitting Federal judges, as well as other court officials, at more than 400 courthouses and facilities across the Nation. The protection of our Federal judges by the U.S. Marshals Service is one of the most important and perhaps least-recognized assignments in law enforcement. But a disturbing trend is afoot. Increasingly, judges, witnesses, courthouse personnel, and law enforcement personnel who support them are the subject of violence simply for carrying out their duties.

We can all agree that the safety of our men and women who serve in these important law enforcement capacities deserve the proper funding necessary for them to do their job.

Mr. President, I regret, more with a sense of disappointment than anger, the fact that the majority leader has denied us an opportunity to offer amendments on any of these priorities, matters which I think we can all agree deserve our consideration and close scrutiny. But given the fact that, rather than the bipartisan cooperation we were promised at the outset of this Congress, we are seeing basically a my-way-or-the-highway approach to this Omnibus appropriations bill, not only are our troops not going to get the $3.1 billion that is necessary to provide housing and assets for them to return home, but we know clean coal-burning technology and research is going to be denied and put off, pushed down the road with harm to our Nation and, finally, we know the U.S. Marshals Service, responsible for protecting our Federal judiciary, is going to be denied the resources they need to do their job.

This is simply not the right way to do business, certainly not in the bipartisan spirit which we were promised at the outset of this Congress. I hope that the majority leader will reconsider and allow us to offer amendments and have an up-or-down vote on each of these amendments.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, how much time remains in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A little less than 7½ minutes. The Senator from Texas.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be notified at 3½ minutes, and I will then leave the rest of our time for the distinguished Senator from South Carolina.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I am very troubled by this process. We are taking up a $463 billion appropriations bill. There is no amendment on the House side and no amendment on the Senate side being allowed. We are going to cloture with no capability of amendments. Yet the deadline for this bill is February 15. We have several days in which we could offer amendments, debate amendments, and go back to the House, if we set our minds to doing it. And if there was a true bipartisan spirit, we would be able to do that.

It has been said we didn't pass these appropriations bills last year, and that is correct. We didn't for a variety of reasons, some of which was obstruction from the other side and some of which was obstruction on this side. I understand that. But now we are where we are. We have been here before.

When the Republicans took control in 2003, after the Democrats had the majority, we didn't put a continuing resolution forward for the 11 appropriations bills that had not been passed. We put forward an Omnibus appropriations bill, a bill that was amendable. There were, in fact, 100 amendments offered. There were 6 days of debate, and the bill was passed with mostly Democratic amendments.

I do think, in a sense of fairness, that is what was expected when the majority switched, that we would have an Omnibus appropriations bill with some reasonable number of amendments. Our leadership certainly offered a limited number with a limited time for debate. We wouldn't have had to have a cloture vote if we had been able to have that open dialog, but we didn't. Now we have a $463 billion bill, in which $3 billion has been taken out of what this Congress passed last year for military construction to prepare for the base closing law we passed and to implement that on the deadline we made, which was 6 years. There was a request for $5.6 billion that was necessary for us to bring 12,000 troops home this year and to go forward with the rest of the appropriations for the troops coming home from overseas, and $3 billion was taken out of the bill that has passed and put into other priorities with no hearings and no amendments allowed on the floor.

I don't see that is in any way able to be described as fair, bipartisan. It is not the way we ought to do business in the Senate.

So here we are taking $3 billion from our military accounts and putting them into accounts throughout the Federal Government. I cannot think of anything more important than making sure our troops, when they come home from overseas, have living conditions and training facilities that we are trying to provide for them. The reason we are moving them home from overseas is to give them better training facilities. That is what the bulk of the $3 billion is going to do, and that is why we need to stop cloture on this bill, offer one or two amendments and send the bill to the House. We have plenty of time to work out something so simple.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is at the 3½-minute mark.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues: Do not vote for cloture on this bill yet. We will have plenty of time to fund the other priorities in the bill, but we can also add amendments. This is the Senate. There are 100 Members, and we should have a say in a $463 billion omnibus appropriation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about my amendment No. 253 that I would like to offer to the fiscal year 2007 omnibus spending bill.

My amendment seeks to strengthen the provisions in section 112 dealing with earmarks. According to the sponsors, the goal of this section is to turn off the hidden earmarks for this year's spending, but, unfortunately, it does not achieve that goal.

First, the language in H.J. Res. 20 say—on page 9—that hidden earmarks shall have no ''legal effect,'' but it does not clearly state that hidden earmarks shall have no guiding effect. These earmarks already have no legal effect. The point of this section was not to restate current law, but rather to make it clear that hidden earmarks have no effect, legal or otherwise.

As my colleagues know, over 95 percent of all earmarks are not even written into our appropriations bills. If we don't fix the language in this resolution we are debating today, all of these earmarks could continue. It is not certain that they will but they could and that is something we should fix to protect American taxpayers.

Our Federal agencies need to understand that hidden earmarks mean nothing and should be completely ignored in their decisionmaking. Our Federal agencies need to spend American tax dollars in ways that meet their core missions and serve true national priorities. Federal agencies should not feel pressure to fund special interest earmarks written by the powerful lawmakers who may cut their funding in retaliation.

Second, the language in H.J. Res. 20 applies to hidden earmarks in the fiscal year 2006 committee reports, but it does not turn off the hidden earmarks buried in committee reports prior to 2006 or those after it. In addition, the language does not turn off earmarks that may be requested through direct communications between lawmakers and our Federal agencies, either by phone or in private emails.

I understand that the Democratic leader is not going to allow any amendments. The Democratic leader scheduled this debate right before the Government's current funding expires so we will all be forced to accept it. This practice has been going on for years, and I am afraid it has become very destructive.

We are going to vote on whether to cut off debate on this measure today at 2:30 p.m. and I will be forced to oppose that motion. Since the Democratic leader has blocked me and other Senators from getting votes on our amendments, I cannot in good conscience vote to cut off debate. My amendment makes small changes to this resolution that would greatly improve its integrity, and there is still time to send this measure back to the House for its approval.

I also want to make it clear that while we have a responsibility in this body to address hidden earmarks in this resolution, the President also has a responsibility to do his part. In a letter that I sent last week, I called on him to instruct his agencies to ignore all earmark requests that do not have the force of law, and I believe he will. He said in the State of the Union Address this year that:

> Over 90 percent of earmarks never make it to the floor of the House and Senate—they are dropped into committee reports that are not even part of the bill that arrives on my desk. You didn't vote them into law. I didn't sign them into law. Yet, they're treated as if they have the force of law. The time has come to end this practice.

It appears as though our Federal agencies are beginning to follow through on the President's directive. Last week, a memo was circulated at the Department of Energy that said:

> Because the funding provided by H.J. Res. 20 will not be subject to non-statutory earmarks and the President's policy on earmarks is clear, we must ensure that the Department only funds programs or activities that are meritorious; the Department itself is responsible for making those determinations.

This is a great sign of progress and I hope other agencies will circulate their own memos to this effect. Our agencies have been under the thumb of powerful appropriators for so long, it may be difficult for them to transition to a world without earmarks. But that is what they must do because that is what the American people expect. Americans want their Federal tax dollars to be spent in competitive ways that meet the highest standards. If a project is going to get Federal funding, they expect—just like with a Federal contract—that the money go to the project with the most merit regardless of whose State or district it is in.

We are making great progress on reforming our budget process and reducing earmarks, and I urge my colleagues to help us continue this progress and win back the trust of the American people.

Mr. President, I wish to make a few additional comments about my amendment No. 253 to the fiscal year 2007 omnibus spending bill. This is an amendment that would strengthen a provision in the bill that is under section 112. This gets back to the earmark discussion. The Senate can be proud of the debate and the votes we have taken to disclose earmarks and to eliminate the hidden earmarks that have been added in conference for years. Unfortunately, the language in this omnibus bill continues the status quo. It says that earmarks have no legal effect. It does not take the debate we have all agreed on and make it a prohibition that earmarks cannot be added in conference.

We know that 95 percent of earmarks are in report language. They do not have the force of law. Yet, through intimidation and other ways, Congress has been able to get the executive branch to follow through on these earmarks for years. My amendment would simply go back to what we have already agreed on as a Senate and prohibit these wasteful, hidden earmarks that waste billions of taxpayer dollars every year from being included in report language.

I am encouraged that the White House is responding. We have a memo that the Energy Department sent out last year to its managers telling them not to give preferential treatment to nonbinding, nonlegal congressional earmarks; that earmarks should be meritorious, as they said in their memo, before they are considered. This would free up all the Federal agencies to focus their spending and their time on Federal priorities, not just specific special interest earmarks that a Member of Congress happens to attach to a bill.

I understand the majority leader is not going to allow any amendments. That is very regrettable, particularly since it leaves out something on which I think we all agree.

The cloture motion we have been asked to vote on at 2:30 is a motion to cut off debate. That means we can no longer talk about the provisions in ways that could improve this bill. For that reason, I am going to have to vote against cloture and hope the majority leader will reconsider, particularly amendments like this which are easy and which this Chamber has already voted unanimously to support.

Mr. President, with that, I yield back.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will stand in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:30 p.m., recessed until 2:14 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. CARPER).

MAKING FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2007

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.J. Res. 20, which the clerk will report by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

> A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 20) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes.

Pending:

> Reid Amendment No. 237, to change an effective date.
>
> Reid Amendment No. 238 (to Amendment No. 237), of a technical nature.
>
> Motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations, with instructions to report back forthwith, with Reid Amendment No. 239, to change an effective date.
>
> Reid Amendment No. 240 (to the instructions of the motion to recommit), of a technical nature.
>
> Reid Amendment No. 241 (to Amendment No. 240), of a technical nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 2:30 will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Who yields time? The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I can do this, I think in 5 or 6 minutes. I yield myself such time as I may consume. Am I recognized?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, today is the 136th day of fiscal year 2007. It is

past time to complete the remaining nine fiscal year 2007 appropriations bills. Agencies have limped along through October, November, December, January, and half of February based on a very restrictive continuing resolution. Thirteen of the fifteen departments do not know how much money they will have for a fiscal year that is now one-third gone, one-third over.

This is a deplorable way to run a government, any government, specifically the Federal Government—this Government.

Under the existing continuing resolution, our veterans hospitals are confronting the need to deny health care to 500,000 veterans and to force 850,000 veterans to wait longer for their care. H.J. Res. 20 includes an increase of $3.6 billion to solve the problem. On this, the 136th day of fiscal year 2007, it is time to act.

Under the existing continuing resolution, the Social Security Administration is facing longer lines for approving benefits, and furloughs of employees. The 1–800 Medicare call centers, which have received over 35 million calls from the elderly with questions about their coverage, will have to shut down for the final months of the fiscal year. H.J. Res. 20 solves those problems. It is time to act.

Under the existing continuing resolution, the Department of Defense will have to delay elective surgeries, nonemergency care, and increase the cost of some pharmaceuticals for Active-Duty members, their families, and retirees. H.J. Res. 20 includes an increase of $1.4 billion to solve the problem. It is time to act.

Under the existing continuing resolution, funding for highways and transit is frozen at fiscal year 2006 levels, putting 160,000 jobs at risk. H.J. Res. 20 fully funds the highway and transit guarantees. It is time to act.

Under the existing continuing resolution, no funds are provided to the Department of Defense to build the facilities needed to bring our troops back home from Europe. H.J. Res. 20 includes $1 billion to solve that problem. It is time, again I say, to act.

According to the White House Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator, under the existing continuing resolution 110,000 to 175,000 people will likely die of HIV-related causes. H.J. Res. 20 includes a $1.4 billion increase to help HIV victims. It is time to act.

H.J. Res. 20 complies with the $872.8 billion statutory cap on spending. It contains no earmarks and, I should say, eliminates 9,300 prior earmarks.

Hallelujah. It eliminates 9,300 prior earmarks.

H.J. Res. 20 cuts 125 accounts below fiscal year 2006 levels and freezes 450 accounts at the 2006 level. H.J. Res. 20 is tough, it is disciplined, and it addresses critical needs. It is time to act.

I urge Members to vote aye on the cloture motion and on the resolution.

Mr. President, how much time do we have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has about 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the Chair. I yield the floor and 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. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

Under the previous order, the clerk will report the motion to invoke cloture.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close the debate on Calendar No. 18, H.J. Res. 20, Continuing Funding resolution.

Robert C. Byrd, Sherrod Brown, Joe Lieberman, Pat Leahy, Patty Murray, John Kerry, Barbara A. Mikulski, Dick Durbin, Ken Salazar, Jack Reed, Tom Harkin, Dianne Feinstein, H.R. Clinton, Mary Landrieu, Herb Kohl, Carl Levin, Byron L. Dorgan, Ben Nelson.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on H.J. Res. 20, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close? The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) are necessarily absent.

Mr. LOTT. The following Senator was necessarily absent. The Senator from Kansas, Mr. BROWNBACK.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 71, nays 26, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 46 Leg.]

YEAS—71

Akaka	Craig	Lieberman
Baucus	Crapo	Lincoln
Bayh	Dodd	Lott
Bennett	Domenici	Lugar
Bingaman	Dorgan	McCaskill
Bond	Durbin	McConnell
Boxer	Enzi	Menendez
Brown	Feingold	Mikulski
Bunning	Feinstein	Murkowski
Burr	Grassley	Murray
Byrd	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Cantwell	Inouye	Nelson (NE)
Cardin	Isakson	Obama
Carper	Kennedy	Pryor
Casey	Kerry	Reed
Chambliss	Klobuchar	Reid
Clinton	Kohl	Rockefeller
Cochran	Landrieu	Salazar
Coleman	Lautenberg	Sanders
Conrad	Leahy	Schumer
Corker	Levin	Shelby
Specter	Tester	Webb
Stabenow	Thune	Whitehouse
Sununu	Vitter	

NAYS—26

Alexander	Gregg	Sessions
Allard	Hagel	Smith
Coburn	Hatch	Snowe
Collins	Hutchison	Stevens
Cornyn	Inhofe	Thomas
DeMint	Kyl	Voinovich
Dole	Martinez	Warner
Ensign	McCain	Wyden
Graham	Roberts	

NOT VOTING—3

Biden	Brownback	Johnson

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 71, the nays are 26. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Mrs. MURRAY. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. DURBIN. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF REPRESENTATIVE CHARLES W. NORWOOD, JR., OF GEORGIA

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 79, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 79) relative to the death of Representative Charles W. Norwood, Jr., of Georgia.

Resolved, That the Senate has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of the Honorable Charles W. Norwood, Jr., late a Representative from the State of Georgia.

Resolved, That the Secretary communicate these resolutions to the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy thereof tot he family of the deceased.

Resolved, That when the Senate adjourns or recesses today, it stand adjourned or recessed as a further mark of respect to the memory of the deceased Representative.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 79) was agreed to.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator CHAMBLISS and I, from Georgia, be recognized for a few minutes to pay tribute to Representative NORWOOD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, first of all, I thank Leader REID and Leader MCCONNELL for bringing this resolution

forward in a very timely fashion. We learned during the lunch hour today that Representative CHARLIE NORWOOD of Georgia passed away, a victim of cancer.

CHARLIE had been fighting valiantly that disease for over 3 years, having a lung transplant, and, unfortunately—after the transplant's success for a year and CHARLIE doing well—cancer occurred in one lung and then transferred to his liver.

His wife Gloria has been an absolutely wonderful human being, seeing to it that CHARLIE continued to do his work in the House of Representatives, even though suffering greatly from the effects of the cancer that reoccurred.

CHARLIE NORWOOD was elected in 1994 and was a classmate and fellow representative with many of us here—Senator COBURN, Senator GRAHAM, Senator LINCOLN, Senator CHAMBLISS, and myself.

On behalf of all of us who have had the chance to serve with CHARLIE NORWOOD, we today pay tribute to his life, the great accomplishments he made on behalf of his district, and his untiring effort to bring about quality, affordable health care within the reach of every single American.

He will be remembered for many things: his tenacity, his great sense of humor, his commitment to his district, and to his people. But from a political standpoint and a service standpoint, he will be remembered for Norwood-Dingell, the legislation that laid the groundwork for reforms in health care that even go on at this day.

So as a Member of the Senate from Georgia, as a personal friend of CHARLIE NORWOOD and his beautiful wife Gloria, and as one who is so thankful for the contributions he made to my State, to me as an individual, and to this body, I pay tribute to CHARLIE NORWOOD, pass on the sympathy and the condolences of my family to his wife Gloria and his many friends.

And again, I repeat my thanks to Senator MCCONNELL and Senator REID for their timely recognition of the passing of CHARLIE NORWOOD.

It is my pleasure now to, with unanimous consent, recognize Senator CHAMBLISS from Georgia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MCCASKILL). The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Madam President, I thank my friend and colleague from Georgia for those very generous and kind words about our mutual friend.

I rise today to pay tribute to a guy who has been a great inspiration not just for the last 3 years when he has so bravely fought the deadly disease that ultimately got him—cancer—but CHARLIE NORWOOD and I were elected to Congress together in 1994.

CHARLIE was one of those individuals who came to Congress for the right reason; that is, to make this country a better place for our generation as well as for future generations to live.

CHARLIE worked every single day to make sure he could personally do everything he could as a Member of the House of Representatives to make this country better.

CHARLIE grew up a Valdosta Wildcat. Now, to people in this body that may not mean a whole lot, but to anybody who lives in our great State, growing up a Valdosta Wildcat and playing for the Wildcat football team is a very special asset.

Valdosta is a very unique town down in my part of the State, down in the very southern part of our State. The football lore of Valdosta is second to no other community in the country.

CHARLIE loved his Valdosta Wildcats. He and I used to sit on the floor of the House every now and then, particularly during football season, and talk about his days of growing up. My hometown of Moultrie is the biggest football rival of Valdosta.

CHARLIE loved life. He loved things like football. He also loved his family. He was the proud husband of Gloria Norwood, who is one more great lady, and he had two sons and several grandchildren.

CHARLIE used to take his grandchildren to Atlanta every year at Thanksgiving, used to take the girls. He would let those girls have the run of a very nice hotel in Atlanta to do whatever they wanted, including CHARLIE NORWOOD, a mean, gruff, old dentist from Augusta, GA, sitting down in the afternoon and having tea with his granddaughters. He was, indeed, a very special person, a guy who loved his country, loved his State, loved his family, and really cared about what is best for America.

One anecdote about CHARLIE I will never forget. He and I became good friends during the 1994 campaign. We both signed the Contract with America. We ran on the Contract with America. One provision in there was requiring an amendment to the Constitution calling for the Federal budget to be balanced. CHARLIE and I both felt very strongly about that. We were sitting on the floor of the House of Representatives one night together, as we were debating and voting on the amendment to the Constitution calling for a balanced budget, and as the numbers in favor of the bill grew and grew, the roar within the Chamber itself got louder and louder. It took 397 votes to reach the point where the balanced budget amendment would pass, and when it hit 350, the roar got louder. It hit 360. Finally, it hit 397. CHARLIE looked over at me and said: SAX, that is why we came here. He was that kind of person who truly cared about his country and the principles for which he stood.

He was a man who will truly be missed, as my colleague, Senator ISAKSON, said, for his ideas on health care. He truly believed that every person who received health care treatment in this country ought to have the ability to look their physician in the eye and make sure they had the right to choose the physician from whom they were receiving medical services. It is only fitting that CHARLIE's Patient's Bill of Rights was reintroduced in the House in the last several days. I look forward, hopefully, to Congressman DINGELL taking up that bill and debating that bill. It was a controversial bill then. It will be controversial again. But just because CHARLIE NORWOOD felt so strongly about it, I am hopeful we will see some movement on that bill.

As I wind down, I have such fond memories about CHARLIE from a personal standpoint. But most significantly, the great memories I will always have about CHARLIE NORWOOD are about his commitment to America, his commitment to freedom, his commitment to the men and women who wear the uniform of the United States, of which he was one—he was a veteran of Vietnam—and about the great spirit CHARLIE NORWOOD always brought to every issue on the floor of the House of Representatives. He was a great American. He was a great Member of the House of Representatives. He was a great colleague. He was a great friend who will be missed.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

MAKING FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2007—Continued

Mr. ALEXANDER. 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. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 20 minutes on the continuing resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Thank you, Mr. President.

A few days ago, I came to the floor deeply concerned because someone, someone over in the House of Representatives—first, let me ask the Chair, will you please give me a minute's notice when my 20 minutes is up?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. At the conclusion of 19 minutes, the Senator will be given notice.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Thank you very much.

Someone over in the House of Representatives, before they sent that continuing resolution or joint funding resolution over here, had taken the Teacher Incentive Fund, which was to be funded at $100 million a year, and reduced it to $200,000. In other words, they killed the funding. I couldn't imagine someone would do that on purpose, and so I came here to say so. I know it was a confusing time and there were lots of different priorities to be met. Perhaps, in the difficulty of putting together the joint funding resolution, it was just a slip-up. I said I

hoped it wasn't the signal of what the new Democratic majority's education policy would be because I couldn't imagine the new Democratic majority—or the old Democratic minority, for that matter—or any of us on either side being against the Teacher Incentive Fund.

What the Teacher Incentive Fund does is almost the most crucial thing we need to do in helping our schools succeed. It makes grants to States and cities that are doing the best work in trying to find fair ways to reward outstanding teaching and to reward good principals. Every education meeting I go to, and I have been going to them for years, that ends up being the No. 1 thing we need to do. First are parents, second are teachers and principals, and everything else is about 5 percent. In other words, a child who has a head start at home is a child who is going to get an education almost no matter what else happens. But if you add an outstanding teacher and an outstanding principal to whatever happens at home, the school is better and the classroom is better and the child succeeds. This is especially true for low-income children in America, which is exactly what the Teacher Incentive Fund is designed to meet.

Well, I wasn't disappointed because within 5 minutes after I began, the distinguished Senator from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN, the assistant Democratic leader, came on the floor, and I think I am being fair in characterizing his remarks when he said: Whoa, wait a minute. This is a good program. In fact, I just received a call this afternoon, said Senator DURBIN, from the superintendent of the Chicago schools, and he said we need this program. He said we have a lot of low-income, poor kids who aren't making it, whom we are leaving behind, we want to help them, and this helps us do that. He said we have a grant under the Teacher Incentive Fund to do it.

We heard further testimony at a roundtable in our Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee that in the Chicago schools they closed some schools where children were not learning year after year after year. What did they do? They put in a new team—a new principal, a new set of teachers. And what did they do with the teachers? They paid them $10,000 a year more than they were otherwise making to make sure they would go there because they were the teachers known in Chicago to be able to help low- achieving students achieve.

We all know from our experience and research that virtually every child can learn. Some children just need a little extra help getting to the starting line. If you don't get it at home, you especially need it at school. And where you get it at school is from outstanding teachers and principals.

So it wasn't Senator DURBIN, who is the assistant Democratic leader in the Senate, who was trying to kill the Teacher Incentive Fund. So I have been wondering for the last few days, well, then, who was it? Who was it? Well, now I know, Mr. President, because they have announced it.

Today comes a letter to me—''Dear Senator ALEXANDER''—on behalf of the National Education Association, the NEA, with 3.2 million members, saying:

> We urge your opposition to several ill-conceived amendments to the continuing resolution. Specifically, we urge you to vote ''no'' on an amendment to be offered by Senator ALEXANDER, Republican of Tennessee, that would provide $99 million for the teacher incentive fund.

So the NEA, in its brilliance, has written me a letter to ask me to vote against my own amendment.

I am astonished. That doesn't surprise me so much. Any of our offices can make a mistake. But what I want the President to know, and I want our colleagues to know—I want them to know who is against this, and I want the world to know what they are against. What they are against is helping find a fair way to pay good teachers more for teaching well and to train and help good principals lead schools, especially in big cities where we have a lot of low-income children who are falling behind.

This is not some abstract notion. The President had recommended $100 million for the Teacher Incentive Fund as part of the No Child Left Behind legislation. In a bipartisan way it passed several years ago, and we are in the midst of a remarkably bipartisan approach to see what we need to do about NCLB as we reauthorize it for 5 years, and part of it is the Teacher Incentive Fund.

In a very tight budget, President Bush has recommended not just $100 million for the next year, he has recommended $200 million.

I placed into the RECORD a few days ago Secretary of Education Spellings' letter saying this is very important. We have just started this program. We made a number of grants to cities all across America, 16 grants across the country, at least one State—in South Carolina. You have cut us off. You stopped us from making an evaluation and reporting back to the Senate, to the Congress, how this is working. You are disappointing these school districts who have stepped up to do this.

That is what has happened. Just to be very specific, here is the kind of thing that the Teacher Incentive Fund grant does. Memphis, our biggest city, has an unusually large number of our lowest performing schools. It is our poorest big city, one of the poorest big cities in America. It has a real solid school superintendent, she's excellent, and they are working hard to improve.

A lot of the Memphis citizens are putting together a special effort to say: One of the single best things we can do in Memphis is to take every single one of our school principals, put them through a training program for a year, hook up with New Leaders for New Schools to do that, continuing after the year, and then we will put them back in charge of their school. We will give them autonomy to make the changes they need to make, and we will see if these children can succeed because we know if they can succeed, if we help them the correct way—we give them extra hours, as we have in our charter schools, give them extra training, we know they will succeed.

Memphis City Schools and New Leaders for New Schools were awarded a grant for $3.1 million in the year 2006, the first year after the 5-year grant totaling $18 million. Over the 5-year grant, Memphis plans to provide training and incentive grants to 83 principals serving almost one-third of the schools in the Memphis school system. Principals will receive incentive grants of at least $15,000 a year.

What is wrong with that? Why would the largest educational association in America oppose taking a city with low-performing students and saying we are going to kill the program that trains your principals and pay them $15,000 more a year to do a better job? Why would they do that?

The assistant Democratic leader doesn't agree with that. At least he said so on the floor of the Senate. I don't agree with it. I don't think the parents of the children agree with it. The school superintendent doesn't agree with it, nor does the mayor. Who is against this? We are trying to pay more money to the members of the association that is trying to kill the program. That is what we are trying to do.

It is not just Memphis. I think it is important that my colleagues in the Senate—if the snow and the ice has not caused them to flee to the suburbs. I think most of them are in their offices, maybe a few are even listening. I want them to know that the National Education Association wants to kill the program for the Northern New Mexico Network, the Northern New Mexico Network for Rural Education, a nonprofit organization, one of the 19 grantees of the Teacher Incentive Fund. It is partnering with four school districts. They serve a region with high levels of poverty, high concentrations of Native Americans and Hispanic students, extreme rural conditions, small schools. So the NEA wants to kill the program to help make those teachers and those principals better.

Here's another project, New Leaders for New Schools in the DC public schools. This is a coalition with DC public schools and several others, to provide direct compensation to teachers and principals who have demonstrated their ability to move student achievement.

What a terrible thing to reward—teachers who have demonstrated an ability to move student achievement. Let's kill that program right away. We don't want that happening in the District of Columbia, do we?

Let's go to the Chicago public schools. Chicago has taken a lot of steps in their public schools. The

mayor deserves a lot of credit for that. The school system deserves a lot of credit. They know these children can't wait 5 or 10 years to have a good education experience, so, as I mentioned earlier, in some cases they are not moving the school, they are just transforming it. How do you transform a school? There is only one way. You move in a new principal and you move in some really good teachers. There is only one way to transform a school, and that is it.

So the Chicago public schools in collaboration with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching proposes the Recognizing Excellence in Academic Leadership. At the heart of that is multiple evaluations, opportunities for new roles and responsibilities, recruitment, development, retention of quality staff in 40 Chicago high schools that serve 24,000 students. The NEA wants to kill that program. That is the third grantee.

Let's go to Denver. The Denver public schools proposed a twofold districtwide expansion of its professional compensation system for teachers—that means we pay them more—to develop and implement and evaluate a performance-based compensation system for principals.

My goodness, Denver wants to pay its best principals more money so they might stay in the school? And how are they going to do that? They are going to think about it. They are going to work within the system. They are going to ask for outside help. They are not just imposing a one-time bonus, merit pay system. They are trying to lead the country in doing this. The National Education Association says: No, let's kill it.

The National Education Association not only said, no, let's kill it, they issued a threat to Members of the Senate. ''Votes associated with these issues may be included in the NEA legislative report card for the 110th Congress.'' That means if you vote against the Alexander amendment or anybody else's amendment supporting the Teacher Incentive Fund, what we, the National Education Association, will do is write all the teachers in Tennessee or Rhode Island or wherever we may be and say: Your Senator is anti-education.

Why is the Senator anti-education? Because he wants to support a program to find a fair way to reward outstanding principals and teachers who are teaching low-income children and helping them succeed.

California—my goodness. The Mare Island Technology Academy—here is another thing that NEA would like to stomp out. It proposes to extend a current project to award incentives to teachers and principals instrumental in increasing student achievement. We can't have that in California, at least under the NEA.

The Houston independent school district—maybe Senators Cornyn and Hutchison would like to know about this. It is the largest public school district in Texas, the seventh largest in the United States. It proposes an incentive plan for teachers that focuses on teacher effectiveness and growth in learning. We don't want that in any school, do we?

Guilford County, NC—maybe Senator BURR and Senator DOLE would like to be aware of this because their schools proposed a financial recruitment project called Mission Possible and plans to extend the program to an additional seven schools, charter schools in various States.

Another project. Alaska—one school district there serves as the fiscal agent. They are working on the same sort of progress and expanding on a current program with the Re-Inventing Schools Coalition.

South Carolina Department of Education. A modified version of the existing teacher advancement program to implement a performance-based compensation system to address problems with recruitment and retention in 23 high-need schools in six districts. We wouldn't want 23 high-need schools in six South Carolina districts to have a program to pay good teachers more for teaching well, would we? We would like to kill that in the Congress because the National Education Association might put us on their list of not voting for the NEA legislative report card.

Dallas independent school district—they have a similar program. They want to identify and reward principals and teachers based on a combination of direct and value-added measures of student achievement. Can't have that.

The school district of Philadelphia, PA. Let's pay particular attention to this one. The overall purpose of Philadelphia's initiative is to pilot a performance-based staff development and compensation system that is teacher pay and principals, that provides teachers and principals with clear incentives that are directly tied to student achievement, growth and classroom observations conducted according to an objective standards-based rubric at multiple points during the school year. Twenty high-need urban elementary schools that have demonstrated high degrees of faculty buy-in—that means the teachers want it—will participate in the pilot.

Nobody is making them do it. They are volunteering to do it. The teachers want it. Leaders from the school district of Philadelphia's administration and from two unions, representing all Philadelphia teachers and principals, have designed the pilot and will oversee its implementation. So the National Education Association says kill the program in Philadelphia for a lot of high-need kids, even though the program involves the unions who work in those schools. That is a very arrogant attitude, it seems to me.

Ohio, State Department of Education, Eagle County, CO, and Weld County, CO—those are just the schools and school districts and the States where the Department has made 16 grants in the first year of its operation.

As you can see, the common thread running through here is, can we find a fair way to reward outstanding teachers and help in training and reward outstanding principals so they will stay in the classroom, so they will have an even better idea of what they are doing, so we can honor them, treat them in a more professional way? If we were to do that, wouldn't that be better?

Why wouldn't the largest educational association in America welcome this? I know in Chattanooga, TN, when the new Senator from Tennessee, BOB CORKER, was mayor, he was more effective than I was in working with the local teachers association or union, and he did just this—generally with their participation and agreement. And he helped, in a model school system in Chattanooga, TN, find a way to attract teachers to the schools where children were having trouble learning and needed extra help. These were teachers who had shown an ability to help these students achieve more. So they were paid more for that. They were paid more for that.

Let me conclude my remarks. I ask unanimous consent for another 5 minutes, if I may?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I will conclude my remarks with a little bit of history. If you sense, in my voice, a heavy amount of disappointment, it is because this goes back a long ways. In 1983, when I was Governor of Tennessee, I proposed what then was the first statewide program to pay teachers more for teaching well. We called it the Master Teacher Program.

I was astonished, after a term as Governor, to discover that not one State was paying one teacher one penny more for teaching well. I could not understand how we were going to keep outstanding men and women in the classrooms, particularly—this was 25 years ago, almost—now that women had many more employment opportunities. The math teacher was headed for IBM, the science teacher was going over here. One reason was because of the teacher pay scale. You could make more for staying around a long time, you could make more for getting another degree, but you couldn't make a penny more for being good.

I went around to try to find out how do we reward outstanding teaching, and everybody said you can't do that. Not quite everybody. One person who did not say that was Albert Shanker, who was the head of the American Federation of Teachers, which is the second largest teachers union. Mr. Shanker said if we have master plumbers we can have master teachers, and maybe we need to get busy trying to think of a fair way to do that. He invited me to go to Los Angeles and speak to the convention of the American Federation

of Teachers. They were very skeptical—which I understand, because professionals who are already working in their profession have a right to be skeptical of outsiders who would come in and say we are going to grade you. Even though these teachers are in the business of grading themselves.

I spoke to the American Federation of Teachers. I worked with Mr. Shanker. I even raised taxes in Tennessee. Guess who was against doing what we eventually did? The National Education Association. Their President said we are going to send whatever we need into Tennessee to defeat Alexander's silly ideas, and we fought for a year and a half and finally I won, temporarily, and Tennessee established a career ladder program which eventually attracted 10,000 teachers with 10- or 11-month contracts who volunteered to go up the career ladder to a second or third level. They were called master teachers.

We raised the pay for every teacher by $1,000, just if they took the basic teacher competency test. That was voluntary, too, but more than 90 percent did it. And 10,000 teachers did. That was quite a number. This was sort of the model T of the teacher compensation plans.

Since then, a lot has happened across the country. Governor Jim Hunt and others, with the support of the teachers unions, have developed the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards Certified Teacher Program, which is one way of certifying a biology teacher in the same way you would certify an orthopedic doctor. This is helpful if you are on the school board in Providence, you can say: I don't have the means to evaluate if this teacher is better than that teacher, but if you are a board certified teacher we will pay you $10,000 more a year. That has worked pretty well. Some places around the country have found ways to do that, but it is not possible for a school board in the town to take on the whole mixture of difficulties that go with a fair way to reward teachers.

We did it in 1983 and 1984, and we had to create a panel of teachers who were outside the district of the teacher who wanted to be a master teacher to avoid politics. We made sure one of those teachers was of that same subject. If it was an eighth grade U.S. history teacher, then somebody on the panel was an eighth grade U.S. history teacher. Principal evaluations were part of it and a teacher portfolio was part of it.

One thing we did not know how to do then and we are just beginning to understand in our country is how to measure student achievement. Our common sense says a teacher makes a big difference, but how do we measure it? The challenge, as we work on schools that need help, is how do we make sure they have the best teachers and the best school leaders? It is a big challenge, but it is not impossible.

We are learning, after 4 years of No Child Left Behind, that 80 percent of our schools I would call high-achieving schools are meeting all the adequate yearly progress requirements for No Child Left Behind. That means we have about 20 percent of our schools that aren't. In 5 percent of the schools, they are only behind in one category. So it is only 15 percent of the schools where children are chronically not learning and being left behind. The ugly fact was, before No Child Left Behind, we let that happen.

Now we put the spotlight on it, and we have to do something about it. The best way to do something about it is what? Get a terrific school leader and help him or her be a good principal, move in some tremendous teachers or reward those who are there and keep them teaching. And the National Education Association says kill the program that is the most important Federal program to do that? I don't understand that; I don't understand.

I say to my colleagues in the Senate of both parties, I hope this approach will have unanimous opposition in the Senate. I hope we say we want to reward efforts in Memphis, in New Mexico, DC, Chicago, Denver, Dallas, Houston, Philadelphia, Chattanooga, where they tackle the problem. No, we are not talking about a one-time bonus pay for people, or teacher of the year, who the principal might like. We are talking about a more professional system where we can say talented men and women who are teachers, we like to honor you. We want to work with you in your district to form a way to honor you and raise your pay.

There is one reason I regret having to make this speech, I had a wonderful visit the other day. It came from six or seven members of the Tennessee Education Association. Earl Wiman, Guy Stanley, Paula Brown, Nita Jones, and Kristen Allen came to my office. We visited for a while. I am about to write a handwritten note to Earl Wiman to say how much I appreciated the visit. He was a career ladder teacher, making $75,000 extra dollars over his tenure. He said "I want to thank you for that." We acknowledged there were problems with the master teacher program we had in Tennessee as there always are when you start up something new. It was a terrific visit from people I greatly respect.

It reminded me, wherever I go in Tennessee, retired teachers or current teachers come up to me and say, thank you for the master teacher program. It paid for my child's education. It honored my work. It raised my retirement pay. It kept me teaching. You would be surprised how many times this happened, so I know this can be done.

But it cannot be done if the largest educational association in America sends out letters such as this threatening Senators with, in effect, writing every teacher in their district, and saying you are a bad Senator because you voted against the NEA legislative report card.

I would give them an F on a letter for another reason. They said that the Teacher Incentive Fund restricts the use of funds to only two possible uses: merit pay and tenure reform. That is not true, at least not according to the Department of Education. We called over there today. This is what they told me: The Department of Education says the words "tenure" or "merit pay" do not even appear in the application forms. The specific goals of the teacher incentive fund include: one, improving student achievement by increasing teacher and principal effectiveness; two, reforming teacher and principal compensation systems so that teachers and principals are rewarded for increases in student achievement; three, increasing the number of effective teachers teaching minority, poor, and disadvantaged students in hard-to-staff subjects; and finally, creating sustainable, performance-based compensation systems.

Applicants must outline how they will utilize classroom evaluations that are conducted multiple times throughout the school year and provide incentives for educators to take on additional responsibilities and easy leadership roles.

The Department also gives extra points to applications that demonstrate they have support from a significant proportion of teachers, the principal, and community. As I mentioned, in Philadelphia or Denver, that means the teachers' union.

I know in this joint funding resolution it looks as though we are not going to have a chance to amend that. That is why I voted against cloture. I understand that. Both sides of our aisle did not get our work done so we have had to clean it up too quickly this year. The Teacher Incentive Fund took a big hit.

I say earnestly to my colleagues in the Senate, I hope Senators will look at the Teacher Incentive Fund carefully. I hope you will think about what your ideas are for improving schools with low-performing students. I hope you will ask yourself whether what they are doing in Chicago, for example, to move in a new principal and to move in a team of teachers and to train them more and to pay them more might not be one way to do it. If Denver wants to do it this way, and Dallas wants to do it that way, and Philadelphia wants to do it that way, and Mayor CORKER helped Chattanooga do it, why shouldn't we help them?

We don't want the Federal Government to take over the local schools, but clearly one of the appropriate things for the Federal Government to do in support of elementary and secondary education and high school education is to help solve this tough problem of how do we fairly and effectively reward outstanding teaching and outstanding school leadership.

If we don't do this in our current system, we are not going to be able to keep the best men and women in our classrooms, especially in the most difficult classrooms, which is where our

spotlight is going. We know that 80 percent of our schools in America are high-achieving schools, they are making the advanced yearly progress under No Child Left Behind. Five percent more are just missing it, and in the 15 percent, don't we want to ignore this letter from the National Education Association?

I will answer their letter from here. I am not going to vote against the Alexander amendment.

I hope they will write me often. I hope it is not this kind of letter again. I say to my friends from Tennessee who were good enough to travel all the way up here and visit with me, I am going to work a little harder in communicating with them. I know there will be issues upon which we disagree—the Tennessee Education Association and I have proved in the past we can disagree.

What I want to prove to them in the future is there are lots of ways we can agree. I know they are dedicated professionals, they are working hard every day under difficult circumstances—many with children whose parents don't feed them well, don't teach them before they come to school, and don't take care of them in the afternoon. I want to be sensitive to that.

In my remarks today I want to send a clear message to the National Education Association: I am disappointed in their letter, I am disappointed in their attitude. I hope the Senate rejects their attitude. But I want to be as clear to my friends in the Tennessee Education Association that I greatly appreciate their visit.

I look forward to redoubling my efforts to work with them. I look forward to talking with them over time about support. I encourage their ways to honor their professionals, including development of a compensation program that rewards outstanding teaching and schools.

I ask unanimous consent the letter from the National Education Association be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

FEBRUARY 13, 2007.

Hon. LAMAR ALEXANDER,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR ALEXANDER: On behalf of the National Education Association's (NEA) 3.2 million members, we urge your opposition to several ill-conceived amendments to the FY07 Continuing Resolution. Specifically, we urge you to vote NO on:

An amendment to be offered by Senator Alexander (R–TN) that would provide $99 million for the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF); and

Any amendment that would call for across-the-board cuts to already depleted domestic programs.

Votes associated with these issues may be included in the NEA Legislative Report Card for the 110th Congress.

NEA strongly opposes the Teacher Incentive Fund, which diverts scarce resources from existing underfunded professional development programs. For example, Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act allows use of funds for the stated purposes of the Teacher Incentive Fund and also gives states and school districts significant flexibility to utilize funds for activities that best meet their needs. In contrast, the Teacher Incentive Fund restricts use of funds to only two possible uses—merit pay and tenure reform.

The proposed CR would reduce TIF funding, while increasing funding for programs proven effective in maximizing student achievement. We support the CR as proposed and oppose any effort to increase TIF funding.

NEA also opposes any proposal to reduce funding across-the-board, further stretching limited resources among already struggling domestic programs. Although such amendments may be addressing very worthy goals, we believe they are more appropriately considered as part of bills to be debated later, such as Emergency Supplemental legislation. Therefore, we urge your vote against any such amendment.

We thank you for your consideration of our views on these important issues.

Sincerely,

DIANE SHUST,
Director of Government Relations.
RANDALL MOODY,
Manager of Federal Policy and Politics.

Mr. ALEXANDER. 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. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CARDIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, we are in the posture of having to pass an appropriations bill that is to none of our liking because the Congress is not fulfilling its responsibility in the budgeting and the appropriations process. It goes back to the fact that albeit the Senate and the Senate Appropriations Committee were responsible in producing all 13 appropriations bills, the leadership in the last Congress decided they did not want to pass 11 of those 13. To the best of my recollection, it was the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security appropriations bills that were passed, leaving all the others without funding. Each time we have continued emergency stopgap funding. The particular law that is in effect now goes until midnight this Thursday. That is no way to run a railroad. It puts us in the posture of having to take something instead of nothing which would shut down the Government. That is not a logical way to do it.

The entire Federal budgetary process ought to be revamped. In the old days, back in the 1970s, the Budget Act was enacted because it was giving the new tools available for the Congress to discipline itself on spending, to hold down spending. Over 22 years, we have seen the Budget Act become not an economic process but a political process in which budget documents are submitted—for example, the one submitted by the President, completely unrealistic—so that political goals can say they are going to be achieved; in other words, moving the budget toward balance. The President has pointed that out over a 5-year period. When, in fact, the reality is that a lot of the President's assumptions in his budget he has sent to the Congress are not realistic. In fact, they are fiction.

For example, there is a tax that is called the alternative minimum tax. It was designed years ago so that people with higher incomes that had huge deductions couldn't offset all of their income. They would have to pay some tax. It was designed to go to that higher income group so that they would still pay their fair share. If that alternative minimum tax is not allowed to be applied in the future—and I can't tell you the technicalities—it comes down and it swoops in a great deal of the middle class, which it was never intended to do, middle-income people, with the result that much higher taxes would be paid in the very income levels that the alternative minimum tax was never designed to hit.

Naturally, a Congress in the future is not going to let that happen, for that additional tax to go on the middle class. Yet the President's assumptions in the budget he has sent are that that alternative minimum tax is going to go away and, therefore, the increased revenue is going to be coming into the Federal Government from the middle-income taxpayers. Therefore, it makes it look like his budget deficit is getting smaller and smaller and moving toward balance.

The same thing is true with the tax cuts that were enacted back in 2001. Over the next several years, a number of those tax cuts expire. Those tax cuts that affect the middle class are not going to expire because the Congress is not going to let that happen. If it did, as the President has proposed in his budget, the revenues to the Government are going to be greater and, therefore, the annual deficit is going to be less. But that is not realistic. So what we have is a document of political fiction.

This isn't the first time. This has been going on over the last couple of decades. But when it leads us down the path of fiction, sleight of hand, a head fake on what the budgetary condition of the country is, as the country, indeed, ought to make its staggering steps toward balancing the budget, at least down the line in the next 5 to 7 years, when that is all a political fiction, it undermines confidence. It undermines the entire system. In large part, it leads to where we are today.

We are going to pass what is known as a continuing resolution, which is an end-of-the-day budget that is pared down, that doesn't address priorities as it should. And are the American people served best by this kind of process? No.

This Senator thinks it is time for us to have some major overhaul of the Budget Act. There are a lot of other

things in the Budget Act that could be reformed, many of which are technical in nature and very extensive. I will not take the time to go into them today. But when are we going to learn? When are we going to stop using the budget of the United States as a political tool instead of moving us in an economic way toward a sound economic plan to bring our fiscal house in order?

I yield the floor and 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. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in more detail about the ''earmarks'' that some members of this body claim remain in H.J. Res. 20. On February 7, 2007, one of our colleagues issued a press release on his Web site which was critical of H.J. Res. 20, the continuing appropriations resolution. Of note was his claim that the resolution continues a number of earmarks. That claim, both generally and specifically, is not true.

The list of ''earmarks,'' stated as fact in this press release, are all supposedly found in the Ag Chapter of the resolution. I would like to take a minute to address those specific items and explain why this information is wrong.

Our colleague claims that H.J. Res. 20 provides $350,000 for the World Food Prize. Although this item was funded in the fiscal year 06 bill as part of General Provision 790, H.J. Res. 20, in section 21004, provides that the amount available for Section 790 is zero. So, obviously, that earmark has been removed.

Our colleague claims that $1.5 million for construction of the entrance to the U.S. National Arboretum is funded in H.J. Res. 20. First of all, this item was never included in the 2006 bill, which is what H.J. Res. 20 is based on. It was, however, included in the 2007 bill under the agricultural research service buildings and facilities account. H.J. Res. 20, in section 20101, provides that the amount available for that account is zero. The entire account, not just the earmark, is removed.

Our colleague claims that H.J. Res. 20 contains more than $1 million for alternative salmon products, including baby food products. This item was funded under the special research grants program of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service. H.J. Res. 20, in section 20102, provides that the amount available for that program is zero so the earmark is removed.

Our colleague claims that H.J. Res. 20 contains $591,000 for the Montana Sheep Institute. This item was also funded under the special research grants account of the Cooperative Research, Education, and Extension Service, which, as I stated earlier, was eliminated in section 20102 of H.J. Res. 20. Thus the earmark was removed.

Here is a third ''earmark'' claim under this same account, which was eliminated. The Senator claims that H.J. Res. 20 contains $295,000 for wool research, again, under the special research grants account of the Cooperative Research, Education, and Extension Service. I repeat again that H.J. Res. 20, in section 20102, provides that the amount available for that program is zero. Again, and I know I am beginning to sound like a broken record, but the earmarks are removed.

In another account, the Senator claims that $232,000 remains for the National Wild Turkey Federation. This item was funded under the Federal Administration program of the Extension Service. H.J. Res. 20 provides that all funds for the Federal Administration program are reduced to a level that only protects Federal FTE positions definitely not the National Wild Turkey Federation. H.J. Res. 20, in section 20103, provides that all other funding in that program, which would include funds for the National Wild Turkey Federation, is zero. There are no earmarks.

The Senator claims that $100,000 is contained in the Agricultural Marketing Service account to establish a farm-raised catfish grading system. However, this item was never included in the 2006 bill, which, again, is what H.J. Res. 20 is based on. It was included in the 2007 bill, which never even passed the Senate floor. There is not, and never was, any funding for this activity in a bill that passed the House or Senate. There are no earmarks in this account.

Finally, the Senator's press release states that $2,970,000 is continued to maintain a partnership between USDA and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. This was funding provided by the natural resources conservation service conservation operations account to a non-Federal entity. H.J. Res. 20, in section 20104, provides that all funds for the conservation operations account were reduced to a level that only protects federal FTE positions. H.J. Res. 20 provides that all other funding in that program, which would include funds for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, is zero. Once again, there are no earmarks.

As our colleagues should now realize, not only does H.J. Res. 20 not continue these items, H.J. Res. 20 actually removes the money which would make their funding possible, even if the administration wished to do so. For even those who wish to claim that money is still provided in the resolution which would enable the items to end up getting funded, it is obvious that in these claims, specifically listed in a press release, that is simply not possible. While I do appreciate zeal for finding and making public all earmarks, perhaps a closer reading of H.J. Res. 20 would have prevented these misstatements from occurring.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I rise today to speak to a global competitiveness amendment to H.J. Res. 20 and to call attention to the challenges facing U.S. financial markets. The first half of the amendment highlights findings from two recent reports that the U.S. is already losing ground in the key areas of global initial public offerings, IPOs, and over-the-counter, OTC, derivatives. The second half of the amendment expresses the sense of the Senate about what steps should be taken to bolster the competitiveness of this essential sector of the U.S. economy.

IPOs are critical to our economy because when a company goes public, it creates capital—and that means jobs and investment opportunities with great potential payoffs. The risk-taking exemplified by IPOs is in the most important sense the critical fuel of a market economy. OTC derivatives play a critical role in our economy, assisting investors to more precisely match their investments to their risk preferences, and helping companies to manage or hedge their risks. Additionally, these instruments provide liquidity to financial markets and reduce volatility by helping to diversify and distribute risk. At the same time the OTC derivatives industry attracts highly skilled professionals who, by virtue of the demand created by their talents, have the potential to contribute significantly to an area's tax base.

Together, IPOs and OTC derivatives contribute to a robust and dynamic capital market which is a tremendously beneficial force for our economy and an empowerment to our citizens. It is critical to ensuring economic growth, job creation, low costs of capital, innovation, entrepreneurship, and a strong tax base in key areas of the country. The U.S. financial sector acts as a catalyst for all other sectors in the U.S. economy. That is why the decline in global initial public offerings in the United States, and the fact that London already enjoys clear leadership in the fast growing OTC derivatives market, are such worrying trends.

Fortunately, academics, business leaders, and politicians are working together to study this issue. They have identified several specific problems that hinder the competitiveness of the U.S. capital markets and have issued reports outlining possible solutions. Chaired by former White House economic adviser Glenn Hubbard and former Goldman Sachs president John Thornton, the Committee on Capital Markets Regulation was formed in September 2006 and issued its preliminary report in November 2006. Mr. SCHUMER of New York along with New York Mayor Bloomberg released the McKinsey Report on New York Competitiveness in January 2007 outlining regulatory, legal, and accounting changes they say are necessary to maintain the city's status as a leading global financial center.

Both reports add considerably to the understanding of the challenges that American capital markets face and

offer solutions that could help American markets, companies, and workers to better compete.

According to the Committee on Capital Markets Regulation:

> A key measure of competitiveness, one particularly relevant to the growth of new jobs, is where new equity is being raised—that is, in which market initial public offerings (IPOs) are being done. The trend in so-called ''global'' IPOs i.e., IPOs done outside a company's home country, provides evidence of a decline in the U.S. competitive position. As measured by value of IPOs, the U.S. share declined from 50 percent in 2000 to 5 percent in 2005. Measured by number of IPOs, the decline is from 37 percent in 2000 to 10 percent in 2005.

According to the McKinsey Report on New York Competitiveness:

> London already enjoys clear leadership in the fast-growing and innovative over-the-counter (OTC) derivatives market. This is significant because of the trading flow that surrounds derivatives markets and because of the innovation these markets drive, both of which are key competitive factors for financial centers. Dealers and investors increasingly see derivatives and cash markets as interchangeable and are therefore combining trading operations for both products. Indeed, the derivatives markets can be more liquid than the underlying cash markets. Therefore, as London takes the global lead in derivatives, America's competitiveness in both cash and derivatives flow trading is at risk, as is its position as a center for financial innovation.

The challenge we are facing is that the U.S. capital markets are losing their competitive edge in intensifying global competition. A shrinking proportion of international companies are listing shares on U.S. stock exchanges and the fast-growing OTC derivatives market are growing more rapidly elsewhere.

This amendment welcomes these reports and encourages Congress and the administration to begin to vet and consider their recommendations.

(1) Congress, the President, regulators, industry leaders, and other stakeholders should carefully review the Interim Report of the Committee on Capital Markets Regulation, published in November 2006, and the McKinsey Report on New York Competitiveness, published in January 2007, and take the necessary steps to reclaim the preeminent position of the United States in the financial services industry.

(2) The Federal and State financial regulatory agencies should, to the maximum extent possible, coordinate activities on significant policy matters, so as not to impose regulations that may have adverse unintended consequences on innovativeness with respect to financial products, instruments, and services, or that impose regulatory costs that are disproportionate to their benefits, and, at the same time, ensure that the regulatory framework overseeing the U.S. capital markets continues to promote and protect the interests of investors in those markets.

(3) Given the complexity of the financial services marketplace today, Congress should exercise vigorous oversight over Federal regulatory and statutory requirements affecting the financial services industry and consumers, with the goal of eliminating excessive regulation and problematic implementation of existing laws and regulations.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this amendment.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONFIRMATION OF JOHN NEGROPONTE

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, few would argue that these are challenging times for U.S. foreign policy. Faced with threats from a growing radical Islamic ideology, tense situations in North Korea and Iran, an escalating civil war in Iraq, humanitarian crises of biblical proportions in Africa and elsewhere, and countless other challenges, it is clear that we need as perhaps never before the hand of experience guiding our foreign policy.

It is no secret that I have disagreed—deeply disagreed—with many of the foreign policy decisions made by this administration. I said in 2002 that it was a mistake to invade Iraq, and my judgement has never wavered: the President was wrong to start this war, he was wrong to continue this war, and he is wrong to escalate this war.

However, we are in Iraq now. American men and women are caught in the cross-fire of sectarian warfare that has been brewing for centuries. And I believe that the way out is primarily political and diplomatic, not solely through the use of military force. The recommendations of the Iraq Study Group are just the latest reminder that we must engage diplomatically with other nations—not only with our friends and allies, but also with our competitors and even our enemies—to seek new solutions.

That is why the leadership at the State Department is so important, and why I am pleased that last night the Senate voted to confirm the nomination of Ambassador John Negroponte to become Deputy Secretary of State. I had an opportunity to meet with Ambassador Negroponte recently, and I am encouraged by his long track record of service to his country, as a foreign service officer and ambassador in many different regions of the world. In his most recent assignments, he has proven himself capable of performing in the most challenging of roles, as U.S. Ambassador to Iraq and as the Director of National Intelligence. Prior to that, he served as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, where he earned this high praise from another diplomat, former Secretary General Kofi Annan:

> He's an outstanding professional, a great diplomat and a wonderful ambassador.

When I met with Ambassador Negroponte, I conveyed to him my strong belief that we must rely on diplomacy and peaceful negotiation to reach lasting stability in the Middle East. I also emphasized that pursuing some sort of Sunni vs. Shi'a alignment in the Middle East as the balance of power in the region shifts is not in the best interests of the United States or the world. I am encouraged that Ambassador Negroponte seems to agree with me, and I look forward to working with him and other administration officials as we seek a path toward peace.

Ambassador Negroponte has demonstrated the savvy and expertise of a world-class diplomat. Our Nation needs experienced professionals who can rise above the fray of partisan politics guiding our foreign policy, particularly in such turbulent times as these. I look forward to working with Ambassador Negroponte in his new role as Deputy Secretary of State.

CONGRATULATING LAKE FOREST ACADEMY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to congratulate an outstanding school on 150 years of educational excellence.

Lake Forest Academy is an independent high school and boarding school in Lake Forest, IL, 30 miles north of Chicago. It was founded by elders of the Presbyterian Church in Chicago and 150 years ago today—on February 13, 1857—it was chartered by the State of Illinois as a college preparatory school for boys.

Classes began at Lake Forest Academy in 1858 with a total of five students. While its enrollment today is considerably larger, Lake Forest Academy remains committed to its founding principle: to educate the whole child.

Dr. Martin Luther King said, ''Intelligence plus character that is the goal of true education.'' And for 150 years, that has been the goal of Lake Forest Academy. Its educational mission is based on ''four pillars:'' character, scholarship, citizenship and responsibility.

Some things have changed at Lake Forest Academy, however. Among the most notable changes: in 1974, Lake Forest formally merged with The Young Ladies Seminary at Ferry Hall, becoming a college prep school for young men and young women.

Lake Forest takes pride in the diversity of its students and faculty, and the global perspective of its programs.

As the oldest institution in the city of Lake Forest four years older than

the city itself Lake Forest Academy is an integral part of the fabric of its community and the State of Illinois. I ask my colleagues in the Senate to please join me in congratulating this fine school on a century and a half of educational progress and excellence.

TRIBUTE TO DANNY ORAZINE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a great Kentuckian, Mr. Danny Orazine, for his 13-year service as county judge-executive to the people of McCracken County.

Mr. Orazine is the epitome of a man dedicated to serving his county residents, all the while ensuring a strong relationship with the city government as well. He is a modest, ethical, and fairminded man who has given much to McCracken County, and I am proud of the work he has done.

On Monday, December 25, 2006, The Paducah Sun newspaper published an article highlighting Mr. Orazine's many years of service. I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD and that the entire Senate join me in thanking this beloved Kentuckian.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Paducah Sun, December 25, 2006]

REFLECTIONS: ORAZINE RETURNS TO SIMPLE LIFE

(By Brian Peach)

Danny Orazine isn't a politician. At least he doesn't think of himself as one. This coming from the man who has spent the past 21 years in McCracken County public office—time that was every bit as challenging as he would have liked.

''Honestly, I don't really like politics,'' the outgoing judge-executive said in a recent interview. ''I'm a simple person.''

He's not flashy. Not begging for the spotlight. He'll wear a suit when he needs to, but he'd rather lose the tie whenever possible.

Look no further than his truck for proof of his modesty.

He still drives a 1983 Ford pickup that he bought new. It has about 250,000 miles on it.

''I've got the same house, same wife, same truck,'' he said with a laugh, adding that a new paint job on the truck has kept it looking good. He'll have to give back his county-issued car, but that's OK. He'll just turn to his trusty pickup a little more often.

He considers himself a strong Democrat, but he's not crazy about partisan politics.

''I normally worked closely with Democratic governors,'' he said, adding that he still considers his relationship strong with Gov. Ernie Fletcher and his Republican cabinet. The two joked recently at ground-breaking and ribbon-cutting ceremonies, and he said it's because partisan politics don't come into play.

''I'm a simple person,'' he said.

At one point, he thought of walking away.

''In the middle of my first tenure, I was about ready to resign,'' he said.

But he stayed on, and was re-elected twice, serving 13 years as judge-executive after eight as a county commissioner.

It was sewers that got him into office. They were the big issue back then. After that, he just hung around.

''We just didn't get sewers in the smaller districts,'' Orazine said, referring in part to the Hendron area 18 years ago.

The sewer agency was finally formed in July 1999 with the merger of separate city and county sewer agencies. He said the goal was to merge the water districts into one as well, but today, ''I would never ask the water districts in the county to give up theirs for the Paducah Water Works board.''

Paducah Mayor Bill Paxton recently asked Orazine to serve on the city water board, and he accepted.

He'll leave behind a big corner office and lots of responsibilities, but take his love for the community with him. He's been offered a couple of full-time jobs since his defeat, but he said he wants to get away from ''the politics stage.''

RUNNING CLEAN

On his window sill are pictures—family and friends—as well as a $20 bill, laminated and labeled: First Campaign Contribution to Danny Orazine from Don Utley, Aug. 21, 1991.

He was elected judge-executive two years later. On his wall are many pictures, including a large one of Paducah native and former U.S. Vice President Alben Barkley, and one of his campaign posters that Orazine said was from 1948.

He has never been offered a bribe, he said. ''I used to kid about never being offered a bribe. Guess they didn't think that I had enough clout to get it down. . . . Hopefully they just thought I wouldn't have accepted it.''

He said advice from Julian Carroll stuck with him over the years: If you'll only take your paycheck, you'll never have any problems.

''I have adhered to that,'' Orazine said, pointing out that among his first responsibilities at the end of this year will be turning in his eight-year-old county-issued Ford Taurus.

TIME OF CHANGE

He's leaving office, and it's in large part due to county residents feeling it was time for a change. They picked Van Newberry to replace Orazine in the May primary. He said his was a good, tough run.

Zoning issues and building code enforcement were just a couple of the ''monumental ordinances'' that he said the fiscal court passed, and that weren't entirely popular with the voters. About six years ago, the fiscal court required that all new homes undergo a five-point inspection. The problem was that some people decided to build homes on their own, and may not have realized that the inspection also checks for earthquake protection, given the proximity to the New Madrid Fault.

''People might cut a plan out of a magazine and come in with it,'' he said. But most of those plans account for possible seismic activity. ''We were stuck with not having a building code or having seismic in it.''

The county opted to keep the more stringent codes, and the five-point inspections—which Orazine said have led to a few building delays during the busy construction season. ''It took a while to catch up,'' he said. ''Now (in the winter), the building has slowed and they're caught up.''

As for the city and county working together on such projects as a comprehensive plan, Orazine never viewed that as a step toward a metro government. Even so, he admitted that at times, ''It's hard to tell where the city ends and the county begins.''

Many city residents have moved into the county over the past several years, and the city is occasionally annexing county land into the city, often at a developer's request.

''Anything, good or bad, affects both the city and county now,'' he said. ''We have to prioritize what we're going to prioritize, and talk over those things we place as priorities.''

The downtown riverfront, though located in the city, will benefit the entire area, and it's something the judge says must naturally include the county, and that includes financial support.

County government, he notes, ''is very lean by nature.'' That's mainly in regard to the budget. Comparatively speaking, Paducah's is about $28 million, while the county's is about $20 million.

''If we didn't have the grants and money that the state gives us, it'd be about half the city's,'' Orazine said of the budget. ''That's why we're hesitant about hiring people over here. . . . That's just the nature of the county.''

He looked to the city's fire department in saying that the county couldn't afford to pay its firefighters. Grants help keep the five volunteer fire districts operational.

''There's a lot of pride that goes into them,'' he said. ''Probably the biggest factor in the metro-government discussion, moneywise, is I think you're going to have to keep your volunteer firefighters.

''If anybody ever proposed (a paid county fire department), oh my, property taxes would go so high. I wouldn't want to be anywhere near public office when that happens.''

That all comes back to the idea of a metro government. He said county residents' pride in fire departments and parks being operated by volunteers adds to the pride when they do look nice, albeit, he said, not as nice as Noble Park.

''The county was just not ready for it,'' he said of metro government suggestions. But because he worked so closely with the city during his tenure, particularly with Paxton, ''I got associated with that, but I never went there and had no plans to. That sure didn't keep me from working with the mayor.''

Paxton said Orazine ''is one of the most ethical, fair-minded people I have ever known,'' and it made him easy to work with. ''I enjoyed every minute of it,'' Paxton said. ''I think the city and county benefited from not only the closeness of my relationship with Danny, but also (his relationship) with former Mayor Albert Jones, who was extremely close with the judge.''

HELPING YOUTH

Another area Orazine looks back on with a smile is everything he has done to help youths.

''I got a special place for juveniles,'' he said of his desire to help them. ''I didn't get into trouble (as a teenager), but it was a wonder I graduated—It took me five years to get through high school.''

Now, thanks to his push, the county puts about $1 million each year toward helping children and teens, in large part through the McCracken Regional Juvenile Detention Center.

Orazine is also a member of the state Office of Juvenile Justice Advisory Board, which he has served on since it was founded in 1998. He also serves on the Juvenile Detention Council Board locally. As his tenure as judge-executive ends, he plans to resign from those boards. That means fewer trips to Frankfort for the state board meetings.

He lasted a term and a half before hiring a county administrator—a position incoming Judge-Executive Van Newberry wants to abolish. Orazine said he was becoming overwhelmed with the large and small projects.

''In the midst of all that, an employee of the courthouse came in'' complaining about the texture of the toilet paper—''that it was too rough,'' he said, still sounding exasperated at having to handle minor tasks when he had more important things to deal with.

NOMINATION OF GEN GEORGE W. CASEY JR.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I voted last Thursday in opposition to the nomination of GEN George W. Casey, Jr., to be the 36th Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army.

This decision did not come easily, but after watching the slow failure of our Iraq strategy since the invasion in March 2003, it was time for some accountability.

This is not to say General Casey, alone, should take the blame for the multitude of mistakes in Iraq. In fact, there is no doubt that the buck stops at the President's desk and this is his war.

It is President Bush more than any other individual who is responsible for the dire situation we face in Iraq today.

It was he who ordered the invasion and he who has stubbornly stuck to a strategy that has put success in Iraq increasingly out of reach.

In addition to President Bush, Vice President CHENEY and former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld were some of the strongest public backers of the campaign to invade Iraq that failed to plan for the chaotic aftermath that we are now mired in today. And it should not be forgotten that it was George Tenet, then the Director of the CIA, who presided over the flawed intelligence analysis that suggested that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and was in the process of developing a nuclear capability. It was Tenet who told us that this intelligence was a ''slam dunk.''

Yet, that said, our military strategy over the past several years should not be free from criticism.

General Casey has served as the commander of Multi-national Force—Iraq since July 2004. Over these past 2½ years, I can see little to applaud regarding our military strategy on the ground.

Too many times, in my view, General Casey, and those around him, failed to provide the Congress with accurate assessments of what has been happening in Iraq. For example, it was General Casey who suggested that the situation in Iraq would improve enough following the December 2005 elections that troop reductions could take place in early 2006. He even went so far as to provide specific projections of troop withdrawals, saying in August 2005 that the level of U.S. troops in Iraq could be drawn down to about 100,000 by the spring of 2006.

Earlier, in June 2005, he said, and I quote:

> I'm confident that we'll be able to continue to take reductions over the course of this year based on the security situation and the progress of the Iraqi security forces.

Time and time again General Casey came before us in Congress and painted an overly optimistic view of the situation on the ground in Iraq. Just last week, at his confirmation hearing in front of the Senate Armed Services Committee, General Casey suggested that, rather than a ''slow failure,'' he sees ''slow progress'' in Iraq.

Since General Casey took over as commander of all coalition forces in Iraq, we have seen the following:

Car bombings have grown from 30 a month when General Casey took command to about 80 today.

Daily insurgent attacks have skyrocketed from 50 to some 200 today.

The training of Iraqi forces, which General Casey touted as the means for an exit of U.S. troops from Iraq, has been slow and inconsistent.

In fact, though General Casey called 2006 the ''Year of the Police'' in Iraq, we have seen increased infiltration of Iraqi police forces by Shiite militias and growing Iranian influence.

While 320,000 Iraqi troops have been ''trained and equipped'' according to the Pentagon, our troop level today, 140,000, is just a few thousand less than when General Casey took command in July 2004.

Iraqi security forces have 91 brigades that are taking the ''lead'' in counterinsurgency operations throughout the country, yet these forces are now responsible for the security of only 2 of Iraq's 18 provinces.

I have no doubt that General Casey is a good man with an impeccable character. Many of the mistakes regarding our Iraq strategy are not the result of his leadership.

But it is time that the Senate insists upon accountability.

It is past time for the Senate to provide oversight by showing that we will not accept anything but unvarnished, forthright candor from our military leaders.

We expect independent views from our military leaders,

and this has simply been too often lacking over these past few years.

General Casey deserves credit for his long, dedicated service to this country. But I did not believe he should to be promoted to Chief of Staff of the Army. Therefore, I regretfully cast my vote against his nomination.

CELBRATING OREGON'S BLACK HISTORY

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, each Congress I rise to honor February as Black History Month. Each February since 1926, our Nation has recognized the contributions of Black Americans to the history of our Nation.

This is no accident; February is a significant month in Black American history. Abolitionist Frederick Douglass, President Abraham Lincoln, and scholar and civil rights leader W.E.B. DuBois were born in the month of February. The 15th amendment to the Constitution was ratified 136 years ago this month, preventing race discrimination in the right to vote. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was founded in February in New York City. And on February 25, 1870, this body welcomed its first Black Senator, Hiram R. Revels of Mississippi.

In this important month I want to celebrate some of the contributions made by Black Americans in my home State of Oregon. Since Marcus Lopez, who sailed with Captain Robert Gray in 1788, became the first person of African descent known to set foot in Oregon, a great many Black Americans have helped shape the history of my State. Throughout this month, I will come to the floor to highlight some of their stories.

Reverend Jesse James ''J.J.'' Clow was a beloved minister and a prominent figure in the struggle for civil rights in Portland, OR. In 1936, Reverend Clow began a service of ministry at Portland's Mount Olivet Baptist Church. Mount Olivet was the first African-American baptist church in the State of Oregon and during the 1940s and 1950s was also the largest Black church in the State. It was from this vantage point that Clow lived and preached a social gospel that contributed to the civil rights battles of Portland's WWII challenges and continued through the turbulent 60s.

Clow was born in Hufsmith, TX, 1 of 15 children. Clow finished high school at Tuskegee Institute and received his B.A. from Virginia Union University. His first pulpit was in Virginia, a second in Georgia, before arriving in Portland. His experiences growing up in the South helped prepare him for a lifetime of activism for justice and civil rights.

During the World War II years, Clow served as president of the local chapter of the NAACP. He was also deeply involved in the establishment of a Portland office of the Urban League. Along with these national organizations, Clow and other Portland area Black leaders worked tirelessly to improve housing and employment opportunities for African Americans. These efforts were largely responsible for ridding the city of many traditional economic and social segregation policies, including Oregon's first civil rights ordinance in 1953.

Upon his retirement from Mount Olivet in 1963, Reverend Clow spoke warmly of the progress he had witnessed during his lifetime. He continued to believe that Christianity must be interpreted in terms of how men behave towards one another and not just to comfort them. Until his death, Clow encouraged the community of Portland to more fully embrace democratic ideals in its social, political, and economic sectors.

Reverend Clow is only one example of the Black men and women who changed the course of history in Oregon and in the United States. During the remainder of Black History Month, I will return to the floor to celebrate more Oregonians like Rev. J.J. Clow, whose contributions, while great, have not yet received the attention they deserve.

S. 331 COSPONSORSHIP

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, Senator KENT CONRAD is an original cosponsor to S. 331, a bill to provide grants from moneys collected from violations of the corporate average fuel economy program to be used to expand infrastructure necessary to increase the availability of alternative fuels.

In my floor statement on January 18, 2007, I referenced Senator CONRAD as a cosponsor but he was omitted from the list of cosponsors of this legislation. I ask that the RECORD be updated to reflect Senator CONRAD's original cosponsorship.

WILLIAM ODOM'S ''VICTORY IS NOT AN OPTION''

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, William Odom is one of the finest intelligence officers who have served in our military. Retiring at the rank of lieutenant general, his distinguished Army career culminated in his heading up the U.S. Army's intelligence division and the National Security Agency. He has worked tirelessly to help the country understand and deal with the challenges to its security and defense. I have known the general for decades, and, like many of my colleagues, I deeply value his judgment and insight.

That is why I read his opinion piece from last Sunday's Washington Post, ''Victory is Not an Option,'' with great interest.

General Odom lays out the truths and myths of the Nation's involvement in Iraq. Among the clear truths is that the dream of a real democracy gaining roots in that war-torn country is simply that, a dream. He rightly points out, too, that any Iraqi government is likely to be more anti than pro-American at the end of the day.

As for the myths, he sensibly lays out that it is pure fantasy for anyone to think that our presence is actually preventing the horrible carnage from unfolding or holding Iran back from gaining influence with its neighbor. It is similarly a flight of the imagination to think that our military presence is actually stanching—as opposed to encouraging—al-Qaida's involvement in the country. Finally, it is a myth to think that we must stay in Iraq ''to support the troops.'' In fact, he notes, many of our brave men and women in the country understand the cold realities that unfold there every day, and many of them believe that we should get out of Iraq.

General Odom makes some sensible suggestions for a new policy direction, something beyond the absurd ''surge'' that is only the same old repast of stay-the-course with a different seasoning. We should get out of Iraq and recognize that our presence there has become a source of instability for the whole Middle East. He smartly suggests that we should work with our international partners to seek order and stability, which will fundamentally alter the balance against the radicals who want to stir up even more strife.

I ask unanimous consent that General Odom's article, ''Victory Is Not an Option,'' now be printed in the RECORD. I urge my colleagues to read this article closely and truly think about what General Odom is saying. The logic is clear and sensible. I think it is incontrovertible.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 11, 2007]

VICTORY IS NOT AN OPTION

(By William E. Odom)

The new National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq starkly delineates the gulf that separates President Bush's illusions from the realities of the war. Victory, as the president sees it, requires a stable liberal democracy in Iraq that is pro-American. The NIE describes a war that has no chance of producing that result. In this critical respect, the NIE, the consensus judgment of all the U.S. intelligence agencies, is a declaration of defeat.

Its gloomy implications—hedged, as intelligence agencies prefer, in rubbery language that cannot soften its impact—put the intelligence community and the American public on the same page. The public awakened to the reality of failure in Iraq last year and turned the Republicans out of control of Congress to wake it up. But a majority of its members are still asleep, or only half-awake to their new writ to end the war soon.

Perhaps this is not surprising. Americans do not warm to defeat or failure, and our politicians are famously reluctant to admit their own responsibility for anything resembling those un-American outcomes. So they beat around the bush, wringing hands and debating ''nonbinding resolutions'' that oppose the president's plan to increase the number of U.S. troops in Iraq.

For the moment, the collision of the public's clarity of mind, the president's relentless pursuit of defeat and Congress's anxiety has paralyzed us. We may be doomed to two more years of chasing the mirage of democracy in Iraq and possibly widening the war to Iran. But this is not inevitable. A Congress, or a president, prepared to quit the game of ''who gets the blame'' could begin to alter American strategy in ways that will vastly improve the prospects of a more stable Middle East.

No task is more important to the well-being of the United States. We face great peril in that troubled region, and improving our prospects will be difficult. First of all, it will require, from Congress at least, public acknowledgment that the president's policy is based on illusions, not realities. There never has been any right way to invade and transform Iraq. Most Americans need no further convincing, but two truths ought to put the matter beyond question:

First, the assumption that the United States could create a liberal, constitutional democracy in Iraq defies just about everything known by professional students of the topic. Of the more than 40 democracies created since World War II, fewer than 10 can be considered truly ''constitutional''—meaning that their domestic order is protected by a broadly accepted rule of law, and has survived for at least a generation. None is a country with Arabic and Muslim political cultures. None has deep sectarian and ethnic fissures like those in Iraq.

Strangely, American political scientists whose business it is to know these things have been irresponsibly quiet. In the lead-up to the March 2003 invasion, neoconservative agitators shouted insults at anyone who dared to mention the many findings of academic research on how democracies evolve. They also ignored our own struggles over two centuries to create the democracy Americans enjoy today. Somehow Iraqis are now expected to create a constitutional order in a country with no conditions favoring it.

This is not to say that Arabs cannot become liberal democrats. When they immigrate to the United States, many do so quickly. But it is to say that Arab countries, as well as a large majority of all countries, find creating a stable constitutional democracy beyond their capacities.

Second, to expect any Iraqi leader who can hold his country together to be pro-American, or to share American goals, is to abandon common sense. It took the United States more than a century to get over its hostility toward British occupation. (In 1914, a majority of the public favored supporting Germany against Britain.) Every month of the U.S. occupation, polls have recorded Iraqis' rising animosity toward the United States. Even supporters of an American military presence say that it is acceptable temporarily and only to prevent either of the warring sides in Iraq from winning. Today the Iraqi government survives only because its senior members and their families live within the heavily guarded Green Zone, which houses the U.S. Embassy and military command.

As Congress awakens to these realities—and a few members have bravely pointed them out—will it act on them? Not necessarily. Too many lawmakers have fallen for the myths that are invoked to try to sell the president's new war aims. Let us consider the most pernicious of them.

(1) We must continue the war to prevent the terrible aftermath that will occur if our forces are withdrawn soon. Reflect on the double-think of this formulation. We are now fighting to prevent what our invasion made inevitable! Undoubtedly we will leave a mess—the mess we created, which has become worse each year we have remained. Lawmakers gravely proclaim their opposition to the war, but in the next breath express fear that quitting it will leave a blood bath, a civil war, a terrorist haven, a ''failed state,'' or some other horror. But this ''aftermath'' is already upon us; a prolonged U.S. occupation cannot prevent what already exists.

(2) We must continue the war to prevent Iran's influence from growing in Iraq. This is another absurd notion. One of the president's initial war aims, the creation of a democracy in Iraq, ensured increased Iranian influence, both in Iraq and the region. Electoral democracy, predictably, would put Shiite groups in power—groups supported by Iran since Saddam Hussein repressed them in 1991. Why are so many members of Congress swallowing the claim that prolonging the war is now supposed to prevent precisely what starting the war inexorably and predictably caused? Fear that Congress will confront this contradiction helps explain the administration and neocon drumbeat we now hear for expanding the war to Iran.

Here we see shades of the Nixon-Kissinger strategy in Vietnam: widen the war into Cambodia and Laos. Only this time, the adverse consequences would be far greater. Iran's ability to hurt U.S. forces in Iraq are not trivial. And the anti-American backlash in the region would be larger, and have more lasting consequences.

(3) We must prevent the emergence of a new haven for al-Qaeda in Iraq. But it was the U.S. invasion that opened Iraq's doors to al-Qaeda. The longer U.S. forces have remained there, the stronger al-Qaeda has become. Yet its strength within the Kurdish

and Shiite areas is trivial. After a U.S. withdrawal, it will probably play a continuing role in helping the Sunni groups against the Shiites and the Kurds. Whether such foreign elements could remain or thrive in Iraq after the resolution of civil war is open to question. Meanwhile, continuing the war will not push al-Qaeda outside Iraq. On the contrary, the American presence is the glue that holds al-Qaeda there now.

(4) We must continue to fight in order to ''support the troops.'' This argument effectively paralyzes almost all members of Congress. Lawmakers proclaim in grave tones a litany of problems in Iraq sufficient to justify a rapid pullout. Then they reject that logical conclusion, insisting we cannot do so because we must support the troops. Has anybody asked the troops?

During their first tours, most may well have favored ''staying the course''—whatever that meant to them—but now in their second, third and fourth tours, many are changing their minds. We see evidence of that in the many news stories about unhappy troops being sent back to Iraq. Veterans groups are beginning to make public the case for bringing them home. Soldiers and officers in Iraq are speaking out critically to reporters on the ground.

But the strangest aspect of this rationale for continuing the war is the implication that the troops are somehow responsible for deciding to continue the president's course. That political and moral responsibility belongs to the president, not the troops. Did not President Harry S. Truman make it clear that ''the buck stops'' in the Oval Office? If the president keeps dodging it, where does it stop? With Congress?

Embracing the four myths gives Congress excuses not to exercise its power of the purse to end the war and open the way for a strategy that might actually bear fruit.

The first and most critical step is to recognize that fighting on now simply prolongs our losses and blocks the way to a new strategy. Getting out of Iraq is the pre-condition for creating new strategic options. Withdrawal will take away the conditions that allow our enemies in the region to enjoy our pain. It will awaken those European states reluctant to collaborate with us in Iraq and the region.

Second, we must recognize that the United States alone cannot stabilize the Middle East.

Third, we must acknowledge that most of our policies are actually destabilizing the region. Spreading democracy, using sticks to try to prevent nuclear proliferation, threatening ''regime change,'' using the hysterical rhetoric of the ''global war on terrorism''—all undermine the stability we so desperately need in the Middle East.

Fourth, we must redefine our purpose. It must be a stable region, not primarily a democratic Iraq. We must redirect our military operations so they enhance rather than undermine stability. We can write off the war as a ''tactical draw'' and make ''regional stability'' our measure of ''victory.'' That single step would dramatically realign the opposing forces in the region, where most states want stability. Even many in the angry mobs of young Arabs shouting profanities against the United States want predictable order, albeit on better social and economic terms than they now have.

Realigning our diplomacy and military capabilities to achieve order will hugely reduce the numbers of our enemies and gain us new and important allies. This cannot happen, however, until our forces are moving out of Iraq. Why should Iran negotiate to relieve our pain as long as we are increasing its influence in Iraq and beyond? Withdrawal will awaken most leaders in the region to their own need for U.S.-led diplomacy to stabilize their neighborhood.

If Bush truly wanted to rescue something of his historical legacy, he would seize the initiative to implement this kind of strategy. He would eventually be held up as a leader capable of reversing direction by turning an imminent, tragic defeat into strategic recovery.

If he stays on his present course, he will leave Congress the opportunity to earn the credit for such a turnaround. It is already too late to wait for some presidential candidate for 2008 to retrieve the situation. If Congress cannot act, it, too, will live in infamy.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN RECOGNITION OF SEHNERT'S BAKERY

• Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate a very special place in my hometown of McCook, NE. It is a place which exemplifies the thousands of family-owned small businesses lining the main streets of every small town in America, businesses which are the driving force in keeping those towns economically viable.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of Sehnert's Bakery in McCook, NE. It was in 1957 when Walt and Jean Sehnert, the grandchildren of immigrants who came to America 110 years ago, bought the bakery as a place to work hard, earn a decent living, and raise a family.

Today, their son Matt Sehnert and his wife Shelly carry on the tradition by providing the people of McCook with some of the most delicious pastries on the planet. Matt and Shelly credit a dedicated and hard-working crew, who also take pride in Sehnert's longstanding tradition.

As many small businesses do in order to survive in a competitive environment, Matt and Shelly have modernized Sehnert's Bakery and expanded it to include a catering service and cafe, where I often meet with constituents during visits home.

My memories of Sehnert's go back to when I was a teenager in McCook and was able to get a job there, working early Saturday mornings. I learned a lot about how to make piecrusts and decorate cakes. I also learned that it is easy to overdose on glazed donuts when you work in a bakery Walt Sehnert can still recall my first day on the job.

My fellow colleagues, if you ever have the pleasure of visiting my hometown of McCook, NE, I urge you to drop by Sehnert's Bakery and enjoy some of their mouth-watering donuts, or maybe some pies or perhaps one of their famous ''Jiffy Burgers,'' whose recipe remains a closely guarded secret in McCook.

Sehnert's Bakery and Bieroc Café Catering Service is located at 312 Norris Avenue. That is Norris, as in George Norris, who very capably served Nebraska in the U.S. Senate from 1913 to 1943. Yes, McCook has produced two U.S. Senators, as well as three of Nebraska's Governors. Not bad for a town with a population of just 8,000 people; but of course, that is why the Sehnerts and I are proud to call it home.•

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:57 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of it reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 34. An act to establish a pilot program in certain United States district courts to encourage enhancement or expertise in patent cases among district judges.

H.R. 342. An act to designate the United States courthouse located at 555 Independence Street in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, as the ''Rush Hudson Limbaugh, Sr. United States Courthouse''.

H.R. 414. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 60 Calle McKinley, West in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, as the ''Miguel Angel Garcia Mendez Post Office Building''.

H.R. 798. An act to direct the Administrator of General Services to install a photovoltaic system for the headquarters building of the Department of Energy.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 44. Concurrent resolution honoring and praising the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on the occasion of its 98th anniversary.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 34. An act to establish a pilot program in certain United States district courts to encourage enhancement of expertise in patent cases among district judges; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 414. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 60 Calle McKinley, West in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, as the ''Miguel Angel Garcia Mendez Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 798. An act to direct the Administrator of General Services to install a photovoltaic system for the headquarters building of the Department of Energy; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

The following concurrent resolution was read, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 44. Concurrent resolution honoring and praising the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on the occasion of its 98th anniversary; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 574. A bill to express the sense of Congress on Iraq.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–744. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2006 Status of the Nation's Highways, Bridges and Transit: Conditions and Performance''; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–745. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2007–12–2007–25); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–746. A communication from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to services performed by certain full-time government employees during fiscal year 2006; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–747. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Statutory Exemption for Cross-Trading of Securities'' (RIN1210–AB17) received on February 12, 2007; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–748. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Regulations and Rulings Division, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Establishment of the Outer Coastal Plain Viticultural Area'' (RIN1513–AB13) received on February 8, 2007; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

Mr. INOUYE. Mr. President, for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORD on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

*Coast Guard nomination of Thomas W. Denucci, 3271, to be Lieutenant.

*Coast Guard nomination of Edward J. Mosely, 9449, to be Lieutenant.

*Coast Guard nomination of Teresa K. Peace, 1300, to be Lieutenant.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

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. NELSON of Florida:

S. 559. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require a voter-verified permanent paper ballot under title III of such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. SALAZAR (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. PRYOR):

S. 560. A bill to create a Rural Policing Institute as part of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BUNNING (for himself, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. BURR, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SMITH, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 561. A bill to repeal the sunset of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 with respect to the expansion of the adoption credit and adoption assistance programs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 562. A bill to provide for flexibility and improvements in elementary and secondary education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 563. A bill to extend the deadline by which State identification documents shall comply with certain minimum standards and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. 564. A bill to modernize water resources planning, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. BINGAMAN (for himself, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. SALAZAR, and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 565. A bill to expand and enhance post-baccalaureate opportunities at Hispanic-serving institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. NELSON of Nebraska (for himself and Mr. SALAZAR):

S. 566. A bill to amend the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to establish a rural entrepreneur and microenterprise assistance program; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN) (by request):

S. 567. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BROWNBACK:

S. 568. A bill to prohibit deceptive conduct in the rating of video and computer games, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. LUGAR:

S. 569. A bill to accelerate efforts to develop vaccines for diseases primarily affecting developing countries and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. WEBB):

S. 570. A bill to designate additional National Forest System lands in the State of Virginia as wilderness or a wilderness study area, to designate the Kimberling Creek Potential Wilderness Area for eventual incorporation in the Kimberling Creek Wilderness, to establish the Seng Mountain and Bear Creek Scenic Areas, to provide for the development of trail plans for the wilderness areas and scenic areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 571. A bill to withdraw normal trade relations treatment from, and apply certain provisions of title IV of the Trade Act of 1974 to, the products of the People's Republic of China; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. SMITH, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 572. A bill to ensure that Federal student loans are delivered as efficiently as possible in order to provide more grant aid to students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 573. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and the Public Health Service Act to improve the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases in women; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. REID:

S. 574. A bill to express the sense of Congress on Iraq; read the first time.

By Mr. DOMENICI (for himself, Mr. DORGAN, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. KYL, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 575. A bill to authorize appropriations for border and transportation security personnel and technology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. DODD (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. FEINGOLD, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 576. A bill to provide for the effective prosecution of terrorists and guarantee due process rights; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, and Ms. MIKULSKI):

S. 577. A bill to amend the Commodity Exchange Act to add a provision relating to reporting and recordkeeping for positions involving energy commodities; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. SMITH, Mr. REED, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mrs. CLINTON, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DODD, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. KERRY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. AKAKA, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 578. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to improve requirements under the Medicaid program for items and services furnished in or through an educational program or setting to children, including children with developmental, physical, or mental health needs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. HAGEL (for himself, Mr. FEINGOLD, and Ms. STABENOW):

S. Res. 78. A resolution designating April 2007 as ''National Autism Awareness Month'' and supporting efforts to increase funding for research into the causes and treatment of autism and to improve training and support for individuals with autism and those who care for individuals with autism; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. REID (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. CHAMBLISS, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. Res. 79. A resolution relative to the death of Representative Charles W. Norwood, Jr., of Georgia; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Res. 80. A resolution to authorize testimony, document production, and legal representation in State of Oregon v. Rebecca Michelson, Michele Darr, and Vernon Huffman; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. FEINGOLD:

S. Con. Res. 11. A concurrent resolution providing that any agreement relating to trade and investment that is negotiated by the executive branch with another country comply with certain minimum standards; to the Committee on Finance.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 65

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 65, a bill to modify the age-60 standard for certain pilots and for other purposes.

S. 206

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 206, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

S. 381

At the request of Mr. INOUYE, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 381, a bill to establish a fact-finding Commission to extend the study of a prior Commission to investigate and determine facts and circumstances surrounding the relocation, internment, and deportation to Axis countries of Latin Americans of Japanese descent from December 1941 through February 1948, and the impact of those actions by the United States, and to recommend appropriate remedies, and for other purposes.

S. 430

At the request of Mr. BOND, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 430, 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. 431

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 431, a bill to require convicted sex offenders to register online identifiers, and for other purposes.

S. 464

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 464, a bill to amend title XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to improve the requirements regarding advance directives in order to ensure that an individual's health care decisions are complied with, and for other purposes.

S. 466

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 466, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage of an end-of-life planning consultation as part of an initial preventive physical examination under the Medicare program.

S. 487

At the request of Mr. LEVIN, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 487, a bill to amend the National Organ Transplant Act to clarify that kidney paired donations shall not be considered to involve the transfer of a human organ for valuable consideration.

S. 494

At the request of Mr. LUGAR, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 494, a bill to endorse further enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and to facilitate the timely admission of new members to NATO, and for other purposes.

S. 497

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 497, a bill to repeal a prohibition on the use of certain funds for tunneling in certain areas with respect to the Los Angeles to San Fernando Valley Metro Rail project, California.

S. 535

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 535, a bill to establish an Unsolved Crimes Section in the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice, and an Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Investigative Office in the Civil Rights Unit of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and for other purposes.

S. 558

At the request of Mr. SALAZAR, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 558, a bill to provide parity between health insurance coverage of mental health benefits and benefits for medical and surgical services.

S. CON. RES. 10

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 10, a concurrent resolution honoring and praising the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on the occasion of its 98th anniversary.

S. RES. 30

At the request of Mr. BIDEN, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN), the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. BINGAMAN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 30, a resolution 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. 65

At the request of Mr. BIDEN, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 65, a resolution condemning the murder of Turkish-Armenian journalist and human rights advocate Hrant Dink and urging the people of Turkey to honor his legacy of tolerance.

AMENDMENT NO. 243

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 243 intended to be proposed to H.J. Res. 20, a joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 246

At the request of Mr. MARTINEZ, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was withdrawn as a cosponsor of amendment No. 246 intended to be proposed to H.J. Res. 20, a joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 247

At the request of Mr. MARTINEZ, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 247 intended to be proposed to H.J. Res. 20, a joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 259

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 259 intended to be proposed to H.J. Res. 20, a joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. NELSON of Florida:

S. 559. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require a voter-verified permanent paper ballot under title III of such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Voting Integrity and Verification Act, VIVA, of 2007. The time has come to ensure that the vote of each American is counted and counted as they intended. VIVA will get us closer to that goal by mandating the use of voter-

verified paper ballots in any election with Federal candidates.

It was President Johnson who helped Black Americans win the right to vote, who said, ''The vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by man . . .'' Indeed, it is the ability of a nation, like ours, to hold free and fair elections, which guarantees our government is based on consent of the governed; and, majority rule with minority rights.

It is the guarantee of a ballot that cools the impassioned hearts of many in the electorate, even when a majority of citizens disagree with their government over a war, court decision, or action by lawmakers or the executive branch.

For any democracy to long withstand these external and internal conflicts, it is vital that the governed have unwavering faith that their votes will be counted. Ever since the 2000 Presidential recount in Florida and, more recently, the disputed congressional election in Sarasota, an increasingly high number of Americans have come to lack confidence in the way our States record, tally, and verify votes.

If this Congress doesn't act to restore voter confidence, I fear our democracy—in the words of philosopher and educator Robert Maynard Hutchins—could suffer ''a slow extinction from apathy, indifference and undernourishment.''

VIVA authorizes $300 million in Federal funding to assist in the implementation of the requirements in this bill. This bill establishes mandatory security requirements for voting systems used in Federal elections. It also will provide for routine, random audits of paper ballots and make it illegal for a chief State election administration official to take an active part in a political campaign.

With another Presidential election on the horizon, we need to fix this—and fix it now. Let us never have another election after which citizens are left to doubt its legitimacy.

By Mr. SALAZAR (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. PRYOR):

S. 560. A bill to create a Rural Policing Institute as part of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I have often referred to our rural communities as ''the forgotten America.'' Indeed, rural America is the backbone of our country—but is too often neglected by policymakers and politicians who have lost touch with people in the heartland. Nowhere is this neglect felt more acutely than in small-town law enforcement agencies—which have been confronted with decreased funding, increased homeland security responsibilities, and the great toll of a meth epidemic that is devastating rural America.

Many people do not realize that most American law enforcement agencies serve rural communities or small towns. Indeed, of the nearly 17,000 police agencies in the United States, 90 percent serve a population of under 25,000 and operate with fewer than 50 sworn officers.

I am well aware of the difficulties small town law enforcement agencies face day-in, day-out. When I was the attorney general of Colorado, I had the honor to work with some of America's finest law enforcement officials—many of them from rural Colorado. Men like Jerry Martin, the Dolores County Sherriff, who have consistently been able to do more with less. But the pressure they face is great.

The growing demands on rural law enforcement, and shrinking budgets, have hit training programs particularly hard. Many rural law enforcement agencies simply do not have the budget to provide officers with adequate training. Furthermore, even those agencies that can come up with the money simply can't afford to take their police officers off the beat long enough to get additional training.

That is where the Rural Policing Institute comes in. FLETC does a fantastic job training Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials. But FLETC does not have enough resources dedicated specifically toward training rural law enforcement officials. So the Rural Policing Institute would: evaluate the needs of rural and tribal law enforcement agencies; develop training programs designed to address the needs of rural law enforcement agencies, with a focus on combating meth, domestic violence, and school violence; export those training programs to rural and tribal law enforcement agencies; and conduct outreach to ensure that the training programs reach rural law enforcement agencies.

As Colorado's attorney general, I learned that a small investment in law enforcement training can pay great dividends. This legislation would do just that—by ensuring that our rural and small town law enforcement officers have the training they need to protect their communities.

I am proud of my roots in rural southern Colorado. Communities like mine are the heart of our Nation—and the men and women who protect them deserve the best possible training.

I thank Senators CHAMBLISS, ISAKSON, and PRYOR for cosponsoring this legislation.

By Mr. BUNNING (for himself, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. BURR, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. HUTCHISON, MR. INHOFE, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SMITH, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 561. A bill to repeal the sunset of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 with respect to the expansion of the adoption credit and adoption assistance programs; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the American family and the need to extend important tax relief provisions to help make adoption more affordable. The high cost of adoptions causes many couples to dismiss adoption as too expensive. By helping to ease this financial burden, we can encourage the development of more stable families and provide a brighter future for thousands of children.

These important goals prompted us to act in 2001, when we passed important adoption incentives in the form of tax credits. However, these provisions are set to expire or ''sunset'' after December 31, 2010.

Our entire society benefits when children are placed with loving, permanent families. That is why today I am introducing the Adoption Tax Relief Guarantee Act with Senator BEN NELSON.

The Adoption Tax Relief Guarantee Act will permanently extend the 2001 adoption incentives allowing those Americans who adopt a child to continue to receive a credit in the amount of their qualified expenses and guarantees the maximum $10,000 credit for those who adopt children with special needs. This legislation will help middle class families break the financial barriers and successfully adopt a child, especially those children with special needs who are in particular need of a loving home.

I am pleased that Senators from both sides of the aisle have cosponsored this legislation, and that it has received endorsement from the National Council for Adoption and RESOLVE: the National Infertility Association. The adoption tax credit and assistance programs have already helped countless children and families by making adoption more affordable. We owe it to future generations of children in need to make these provisions permanent.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the Adoption Tax Relief Guarantee Act, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 561

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 Adoption Tax Relief Guarantee Act''.

SEC. 2. REPEAL OF APPLICABILITY OF SUNSET OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TAX RELIEF RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2001 WITH RESPECT TO ADOPTION CREDIT AND ADOPTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.

Section 901 of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(c) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to the amendments made by section 202 (relating to expansion of adoption credit and adoption assistance programs).''.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 562. A bill to provide for flexibility and improvements in elementary and

secondary education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the No Child Left Behind Flexibility and Improvements Act. I am pleased to be joined in this effort by my colleague from Maine, Senator SNOWE. Our legislation would give greater local control and flexibility to Maine and other States in their efforts to implement the No Child Left Behind Act, NCLB, and provides common sense reforms in keeping with the worthy goals of NCLB.

Since NCLB was enacted in 2002, I have had the opportunity to meet with numerous Maine educators to discuss their concerns with the law. In response to their concerns, in March 2004, Senator SNOWE and I commissioned the Maine NCLB Task Force to examine the implementation issues facing Maine under both NCLB and the Maine Learning Results. Our task force included members from every county in the State and had superintendents, teachers, principals, school board members, parents, business leaders, former State legislators, special education experts, assessment specialists, officials from the Maine Department of Education, a former Maine Commissioner of Education, and the Dean from the University of Maine's College of Education and Human Development.

After a year of study, the Task Force presented us with its final report outlining recommendations for possible statutory and regulatory changes to the Act. These recommendations form the basis of the legislation that we are introducing today.

First, our legislation would provide new flexibility for teachers of multiple subjects at the secondary school level to help them meet the ''highly qualified teacher'' requirements. Unfortunately, the current regulations place undue burdens on teachers at small and rural schools who often teach multiple subjects due to staffing needs, and on special education teachers who work with students on a variety of subjects throughout the day. Under the bill, provided these teachers are highly qualified for one subject they teach, they will be provided additional time and less burdensome avenues to satisfy the remaining requirements.

Second, our legislation would provide greater flexibility to States in the ways that they demonstrate student progress in meeting State education standards. Specifically, it would permit States to use a cohort growth model, which tracks the progress of the same group of students over time. It would also permit the use of an ''indexing'' model, where progress is measured based on the number of students whose scores improve from, for example, a ''below-basic'' to a ''basic'' level, and not simply on the number of students who cross the ''proficient'' line.

Third, our legislation would provide schools with better notice regarding possible performance issues, allowing schools a chance to identify and work with a particular group of students before being identified. It would expand the existing ''safe-harbor'' provisions to allow more schools to qualify for this important protection. The changes made in our bill are in keeping with what assessment experts and teachers know—that significant gains in academic achievement tend to occur gradually and over time.

Fourth, our legislation would allow the members of a special education student's IEP team to determine the best assessment for that individual student, and would permit the student's performance on that assessment to count for all NCLB purposes.

One reason this change is so important for Maine is that we have small student populations and Maine has chosen a very small subgroup size—only 20 students. I was very concerned to hear reports that in some schools, special education students fear that they are being blamed for their school not making adequate yearly progress. While the statute explicitly prohibits the disaggregation of student data if it would jeopardize student privacy, I am concerned to hear that this is not working out in practice.

This legislative change is also based on principles of fairness and common sense. Many times, it simply does not make sense to require a special needs student to take a grade-level assessment that everyone knows he or she is not ready to take. Many special education students are referred for special education services precisely because they cannot meet grade-level expectations. Allowing the IEP team to determine the best test for each special student will bring an important improvement to the Act.

Fifth, the legislation addresses my concern about the statute's current requirement that all schools reach 100 percent proficiency by 2013–2014. Our bill would require the Secretary of Education to review progress by the States toward meeting this goal every 3 years, and would allow her to modify the timeline as necessary.

Our legislation is a comprehensive effort to provide greater flexibility and commonsense modifications to address the key NCLB challenges facing Maine, and other States. I look forward to working with my colleagues on these issues during the upcoming NCLB reauthorization process.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 563. A bill to extend the deadline by which State identification documents shall comply with certain minimum standards and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation to address the growing concern among States regarding the Real ID Act of 2005, which requires States to meet minimum security standards before citizens can use drivers' licenses for Federal purposes. As the deadline for compliance with Real ID rapidly approaches, States are beginning to send a very clear message that they are deeply concerned that they will not be able to meet these standards. The bill I introduce today recognizes those concerns by giving everyone more time to devise a way to make drivers' licenses more secure without unduly burdening State governments and without threatening privacy and civil liberties.

To begin, some background may be useful. The 9/11 Commission, finding that all but one of the 9/11 hijackers had acquired some form of U.S. identification, recommended that the Federal Government should set standards for the issuance of drivers' licenses. Taking up that recommendation I worked with a bipartisan group of Senators, especially Senator LIEBERMAN, to craft a provision in the 2004 Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act that would accomplish this goal. This provision called for the creation of a committee composed of experts from the Federal Government, from State governments, and from other interested parties such as privacy and civil liberties advocates and information technology groups. This committee was charged with developing a means of providing secure identification that protected privacy and civil liberties and respected the role of States in issuing these documents.

The committee diligently began meeting, but before it could complete its work, the House of Representatives attached the Real ID Act of 2005 to an emergency war supplemental bill, thus halting this productive effort. Unlike our intelligence reform bill, the Real ID Act of 2005 did not include States and other interested parties in the rulemaking process and instead instructed the Department of Homeland Security to simply write its own regulations. Nearly 2 years later, we still have not seen these regulations in spite of a looming May 2008 deadline for States to be in compliance with the Real ID Act.

As States begin work this year on their 2008 budgets, they still have no idea what the regulations will require of them. They do know, from a study released in 2006 by the National Governors Association, that the cost to States to implement Real ID could total more than $11 billion over the first 5 years. As a result, many States—my home State of Maine included—have passed resolutions that have sent the message to Washington that they cannot and will not implement Real ID by the May 2008 deadline.

My bill has two primary objectives: 1. It gives us the time and flexibility we need to come up with an effective system to provide secure drivers' licenses; and 2. it gets the experts from the States and from the technology industry and from the privacy and civil liberties advocates back at the table and gives them a chance to make these regulations work.

There are three main provisions in this bill: First, the bill provides that States will not have to be Real ID compliant until 2 years after the final regulations are promulgated. This means that no matter how long it takes the Department of Homeland Security to finish these regulations, States will have a full 2 years to implement them. Most likely that will mean an extension from 2008 to 2010.

Second, the bill gives the Secretary of Homeland Security more flexibility to waive certain requirements of Real ID if an aspect of the program proves technically difficult to implement. Under the current law, the Secretary of Homeland Security has the discretion to waive the requirements for Real ID on a State-by-State basis if the State cannot comply for justifiable reasons. Because it is possible that some of the technological advances necessary for Real ID may not be in place when compliance is required, the bill will provide the Secretary specific authority to waive compliance with specific requirements if these technological systems are not up and running—relieving the States from the burden of seeking exemptions from Real ID for technological reasons not within their control.

Third, it reconstitutes the committee that we created in 2004 and that was making good progress in its discussions. The committee would be required to look at the regulations published by the Department of Homeland Security and to make suggestions for modifications to meet the concerns of States, privacy advocates, and the other interested parties. The committee would report these suggestions to the Department of Homeland Security and to Congress. The Department of Homeland Security would either have to make these modifications or explain why it chose not to do so. In addition, the committee could recommend to Congress statutory changes that would mitigate concerns that could not be addressed by modifications to the regulations.

This bill gives us the time and the information that Congress and the Department of Homeland Security need to better implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission in order to make our drivers' licenses secure so that they cannot be used again as a part of a plot to attack our country. This bill does this in a way that does not rewind the clock three years but instead keeps us moving forward to a more secure America.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to address Real ID and to put us back on track in protecting our privacy, protecting our liberty, and protecting our country.

By Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself and Mr. McCAIN):

S. 564. A bill to modernize water resources planning, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, today I introduce the Water Resources Planning and Modernization Act of 2007. I am pleased to be joined in introducing this legislation by the senior Senator from Arizona, Mr. McCAIN. We have worked together for some time to modernize the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and I thank Senator McCAIN for his continued commitment to this issue.

I was pleased that the Senate made significant progress last Congress and included many key reforms in the Senate-passed Water Resources Development Act. I again thank my colleagues who cosponsored a successful independent peer review amendment: the Senator from Delaware, Mr. CARPER; the Senator from Connecticut, Mr. LIEBERMAN; the former Senator from Vermont, Mr. Jeffords; and the Senators from Maine, Ms. COLLINS and Ms. SNOWE. I also want to acknowledge the Senator from California, Mrs. BOXER, for her support for this amendment. In addition, I appreciate the efforts to include reform provisions in the underlying bill by the then-Environment and Public Works Committee Chairs and Ranking Members: the former Senator from Vermont, Mr. Jeffords; the Senator from Montana, Mr. BAUCUS; the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. INHOFE; and the Senator from Missouri, Mr. BOND. After six years of efforts on this issue, we made significant progress. However, negotiations between the House and Senate stalled and no conference report was agreed to.

By introducing this bill today, I am renewing my efforts to ensure that the Corps of Engineers' water resources planning is brought into the 21st century. As we all know, Hurricane Katrina produced one of the most tragic and costly natural disasters in our Nation's history. Water resources projects authorized by Congress and planned by the Corps of Engineers contributed to the loss of vital coastal wetlands (which can provide natural buffers from storm surge), intensified the storm surge into New Orleans, and encouraged development in flood-prone areas.

The flawed project planning, however, did not end there. Floodwalls and levees that the Corps built to protect New Orleans failed catastrophically during Hurricane Katrina. It is now well recognized and indeed, the Corps has acknowledged—that flawed engineering and construction led to those failures and the flooding of much of New Orleans.

Over the past decade, dozens of governmental and scientific studies have documented other flaws in Corps of Engineers' project planning. Most recently, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) testified that recent Corps studies ''did not provide a reasonable basis for decision-making'' because they were ''were fraught with errors, mistakes, and miscalculations, and used invalid assumptions and outdated data.'' The GAO found that the recurring problems at the agency were ''systemic in nature and therefore prevalent throughout the Corps' Civil Works portfolio.''

We can, and must, do better.

Congress should not authorize additional Army Corps projects until it has considered and passed the reforms included in the Water Resources Planning and Modernization Act. From ensuring large projects are sound to using natural resources to protect our communities, modernizing water resources policy is a national priority.

The Water Resources Planning and Modernization Act of 2007 represents a sensible effort to increase our environmental stewardship and significantly reduce the government waste inherent in poorly designed or low priority U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects. It represents a way to both protect the environment and save taxpayer dollars. With support from Taxpayers for Common Sense Action, National Taxpayers Union, Council for Citizens Against Government Waste, American Rivers, Association of State Wetland Managers, Defenders of Wildlife, Earthjustice, Environmental Defense, Friends of the Earth, National Wildlife Federation, Republicans for Environmental Protection, Sierra Club, Surfrider Foundation, and the World Wildlife Fund, the bill has the backing of a committed and diverse coalition.

The Water Resources Planning and Modernization Act of 2007 can be broadly divided into five parts: ensuring sound projects and responsible spending, valuing our natural resources, focusing our resources, identifying vulnerabilities, and updating the Army Corps of Engineer's planning guidelines.

To ensure that Corps water resources projects are sound, the bill requires independent review of those projects estimated to cost over $40 million, those requested by a Governor of an affected state, those which the head of a federal agency has determined may lead to a significant adverse impact, or those that the Secretary of the Army has found to be controversial. As crafted in the bill, independent review should not increase the length of time required for project planning but would protect the public—both those in the vicinity of massive projects and those whose tax dollars are funding projects. The Director of Independent Review can also require independent review of the technical designs and construction of flood damage reduction projects to ensure public safety and welfare. The independent review provision is identical to that supported by a majority of my colleagues last Congress and included in the Senate-passed WRDA.

We must do a better job of valuing our natural resources, such as wetlands, that provide important services. These resources can help buffer communities from storms, filter contaminants out of our water, support vibrant economies, and provide vital fish and wildlife habitat. Recognizing the role

of these natural systems, the Water Resources Planning and Modernization Act of 2007 brings the Corps' 1986 mitigation standards into line with their regulatory program by requiring Corps water resources projects to meet the same mitigation standard that is required of all private citizens and other entities under the Clean Water Act. Where States have adopted stronger mitigation standards, the Corps must meet those standards. I feel very strongly that the Federal government should be able to live up to this requirement. Unfortunately, all too often, the Corps has not completed required mitigation. This legislation will make sure that mitigation is completed, that the true costs of mitigation are accounted for in Corps projects, and that the public is able to track the progress of mitigation projects.

Our current prioritization process is not serving the public good. To address this problem, the bill reinvigorates the Water Resources Council, originally established in 1965, and charges it with providing Congress a prioritized list of authorized water resource projects within one year of enactment and then every two years following. The prioritized list would also be printed in the Federal Register for the public to see. The Water Resources Council described in the bill, comprised of cabinet-level officials, would bring together varied perspectives to shape a list of national needs. In short, the prioritization process would be improved to make sure Congress has the tools to more wisely invest limited resources while also increasing public transparency in decision making—both needed and reasonable improvements to the status quo.

Taking stock of our vulnerabilities to natural disasters must also be a priority. For this reason, the bill also directs the Water Resources Council to identify and report to Congress on the nation's vulnerability to flood and related storm damage, including the risk to human life and property, and relative risks to different regions of the country. The Water Resources Council would also recommend improvements to the nation's various flood damage reduction programs to better address those risks. Many of these improvements were discussed in a government report following the 1993 floods so the building blocks are available; we just need to update the assessment. Then, of course, we must actually take action based on the assessment. To help speed such action, the legislation specifies that the Administration will submit a response to Congress, including legislative proposals to implement the recommendations, on the Water Resources Council report no later than 90 days after the report has been made public. We cannot afford to have this report, which will outline improvements to our flood damage reduction programs, languish like others before it.

The process by which the Army Corps of Engineers analyzes water projects should undergo periodic revision. Unfortunately, the Corps' principles and guidelines, which bind the planning process, have not been updated since 1983. This is why the bill requires that the Water Resources Council work in coordination with the National Academy of Sciences to propose periodic revisions to the Corps' planning principles and guidelines, regulations, and circulars. Updating the project planning process should involve consideration of a variety of issues, including the use of modern economic analysis and the same discount rates as used by all other Federal agencies. Simple steps such as these will lead to more precise estimates of project costs and benefits, a first step to considering whether a project should move forward.

Modernizing all aspects of our water resources policy will help restore credibility to a Federal agency historically rocked by scandal and currently plagued by public skepticism. Congress has long used the Army Corps of Engineers to facilitate favored pork-barrel projects, while periodically expressing a desire to change its ways. Back in 1836, a House Ways and Means Committee report referred to Congress ensuring that the Corps sought ''actual reform, in the further prosecution of public works.'' Over 150 years later, the need for actual reform is stronger than ever.

My office has strong working relationships with the Detroit, Rock Island, and St. Paul District Offices that service Wisconsin, and I do not want this bill to be misconstrued as reflecting on the work of those district offices. What I do want is the fiscal and management cloud over the entire Army Corps to dissipate so that the Corps can better contribute to our environment and our economy—without wasting taxpayer dollars or endangering public safety.

I wish the changes we are proposing today were not needed, but unfortunately that is not the case. In fact, if there were ever a need for the bill, it is now. We must make sure that future Corps projects produce predicted benefits, are in furtherance of national priorities, and do not have negative environmental impacts. This bill gives the Corps the tools it needs to do a better job and focuses the attention of Congress on national needs, which is what the American taxpayers and the environment deserve.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 564

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 ''Water Resources Planning and Modernization Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COUNCIL.—The term ''Council'' means the Water Resources Council established under section 101 of the Water Resources Planning Act (42 U.S.C. 1962a).

(2) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Army.

SEC. 3. NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES PLANNING AND MODERNIZATION POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States that all water resources projects carried out by the Corps of Engineers shall—

(1) reflect national priorities for flood damage reduction, navigation, and ecosystem restoration; and

(2) seek to avoid the unwise use of floodplains, minimize vulnerabilities in any case in which a floodplain must be used, protect and restore the extent and functions of natural systems, and mitigate any unavoidable damage to natural systems.

SEC. 4. MEETING THE NATION'S WATER RESOURCE PRIORITIES.

(a) REPORT ON THE NATION'S FLOOD RISKS.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Council shall submit to the President and Congress a report describing the vulnerability of the United States to damage from flooding and related storm damage, including the risk to human life, the risk to property, and the comparative risks faced by different regions of the country. The report shall assess the extent to which the Nation's programs relating to flooding are addressing flood risk reduction priorities and the extent to which those programs may unintentionally be encouraging development and economic activity in floodprone areas, and shall provide recommendations for improving those programs in reducing and responding to flood risks. Not later than 90 days after the report required by this subsection is published in the Federal Register, the Administration shall submit to Congress a report that responds to the recommendations of the Council and includes proposals to implement recommendations of the Council.

(b) PRIORITIZATION OF WATER RESOURCES PROJECTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Council shall submit to Congress an initial report containing a prioritized list of each water resources project of the Corps of Engineers that is not being carried out under a continuing authorities program, categorized by project type and recommendations with respect to a process to compare all water resources projects across project type. The Council shall submit to Congress a prioritized list of water resources projects of the Corps of Engineers every 2 years following submission of the initial report. In preparing the prioritization of projects, the Council shall endeavor to balance stability in the rankings from year to year with recognizing newly authorized projects. Each report prepared under this paragraph shall provide documentation and description of any criteria used in addition to those set forth in paragraph (2) for comparing water resources projects and the assumptions upon which those criteria are based.

(2) PROJECT PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA.—In preparing a report under paragraph (1), the Council shall prioritize each water resource project of the Corps of Engineers based on the extent to which the project meets at least the following criteria:

(A) For flood damage reduction projects, the extent to which such a project—

(i) addresses the most critical flood damage reduction needs of the United States as identified by the Council;

(ii) does not encourage new development or intensified economic activity in flood prone areas and avoids adverse environmental impacts; and

(iii) provides significantly increased benefits to the United States through the protection of human life, property, economic activity, or ecosystem services.

(B) For navigation projects, the extent to which such a project—

(i) produces a net economic benefit to the United States based on a high level of certainty that any projected trends upon which the project is based will be realized;

(ii) addresses priority navigation needs of the United States identified through comprehensive, regional port planning; and

(iii) minimizes adverse environmental impacts.

(C) For environmental restoration projects, the extent to which such a project—

(i) restores the natural hydrologic processes and spatial extent of an aquatic habitat;

(ii) is self-sustaining; and

(iii) is cost-effective or produces economic benefits.

(3) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that to promote effective prioritization of water resources projects, no project should be authorized for construction unless a final Chief's report recommending construction has been submitted to Congress, and annual appropriations for the Corps of Engineers' Continuing Authorities Programs should be distributed by the Corps of Engineers to those projects with the highest degree of design merit and the greatest degree of need, consistent with the applicable criteria established under paragraph (2).

(c) MODERNIZING WATER RESOURCES PLANNING GUIDELINES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 5 years thereafter, the Council, in coordination with the National Academy of Sciences, shall propose revisions to the planning principles and guidelines, regulations, and circulars of the Corps of Engineers to improve the process by which the Corps of Engineers analyzes and evaluates water projects.

(2) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—The Council shall solicit public and expert comment and testimony regarding proposed revisions and shall subject proposed revisions to public notice and comment.

(3) REVISIONS.—Revisions proposed by the Council shall improve water resources project planning through, among other things—

(A) focusing Federal dollars on the highest water resources priorities of the United States;

(B) requiring the use of modern economic principles and analytical techniques, credible schedules for project construction, and current discount rates as used by all other Federal agencies;

(C) discouraging any project that induces new development or intensified economic activity in flood prone areas, and eliminating biases and disincentives to providing projects to low-income communities, including fully accounting for the prevention of loss of life as required by section 904 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (33 U.S.C. 2281);

(D) eliminating biases and disincentives that discourage the use of nonstructural approaches to water resources development and management, and fully accounting for the flood protection and other values of healthy natural systems;

(E) utilizing a comprehensive, regional approach to port planning;

(F) promoting environmental restoration projects that reestablish natural processes;

(G) analyzing and incorporating lessons learned from recent studies of Corps of Engineers programs and recent disasters such as Hurricane Katrina and the Great Midwest Flood of 1993; and

(H) ensuring the effective implementation of the National Water Resources Planning and Modernization Policy established by this Act.

(d) REVISION OF PLANNING GUIDELINES.—Not later than 180 days after submission of the proposed revisions required by subsection (b), the Secretary shall implement the recommendations of the Council by incorporating the proposed revisions into the planning principles and guidelines, regulations, and circulars of the Corps of Engineers. These revisions shall be subject to public notice and comment pursuant to subchapter II of chapter 5, and chapter 7, of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Administrative Procedure Act''). Effective beginning on the date on which the Secretary carries out the first revision under this paragraph, the Corps of Engineers shall not be subject to—

(1) subsections (a) and (b) of section 80 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 1962d–17); and

(2) any provision of the guidelines entitled ''Economic and Environmental Principles and Guidelines for Water and Related Land Resources Implementation Studies'' and dated 1983, to the extent that such a provision conflicts with a guideline revised by the Secretary.

(e) AVAILABILITY.—Each report prepared under this section shall be published in the Federal Register and submitted to the Committees on Environment and Public Works and Appropriations of the Senate and the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure and Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(f) WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL.—Section 101 of the Water Resources Planning Act (42 U.S.C. 1962a) is amended in the first sentence by inserting ''the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Chairperson of the Council on Environmental Quality,'' after ''Secretary of Transportation,''.

(g) FUNDING.—In carrying out this section, the Council shall use funds made available for the general operating expenses of the Corps of Engineers.

SEC. 5. INDEPENDENT PEER REVIEW.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES.—The term ''construction activities'' means development of detailed engineering and design specifications during the preconstruction engineering and design phase and the engineering and design phase of a water resources project carried out by the Corps of Engineers, and other activities carried out on a water resources project prior to completion of the construction and to turning the project over to the local cost-share partner.

(2) PROJECT STUDY.—The term ''project study'' means a feasibility report, reevaluation report, or environmental impact statement prepared by the Corps of Engineers.

(b) DIRECTOR OF INDEPENDENT PEER REVIEW.—The Secretary shall appoint in the Office of the Secretary a Director of Independent Review. The Director shall be selected from among individuals who are distinguished experts in engineering, hydrology, biology, economics, or another discipline related to water resources management. The Secretary shall ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, that the Director does not have a financial, professional, or other conflict of interest with projects subject to review. The Director of Independent Review shall carry out the duties set forth in this section and such other duties as the Secretary deems appropriate.

(c) SOUND PROJECT PLANNING.—

(1) PROJECTS SUBJECT TO PLANNING REVIEW.—The Secretary shall ensure that each project study for a water resources project shall be reviewed by an independent panel of experts established under this subsection if—

(A) the project has an estimated total cost of more than $40,000,000, including mitigation costs;

(B) the Governor of a State in which the water resources project is located in whole or in part, or the Governor of a State within the drainage basin in which a water resources project is located and that would be directly affected economically or environmentally as a result of the project, requests in writing to the Secretary the establishment of an independent panel of experts for the project;

(C) the head of a Federal agency with authority to review the project determines that the project is likely to have a significant adverse impact on public safety, or on environmental, fish and wildlife, historical, cultural, or other resources under the jurisdiction of the agency, and requests in writing to the Secretary the establishment of an independent panel of experts for the project; or

(D) the Secretary determines on his or her own initiative, or shall determine within 30 days of receipt of a written request for a controversy determination by any party, that the project is controversial because—

(i) there is a significant dispute regarding the size, nature, potential safety risks, or effects of the project; or

(ii) there is a significant dispute regarding the economic, or environmental costs or benefits of the project.

(2) PROJECT PLANNING REVIEW PANELS.—

(A) PROJECT PLANNING REVIEW PANEL MEMBERSHIP.—For each water resources project subject to review under this subsection, the Director of Independent Review shall establish a panel of independent experts that shall be composed of not less than 5 nor more than 9 independent experts (including at least 1 engineer, 1 hydrologist, 1 biologist, and 1 economist) who represent a range of areas of expertise. The Director of Independent Review shall apply the National Academy of Science's policy for selecting committee members to ensure that members have no conflict with the project being reviewed, and shall consult with the National Academy of Sciences in developing lists of individuals to serve on panels of experts under this subsection. An individual serving on a panel under this subsection shall be compensated at a rate of pay to be determined by the Secretary, and shall be allowed travel expenses.

(B) DUTIES OF PROJECT PLANNING REVIEW PANELS.—An independent panel of experts established under this subsection shall review the project study, receive from the public written and oral comments concerning the project study, and submit a written report to the Secretary that shall contain the panel's conclusions and recommendations regarding project study issues identified as significant by the panel, including issues such as—

(i) economic and environmental assumptions and projections;

(ii) project evaluation data;

(iii) economic or environmental analyses;

(iv) engineering analyses;

(v) formulation of alternative plans;

(vi) methods for integrating risk and uncertainty;

(vii) models used in evaluation of economic or environmental impacts of proposed projects; and

(viii) any related biological opinions.

(C) PROJECT PLANNING REVIEW RECORD.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—After receiving a report from an independent panel of experts established under this subsection, the Secretary shall take into consideration any recommendations contained in the report and

shall immediately make the report available to the public on the Internet.

(ii) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Secretary shall prepare a written explanation of any recommendations of the independent panel of experts established under this subsection not adopted by the Secretary. Recommendations and findings of the independent panel of experts rejected without good cause shown, as determined by judicial review, shall be given equal deference as the recommendations and findings of the Secretary during a judicial proceeding relating to the water resources project.

(iii) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS AND PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The report of the independent panel of experts established under this subsection and the written explanation of the Secretary required by clause (ii) shall be included with the report of the Chief of Engineers to Congress, shall be published in the Federal Register, and shall be made available to the public on the Internet.

(D) DEADLINES FOR PROJECT PLANNING REVIEWS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Independent review of a project study shall be completed prior to the completion of any Chief of Engineers report for a specific water resources project.

(ii) DEADLINE FOR PROJECT PLANNING REVIEW PANEL STUDIES.—An independent panel of experts established under this subsection shall complete its review of the project study and submit to the Secretary a report not later than 180 days after the date of establishment of the panel, or not later than 90 days after the close of the public comment period on a draft project study that includes a preferred alternative, whichever is later. The Secretary may extend these deadlines for good cause.

(iii) FAILURE TO COMPLETE REVIEW AND REPORT.—If an independent panel of experts established under this subsection does not submit to the Secretary a report by the deadline established by clause (ii), the Chief of Engineers may continue project planning without delay.

(iv) DURATION OF PANELS.—An independent panel of experts established under this subsection shall terminate on the date of submission of the report by the panel. Panels may be established as early in the planning process as deemed appropriate by the Director of Independent Review, but shall be appointed no later than 90 days before the release for public comment of a draft study subject to review under subsection (c)(1)(A), and not later than 30 days after a determination that review is necessary under subsection (c)(1)(B), (c)(1)(C), or (c)(1)(D).

(E) EFFECT ON EXISTING GUIDANCE.—The project planning review required by this subsection shall be deemed to satisfy any external review required by Engineering Circular 1105-2-408 (31 May 2005) on Peer Review of Decision Documents.

(d) SAFETY ASSURANCE.—

(1) PROJECTS SUBJECT TO SAFETY ASSURANCE REVIEW.—The Secretary shall ensure that the construction activities for any flood damage reduction project shall be reviewed by an independent panel of experts established under this subsection if the Director of Independent Review makes a determination that an independent review is necessary to ensure public health, safety, and welfare on any project—

(A) for which the reliability of performance under emergency conditions is critical;

(B) that uses innovative materials or techniques;

(C) for which the project design is lacking in redundancy, or that has a unique construction sequencing or a short or overlapping design construction schedule; or

(D) other than a project described in subparagraphs (A) through (C), as the Director of Independent Review determines to be appropriate.

(2) SAFETY ASSURANCE REVIEW PANELS.—At the appropriate point in the development of detailed engineering and design specifications for each water resources project subject to review under this subsection, the Director of Independent Review shall establish an independent panel of experts to review and report to the Secretary on the adequacy of construction activities for the project. An independent panel of experts under this subsection shall be composed of not less than 5 nor more than 9 independent experts selected from among individuals who are distinguished experts in engineering, hydrology, or other pertinent disciplines. The Director of Independent Review shall apply the National Academy of Science's policy for selecting committee members to ensure that panel members have no conflict with the project being reviewed. An individual serving on a panel of experts under this subsection shall be compensated at a rate of pay to be determined by the Secretary, and shall be allowed travel expenses.

(3) DEADLINES FOR SAFETY ASSURANCE REVIEWS.—An independent panel of experts established under this subsection shall submit a written report to the Secretary on the adequacy of the construction activities prior to the initiation of physical construction and periodically thereafter until construction activities are completed on a publicly available schedule determined by the Director of Independent Review for the purposes of assuring the public safety. The Director of Independent Review shall ensure that these reviews be carried out in a way to protect the public health, safety, and welfare, while not causing unnecessary delays in construction activities.

(4) SAFETY ASSURANCE REVIEW RECORD.—After receiving a written report from an independent panel of experts established under this subsection, the Secretary shall—

(A) take into consideration recommendations contained in the report, provide a written explanation of recommendations not adopted, and immediately make the report and explanation available to the public on the Internet; and

(B) submit the report to the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

(e) EXPENSES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The costs of an independent panel of experts established under subsection (c) or (d) shall be a Federal expense and shall not exceed—

(A) $250,000, if the total cost of the project in current year dollars is less than $50,000,000; and

(B) 0.5 percent of the total cost of the project in current year dollars, if the total cost is $50,000,000 or more.

(2) WAIVER.—The Secretary, at the written request of the Director of Independent Review, may waive the cost limitations under paragraph (1) if the Secretary determines appropriate.

(f) REPORT.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report describing the implementation of this section.

(g) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect any authority of the Secretary to cause or conduct a peer review of the engineering, scientific, or technical basis of any water resources project in existence on the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 6. MITIGATION.

(a) MITIGATION.—Section 906(d) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (33 U.S.C. 2283(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''to the Congress'' and inserting ''to Congress, and shall not choose a project alternative in any final record of decision, environmental impact statement, or environmental assessment,'', and by inserting in the second sentence ''and other habitat types'' after ''bottomland hardwood forests''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) MITIGATION REQUIREMENTS.—

''(A) MITIGATION.—To mitigate losses to flood damage reduction capabilities and fish and wildlife resulting from a water resources project, the Secretary shall ensure that mitigation for each water resources project complies fully with the mitigation standards and policies established by each State in which the project is located. Under no circumstances shall the mitigation required for a water resources project be less than would be required of a private party or other entity under section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1344).

''(B) MITIGATION PLAN.—The specific mitigation plan for a water resources project required under paragraph (1) shall include, at a minimum—

''(i) a detailed plan to monitor mitigation implementation and ecological success, including the designation of the entities that will be responsible for monitoring;

''(ii) specific ecological success criteria by which the mitigation will be evaluated and determined to be successful, prepared in consultation with the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service or the Director of the National Marine Fisheries Service, as appropriate, and each State in which the project is located;

''(iii) a detailed description of the land and interests in land to be acquired for mitigation, and the basis for a determination that land and interests are available for acquisition;

''(iv) sufficient detail regarding the chosen mitigation sites, and types and amount of restoration activities to be conducted, to permit a thorough evaluation of the likelihood of the ecological success and aquatic and terrestrial resource functions and habitat values that will result from the plan; and

''(v) a contingency plan for taking corrective actions if monitoring demonstrates that mitigation efforts are not achieving ecological success as described in the ecological success criteria.

''(4) DETERMINATION OF MITIGATION SUCCESS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Mitigation under this subsection shall be considered to be successful at the time at which monitoring demonstrates that the mitigation has met the ecological success criteria established in the mitigation plan.

''(B) EVALUATION AND REPORTING.—The Secretary shall consult annually with the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Director of the National Marine Fisheries Service, as appropriate, and each State in which the project is located, on each water resources project requiring mitigation to determine whether mitigation monitoring for that project demonstrates that the project is achieving, or has achieved, ecological success. Not later than 60 days after the date of completion of the annual consultation, the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service or the Director of the National Marine Fisheries Service, as appropriate, shall, and each State in which the project is located may, submit to the Secretary a report that describes—

''(i) the ecological success of the mitigation as of the date of the report;

''(ii) the likelihood that the mitigation will achieve ecological success, as defined in the mitigation plan;

''(iii) the projected timeline for achieving that success; and

''(iv) any recommendations for improving the likelihood of success.

The Secretary shall respond in writing to the substance and recommendations contained in such reports not later than 30 days after the date of receipt. Mitigation monitoring shall continue until it has been demonstrated that the mitigation has met the ecological success criteria.''.

(b) MITIGATION TRACKING SYSTEM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish a recordkeeping system to track, for each water resources project constructed, operated, or maintained by the Secretary and for each permit issued under section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1344)—

(A) the quantity and type of wetland and other habitat types affected by the project, project operation, or permitted activity;

(B) the quantity and type of mitigation required for the project, project operation, or permitted activity;

(C) the quantity and type of mitigation that has been completed for the project, project operation, or permitted activity; and

(D) the status of monitoring for the mitigation carried out for the project, project operation, or permitted activity.

(2) REQUIRED INFORMATION AND ORGANIZATION.—The recordkeeping system shall—

(A) include information on impacts and mitigation described in paragraph (1) that occur after December 31, 1969; and

(B) be organized by watershed, project, permit application, and zip code.

(3) AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall make information contained in the recordkeeping system available to the public on the Internet.

SEC. 7. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION.

(a) CHIEF'S REPORTS.—The Chief of Engineers shall not submit a Chief's report to Congress recommending construction of a water resources project until that Chief's report has been reviewed and approved by the Secretary of the Army.

(b) PROJECT TRACKING.—The Secretary shall assign a unique tracking number to each water resources project, to be used by each Federal agency throughout the life of the project.

(c) REPORT REPOSITORY.—The Secretary shall maintain at the Library of Congress a copy of each final feasibility study, final environmental impact statement, final reevaluation report, record of decision, and report to Congress prepared by the Corps of Engineers. These documents shall be made available to the public for review, and electronic copies of those documents shall be permanently available, through the Internet website of the Corps of Engineers.

By Mr. BINGAMAN (for himself, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. SALAZAR, and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 565. A bill to expand and enhance postbaccalaureate opportunities at Hispanic-serving institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the next generation of Hispanic Serving Institutions legislation. This legislation is critical if we, as a nation, are going to continue to compete in a global economy. Education is the key to building a strong and dynamic economy, and therefore, it is our obligation to ensure quality educational opportunities for all Americans. That is why I am introducing, along with my colleague, Senator HUTCHISON, the Next Generation Hispanic Serving Institutions Act of 2007. This legislation is supported by the Hispanic Associations of Colleges and Universities, and the Hispanic Education Coalition, a coalition of 25 organizations dedicated to improving educational opportunities for more than 40 million Hispanics living in the United States. I ask unanimous consent that their letters of support appear in the text following this statement. Senators BILL NELSON, MARTINEZ, CLINTON, CORNYN, SALAZAR, BOXER, and FEINSTEIN have joined in this effort as cosponsors.

According to Census Bureau data, the Hispanic population in the United States grew by 25.7 million between 1970 and 2000, and continues to grow at a very brisk pace. The most recent Census data puts the Hispanic population at over 40 million, representing approximately 14 percent of the U.S. population and making it the Nation's largest minority group. Estimates project that the Hispanic population will grow by 25 million between 2000 and 2020. By the year 2050, 1 in 4 Americans will be of Hispanic origin.

Currently, Hispanics make up about 13 percent of the U.S. labor force. While the overall labor force is projected to slow down over the next decades as an increasing number of workers reach retirement age, the Hispanic labor force is expected to continue growing at a fast pace. It will expand by nearly 10 million workers between now and 2020, through a combination of immigration and native-born youth reaching working age.

Our Nation's economic and social success rests, in large part, on the level of skills and knowledge attained by our Hispanic population.

I was one of the authors and lead supporters of the original Hispanic-Serving Institutions proposal when it was enacted as part of the Higher Education Act in 1992 in order to increase educational opportunities for Hispanic students. Since then, Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) have made significant strides in increasing the number of Hispanic students enrolling in and graduating from college. Although Hispanic-serving institutions account for only 5 percent of all institutions of higher education in the United States, HSIs enroll over half (51 percent) of all Hispanics pursuing higher education degrees in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

While Hispanic high school graduates go on to college at higher rates than they did even ten years ago, Hispanics still lag behind their non-Hispanic peers in postsecondary school enrollment. In 2000, only 21.7 percent of all Hispanics ages 18 through 24 were enrolled in postsecondary degree-granting institutions in the United States.

We must take HSIs to the next level. While the percentage of Hispanics attending college has increased significantly over the past few years, Hispanics only earned 6 percent of all bachelor's degrees awarded, 4 percent of all master's degrees, and only 3 percent of all doctorates. But the pace of bachelor's degrees or higher earned by Hispanics is accelerating rapidly, according to the Department of Education. Therefore, we must keep pace. We must increase the capacity of our institutions of higher education to serve the increasing number of Hispanic students.

The Next Generation HSI bill does just that. Simply, this legislation will improve educational opportunities for Hispanic students by establishing a competitive grant program to expand post-baccalaureate degree opportunities at HSIs.

Current law only provides support for two-year and four-year Hispanic Serving Institutions. This legislation will support graduate fellowships and support services for graduate students, facilities improvement, faculty development, technology and distance education, and collaborative arrangements with other institutions. This legislation will build capacity and establish a long overdue graduate program for HSIs.

Hispanic students now account for nearly 17 percent of the total kindergarten through grade 12 student population. Estimates project that this student population will grow from 11 million in 2005 to 16 million in 2020. We must provide our institutions of higher education with the resources and supports to build capacity and serve the increasing Hispanic student population. We must be ready for the next generation of students to meet the demands of a competitive workforce and to fully participate in the global economy. I ask unanimous consent that the text of this bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the materials were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

HACU,
San Antonio, TX, February 8, 2007.

Hon. JEFF BINGAMAN,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR BINGAMAN: On behalf of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and its 450 member institutions, I want to express my sincerest appreciation for your efforts in re-introducing the ''Next Generation Hispanic-Serving Institutions Act.'' You have long been a champion of Hispanic higher education issues and we appreciate all that you do.

This landmark piece of legislation, first introduced in the 108th Congress with bipartisan support, will help to eradicate the chronic shortage of Hispanic professionals lacking advanced degrees. As we both know, the number of Hispanics earning post-baccalaureate degrees at HSIs between the years of 1991 and 2000 increased by 136 percent, thus showing the demand and need to increase graduate program capacity at these institutions. Of the more than 270 HSIs serving half

of the 1.8 million Hispanics enrolled in higher education programs, only 44 have graduate programs in place. This failure to provide adequate graduate opportunity is a travesty to the Hispanic community and should be addressed.

The eagerly anticipated re-introduction of The Next Generation Hispanic-Serving Institutions Act in the 110th Congress will be a central focus of HACU's 2007 Legislative Agenda. As the only nationally recognized voice for our country's fast-growing community of HSIs, HACU fully recognizes the critical importance of this proposal to dramatically expand post-baccalaureate degree opportunities for the country's youngest and largest ethnic population.

Your past success at winning support for HSIs in Title V of the Higher Education Act and your new efforts to build upon that success with the inclusion of a new graduate education component are extraordinary testimony to your leadership in opening the doors to college and career success for this and future generations of our youth.

Please call upon our offices for any assistance in support of your important work, which is so critical to building a better future for our Hispanic communities and for our country.

Respectfully,

ANTONIO R. FLORES,
President and CEO.

HISPANIC EDUCATION COALITION,
February 8, 2007.

Hon. JEFF BINGAMAN,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR BINGAMAN: On behalf of the Hispanic Education Coalition and its twenty-five member organizations, we express our strong support for your re-introduction of the ''Next Generation Hispanic-Serving Institutions Act.'' You have long been a champion of Hispanic higher education, and we appreciate all that you do to secure equal educational opportunities for Latinos.

The Next Generation Hispanic-Serving Institutions Act will help to eradicate the chronic shortage of Hispanic professionals with advanced degrees. The number of Hispanics earning post-baccalaureate degrees at HSIs between the years of 1991 and 2000 increased by 136 percent, demonstrating a high demand and need to increase graduate program capacity at these institutions. Out of 262 HACU member HSIs that serve over 50% of the 1.6 million Hispanics enrolled in higher education programs, only 44 currently have graduate programs in place. The Next Generation Hispanic-Serving Institutions Act will help to remedy this deficit.

The Hispanic Education Coalition and its member organizations commend your leadership and will work with you to secure final passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

PETER ZAMORA,
Acting Regional Counsel, MALDEF.

ROGER ROSENTHAL,
Executive Director, Migrant Legal Action Program.

S. 565

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 ''Next Generation Hispanic-Serving Institutions Act''.

SEC. 2. POSTBACCALAUREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HISPANIC AMERICANS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—Title V of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating part B as part C;

(2) by redesignating sections 511 through 518 as sections 521 through 528, respectively; and

(3) by inserting after section 505 (20 U.S.C. 1101d) the following new part:

''PART B—PROMOTING POSTBACCALAUREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HISPANIC AMERICANS

''SEC. 511. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

''(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

''(1) According to the United States Census, by the year 2050 one in four Americans will be of Hispanic origin.

''(2) Despite the dramatic increase in the Hispanic population in the United States, the National Center for Education Statistics reported that in 1999, Hispanics accounted for only 4 percent of the master's degrees, 3 percent of the doctor's degrees, and 5 percent of first-professional degrees awarded in the United States.

''(3) Although Hispanics constitute 10 percent of the college enrollment in the United States, they comprise only 3 percent of instructional faculty in colleges and universities.

''(4) The future capacity for research and advanced study in the United States will require increasing the number of Hispanics pursuing postbaccalaureate studies.

''(5) Hispanic-serving institutions are leading the Nation in increasing the number of Hispanics attaining graduate and professional degrees.

''(6) Among Hispanics who received master's degrees in 1999–2000, 25 percent earned them at Hispanic-serving institutions.

''(7) Between 1991 and 2000, the number of Hispanic students earning master's degrees at Hispanic-serving institutions grew 136 percent, the number receiving doctor's degrees grew by 85 percent, and the number earning first-professional degrees grew by 47 percent.

''(8) It is in the national interest to expand the capacity of Hispanic-serving institutions to offer graduate and professional degree programs.

''(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this part are—

''(1) to expand postbaccalaureate educational opportunities for, and improve the academic attainment of, Hispanic students; and

''(2) to expand and enhance the postbaccalaureate academic offerings, and program quality, that are educating the majority of Hispanic college students and helping large numbers of Hispanic students and other low-income individuals complete post-secondary degrees.

''SEC. 512. PROGRAM AUTHORITY AND ELIGIBILITY.

''(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—Subject to the availability of funds appropriated to carry out this part, the Secretary shall award competitive grants to Hispanic-serving institutions that offer postbaccalaureate certifications or degrees.

''(b) ELIGIBILITY.—In this part, an 'eligible institution' means an institution of higher education that—

''(1) is an eligible institution under section 502; and

''(2) offers a postbaccalaureate certificate or degree granting program.

''SEC. 513. AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.

''Grants awarded under this part shall be used for 1 or more of the following activities:

''(1) Purchase, rental, or lease of scientific or laboratory equipment for educational purposes, including instructional and research purposes.

''(2) Construction, maintenance, renovation, and improvement in classroom, library, laboratory, and other instructional facilities, including purchase or rental of telecommunications technology equipment or services.

''(3) Purchase of library books, periodicals, technical and other scientific journals, microfilm, microfiche, and other educational materials, including telecommunications program materials.

''(4) Support for needy postbaccalaureate students including outreach, academic support services, mentoring, scholarships, fellowships, and other financial assistance to permit the enrollment of such students in postbaccalaureate certificate and degree granting programs.

''(5) Support of faculty exchanges, faculty development, faculty research, curriculum development, and academic instruction.

''(6) Creating or improving facilities for Internet or other distance learning academic instruction capabilities, including purchase or rental of telecommunications technology equipment or services.

''(7) Collaboration with other institutions of higher education to expand postbaccalaureate certificate and degree offerings.

''(8) Other activities proposed in the application submitted pursuant to section 514 that—

''(A) contribute to carrying out the purposes of this part; and

''(B) are approved by the Secretary as part of the review and acceptance of such application.

''SEC. 514. APPLICATION AND DURATION.

''(a) APPLICATION.—Any eligible institution may apply for a grant under this part by submitting an application to the Secretary at such time and in such manner as determined by the Secretary. Such application shall demonstrate how the grant funds will be used to improve postbaccalaureate education opportunities for Hispanic and low-income students and will lead to greater financial independence.

''(b) DURATION.—Grants under this part shall be awarded for a period not to exceed 5 years.

''(c) LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall not award more than 1 grant under this part in any fiscal year to any Hispanic-serving institution.''.

(b) COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS.—Section 524(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (as redesignated by subsection (a)(2)) is amended by inserting ''and section 513'' after ''section 503''.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 528(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (as redesignated by subsection (a)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

''(a) AUTHORIZATIONS.—

''(1) PART A.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out part A of this title $175,000,000 for fiscal year 2008 and such sums as may be necessary for each of the 4 succeeding fiscal years.

''(2) PART B.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out part B of this title $125,000,000 for fiscal year 2008 and such sums as may be necessary for each of the 4 succeeding fiscal years.''.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN) (by request):

S. 567. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, Senator MCCAIN and I are today introducing, by request, the administration's proposed

National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008. As is the case with any bill that is introduced by request, we introduce this bill for the purpose of placing the administration's proposals before Congress and the public without expressing our own views on the substance of these proposals. As chairman and ranking member of the Armed Services Committee, we look forward to giving the administration's requested legislation our most careful review and thoughtful consideration.

By Mr. LUGAR:

S. 569. A bill to accelerate efforts to develop vaccines for diseases primarily affecting developing countries and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the Vaccines for the Future Act of 2007.

This legislation seeks to accelerate the development of vaccines for HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other diseases that are major killers of people living in developing countries. HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis are devastating sub-Saharan Africa where, combined, they claim as many as 5 million lives a year. Yet there are no vaccines for these diseases.

Vaccines are one of the most effective public health measures of the 20th century. With U.S. leadership, the global community has eradicated smallpox, and we are close to eradicating polio. Vaccines for diseases such as measles and tetanus have dramatically reduced childhood mortality worldwide. These public health victories benefit every country.

Vaccines for diseases such as AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and for other, less well-known diseases would save millions of lives. Partnerships between governments, private foundations, and businesses have made significant strides toward the development of vaccines, but much more needs to be done.

One of the biggest challenges is that drug companies do not have a strong financial incentive to invest in the development of vaccines for these diseases because there is no reliable market for them. In other words, vaccine manufacturers are reluctant to commit the hundreds of millions of dollars necessary to create a new vaccine with no obvious way to recoup their investment. What is needed is the promise of market demand to encourage industry to develop the vaccines for these diseases.

Five countries—Britain, Italy, Norway, Russia, and Canada—along with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, have developed such a market solution. On February 9, 2007, in Rome, they pledged $1.5 billion for an initiative called an Advance Market Commitment, AMC, aimed at encouraging pharmaceutical companies to develop vaccines for diseases caused by the pneumococcus bacterium, such as pneumonia and meningitis. These diseases claim the lives of an estimated 1 million children per year, most of whom live in the developing world. Through this AMC, these countries and the Gates Foundation have pledged to purchase pneumococcal vaccines that will work in poor countries.

Although a vaccine for pneumococcal disease exists in the United States and other developed countries, this version is not effective against the strains prevalent in developing countries. By committing to purchase large quantities of a successful vaccine beforehand, the Advance Market Commitment aims to bridge the gap between the vaccine makers' research costs and the future sales needed to cover the costs of their investment. Experts are hopeful that this initiative could accelerate by a decade the widespread use of a pneumococcal vaccine specific to the developing world and could prevent the deaths of an estimated 5.4 million children by 2030.

In 2005, the United States, at the G8 Summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, agreed to encourage the development of vaccines for diseases affecting the developing world and endorsed the Advance Market Commitment concept. I believe that, with continued strong U.S. leadership, we can save many more lives in this new century. Because of the promise that vaccines hold, I am introducing the ''Vaccines for the Future Act of 2007.'' My bill would authorize the United States to contribute to the Advance Market Commitment for pneumococcal vaccines. Equally important, it would require the administration to develop a comprehensive strategy and make a commitment to speed development, testing, and distribution of life-saving vaccines for other diseases, including AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis, through innovative financial incentives like the AMC.

I am hopeful that my fellow Senators will join me in supporting this legislation.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 569

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 ''Vaccines for the Future Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) AIDS.—The term ''AIDS'' has the meaning given the term in section 104A(g) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151b–2).

(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(3) DEVELOPING COUNTRY.—The term ''developing country'' means a country that the World Bank determines to be a country with a lower middle income or less.

(4) HIV/AIDS.—The term ''HIV/AIDS'' has the meaning given the term in section 104A(g) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151b–2).

(5) GAVI ALLIANCE.—The term ''GAVI Alliance'' means the public-private partnership launched in 2000 for the purpose of saving the lives of children and protecting the health of all people through the widespread use of vaccines.

(6) NEGLECTED DISEASE.—The term ''neglected disease'' means—

(A) HIV/AIDS;

(B) malaria;

(C) tuberculosis; or

(D) any infectious disease that, according to the World Health Organization, afflicts over 1,000,000 people and causes more than 250,000 deaths each year in developing countries.

(7) WORLD BANK.—The term ''World Bank'' means the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Immunization is an inexpensive and effective public health intervention that has had a profound life-saving impact around the world.

(2) During the 20th century, global immunization efforts have successfully led to the eradication of smallpox and the elimination of polio from the Western Hemisphere, Europe, and most of Asia. Vaccines for diseases such as measles and tetanus have dramatically reduced childhood mortality worldwide, and vaccines for diseases such as influenza, pneumonia, and hepatitis help prevent sickness and death of adults as well as children.

(3) According to the World Health Organization, combined, AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria kill more than 5,000,000 people a year, most of whom are in the developing world, yet there are no vaccines for these diseases.

(4) Other, less well-known neglected diseases, such as pneumococcal disease, lymphatic filariasis, leptospirosis, leprosy, and onchocerciasis, result in severe health consequences for individuals afflicted with them, such as anemia, blindness, malnutrition and impaired childhood growth and development. In addition, these diseases result in lost productivity in developing countries costing in the billions of dollars.

(5) Infants, children, and adolescents are among the populations hardest hit by AIDS, malaria, and many other neglected diseases. Nearly 11,000,000 children under age 5 die each year due to these diseases, primarily in developing countries. Existing and future vaccines that target children could prevent more than 2,500,000 of these illnesses and deaths.

(6) The devastating impact of neglected diseases in developing countries threatens the political and economic stability of these countries and constitutes a threat to United States economic and security interests.

(7) Of more than $100,000,000,000 spent on health research and development across the world, only $6,000,000,000 is spent each year on diseases that are specific to developing countries, most of which is from public and philanthropic sources.

(8) Despite the devastating impact these and other diseases have on developing countries, it is estimated that only 10 percent of the world's research and development on health is targeted on diseases affecting 90 percent of the world's population.

(9) Because the developing country market is small and unpredictable, there is an insufficient private sector investment in research

for vaccines for neglected diseases that disproportionately affect populations in developing countries.

(10) Creating a broad range of economic incentives to increase private sector research on neglected diseases is critical to the development of vaccines for neglected diseases.

(11) In recognition of the need for more economic incentives to encourage private sector investment in vaccines for neglected diseases, an international group of health, technical, and economic experts has developed a framework for an advance market commitment pilot program for pneumococcal vaccines. Pneumococcal disease, a cause of pneumonia and meningitis, kills 1,600,000 people every year, an estimated 1,000,000 of whom are children under age 5. This pilot program will seek to stimulate investments to develop and produce pneumococcal vaccines that could prevent between 500,000 and 700,000 deaths by the year 2020.

(12) On February 9, 2007, 5 countries, Britain, Canada, Italy, Norway, and Russia, together with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, pledged, under a plan called an Advance Market Commitment, to purchase pneumococcal vaccines now under development. Together, these countries and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation have committed $1,500,000,000 for this program. Experts believe that this initiative could accelerate by a decade the widespread use of such a vaccine in the developing world and could prevent the deaths of an estimated 5,400,000 children by 2030.

SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON SUPPORT FOR NEGLECTED DISEASES.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the President should continue to encourage efforts to support the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise, a virtual consortium of scientists and organizations committed to accelerating the development of an effective HIV vaccine;

(2) the United States should work with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (''UNAIDS''), the World Health Organization, the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, the GAVI Alliance, and the World Bank to ensure that all countries heavily affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic have national AIDS vaccine plans;

(3) the United States should support and encourage the carrying out of the agreements of the Group of 8 made at the 2005 Summit at Gleneagles, Scotland, to increase direct investment and create market incentives, including through public-private partnerships and advance market commitments, to complement public research in the development of vaccines, microbicides, and drugs for HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and other neglected diseases;

(4) the United States should support the development of effective vaccines for infants, children, and adolescents as early as is medically and ethically appropriate, in order to avoid significant delays in the availability of pediatric vaccines at the cost of thousands of lives;

(5) the United States should continue supporting the work of the GAVI Alliance and the Global Fund for Children's Vaccines as appropriate and effective vehicles to purchase and distribute vaccines for neglected diseases at an affordable price once such vaccines are discovered in order to distribute them to the developing world;

(6) the United States should work with others in the international community to address the multiple obstacles to the development of vaccines for neglected diseases including scientific barriers, insufficient economic incentives, protracted regulatory procedures, lack of delivery systems for products once developed, liability risks, and intellectual property rights; and

(7) the United States should contribute to the pilot Advance Market Commitment for pneumococcal vaccines launched in Rome on February 9, 2007, which could prevent some 500,000 to 700,000 child deaths by the year 2020 and an estimated 5,400,000 child deaths by 2030.

SEC. 5. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Partnerships between governments and the private sector (including foundations, universities, corporations, community-based organizations, and other nongovernmental organizations) are playing a critical role in the area of global health, particularly in the fight against neglected diseases, including HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria.

(2) These public-private partnerships improve the delivery of health services in developing countries and accelerate research and development of vaccines and other preventive medical technologies essential to combating infectious diseases that disproportionately kill people in developing countries.

(3) These public-private partnerships maximize the unique capabilities of each sector while combining financial and other resources, scientific knowledge, and expertise toward common goals which cannot be achieved by either sector alone.

(4) Public-private partnerships such as the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, PATH's Malaria Vaccine Initiative, and the Global TB Drug Facility are playing cutting edge roles in the efforts to develop vaccines for these diseases.

(5) Public-private partnerships serve as incentives to the research and development of vaccines for neglected diseases by providing biotechnology companies, which often have no experience in developing countries, with technical assistance and on the ground support for clinical trials of the vaccine through the various stages of development.

(6) Sustaining existing public-private partnerships and building new ones where needed are essential to the success of the efforts by the United States and others in the international community to find a cure for these and other neglected diseases.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the sustainment and promotion of public-private partnerships must be a central element of the strategy pursued by the United States to create effective incentives for the development of vaccines and other preventive medical technologies for neglected diseases debilitating the developing world; and

(2) the United States Government should take steps to address the obstacles to the development of these technologies by increasing investment in research and development and establishing market and other incentives.

SEC. 6. COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY FOR ACCELERATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF VACCINES FOR NEGLECTED DISEASES.

(a) REQUIREMENT FOR STRATEGY.—The President shall establish a comprehensive strategy to accelerate efforts to develop vaccines and microbicides for neglected diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis. Such strategy shall—

(1) expand public-private partnerships and seek to leverage resources from other countries and the private sector;

(2) include the negotiation of advance market commitments and other initiatives to create economic incentives for the research, development, and manufacturing of vaccines and microbicides for HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and other neglected diseases;

(3) address intellectual property issues surrounding the development of vaccines and microbicides for neglected diseases;

(4) maximize United States capabilities to support clinical trials of vaccines and microbicides in developing countries;

(5) address the issue of regulatory approval of such vaccines and microbicides, whether through the Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, or the World Health Organization, or another entity; and

(6) expand the purchase and delivery of existing vaccines.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report setting forth the strategy described in subsection (a) and the steps to implement such strategy.

SEC. 7. ADVANCE MARKET COMMITMENTS.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to improve global health by creating a competitive market for future vaccines through advance market commitments.

(b) AUTHORITY TO NEGOTIATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall enter into negotiations with the appropriate officials of the World Bank, the International Development Association, and the GAVI Alliance, the member nations of such entities, and other interested parties for the purpose of establishing advance market commitments to purchase vaccines and microbicides to combat neglected diseases.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the status of the negotiations to create advance market commitments under this section. This report may be submitted as part of the report submitted under section 6(b).

(c) REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall work with the entities referred to in subsection (b) to ensure that there is an international framework for the establishment and implementation of advance market commitments and that such commitments include—

(1) legally binding contracts for product purchase that include a fair market price for a guaranteed number of treatments to ensure that the market incentive is sufficient;

(2) clearly defined and transparent rules of competition for qualified developers and suppliers of the product;

(3) clearly defined requirements for eligible vaccines to ensure that they are safe and effective;

(4) dispute settlement mechanisms; and

(5) sufficient flexibility to enable the contracts to be adjusted in accord with new information related to projected market size and other factors while still maintaining the purchase commitment at a fair price.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2014 to fund an advance market commitment pilot program for pneumococcal vaccines.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated pursuant to this subsection shall remain available until expended without fiscal year limitation.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. WEBB):

S. 570. A bill to designate additional National Forest System lands in the State of Virginia as wilderness or a wilderness study area, to designate the Kimberling Creek Potential Wilderness Area for eventual incorporation in the

Kimberling Creek Wilderness, to establish the Seng Mountain and Bear Creek Scenic Areas, to provide for the development of trail plans for the wilderness areas and scenic areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Virginia Ridge and Valley Act of 2007. This bill seeks to add six new wilderness areas, expand six existing wilderness areas, and create two new national scenic areas in the Jefferson National Forest. Today, Congressman RICK BOUCHER will join me by introducing companion legislation in the United States House of Representatives.

Throughout my nearly three decades in the United States Senate, I have strived to preserve Virginia's natural resources through the designation of wilderness areas and, today, I am proud to say that Virginia boasts just over 100,000 acres of designated wilderness lands. However, there is still much work to be done. If enacted, the Virginia Ridge and Valley Act of 2007 will substantially increase this figure by expanding our opportunities for uninterrupted enjoyment in the forest with the addition of nearly 43,000 acres of new wilderness and wilderness study lands and almost 12,000 acres of national scenic areas.

Virginia is blessed with great natural beauty and diversity. From the coves and inlets of the Chesapeake Bay, to the exquisite peaks of the Shenandoah Mountains, residents and visitors alike can enjoy a bountiful array of natural treasures. As demand for development in Virginia continues to increase, it is imperative that Congress act expeditiously to protect these wild lands. Through wilderness and national scenic area designations, we can ensure that these areas retain their natural character and influences.

As an avid outdoorsman, I enjoy opportunities for recreation like most Americans. Therefore, I want to stress the many joyful outdoor activities that will be enhanced by the wilderness designation in these areas, including: hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, canoeing, and horseback riding, to name a few. By designating these lands as wilderness and scenic areas, we ensure that Virginians will be able to enjoy these activities in an unspoiled playground for generations to come.

I am pleased that my colleague from Virginia, Senator JIM WEBB, has agreed to co-sponsor this important legislation, and I urge the rest of my colleagues to join me in support of this bill. I thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the Virginia Ridge and Valley Act of 2007.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. SMITH, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 572. A bill to ensure that Federal student loans are delivered as efficiently as possible in order to provide more grant aid to students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, more than 40 years ago, Congress recognized the importance of a college education in opening the door to the American dream. We agreed then that no qualified student should be denied the opportunity to go to college because of the cost. Guided by that principle, we enacted the Higher Education Act of 1965.

Times have changed since then. College education has become even more critical to success in the global economy. Yet, Congress has shamefully lost sight of this fundamental principle, especially in recent years.

Today, 400,000 qualified students a year don't attend a four-year college because they can't afford it. The cost of college has more than tripled over the last twenty years, and vast numbers of families can't keep up. Twenty years ago, the maximum Pell Grant—the lifeline to college for low-income and first-generation students—covered more than half the cost of attendance at a typical four-year public college. Today, it only covers 32 percent.

Yet each year, the federal government wastes billions of taxpayer dollars on subsidies to private lenders to do a job that could be done much more efficiently without these middlemen.

At a time when students and families are pinching pennies more than ever to pay for college, we can't let this situation continue. We should use scarce tax dollars to help students, not banks.

The system we created 40 years ago involved federally-guaranteed student loans made by private lenders, and it's now known as the Federal Family Education Loan Program, or FFEL. At that time, Congress wasn't sure lenders would be willing to loan money to students with no credit history, so we created a system with guarantees against default. Four decades later, student default rates are near an all-time low and private lenders hold over $100 billion in federal student loan volume. Federal guarantees and subsidies have made student loans the second most profitable business for banks, after credit cards. The stock price of the biggest lender, Sallie Mae, has skyrocketed from $3 to more than $40 in the last decade.

In 1994, Congress finally recognized that we could give students a better deal and save billions of dollars by cutting out the middleman. We created the Direct Loan program, in which loans are issued directly to students, from the United States Treasury. The loans are serviced and collected under contracts with private companies, but there is no middleman making the loans.

The Direct Loan program is much less expensive for taxpayers, because it provides loan capital at a lower rate than banks, and avoids billions of dollars in unnecessary subsidies to lenders.

If we had gone to a system of 100 percent Direct Loans in 1994, the government would have saved over $30 billion since the program was created. Unfortunately, because of the lobbying of the private lenders, the FFEL program continues, and the Direct Loan program has never been allowed to compete on a level playing field.

As a result, we continue to waste taxpayer money by paying an unnecessary middleman, we shield lenders from risk, and we continue to guarantee them a very profitable return.

It's time to encourage serious competition in the college loan marketplace, and let students reap the benefits.

Today, Senator GORDON SMITH (R-OR), Congressmen GEORGE MILLER (D-CA) and TOM PETRI (R-WI) and I are proposing a bipartisan plan to do that. Our bill will increase student financial aid by squeezing billions of dollars in corporate welfare out of the student loan program.

Our bill, The Student Aid Reward Act, will provide colleges and universities with grant aid to increase scholarships for their students. It is completely paid for by increased efficiency in delivering student loans. The bill encourages colleges to use the direct loans, which are cheaper for both the government and taxpayers, and allows them to keep half the savings to increase need-based aid. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that our plan will generate $13 billion in savings over the next 10 years from schools switching to the more efficient program. The bill would provide at least $10 billion for additional college scholarship aid at no additional cost to taxpayers.

According to President Bush's 2008 education budget, student loans made through the more expensive FFEL program in 2007 cost $3 more for every $100 in loans than the same loans made directly from the Treasury. Yet, colleges and students have no incentive under current law to use the more efficient program.

Our Student Aid Reward Act encourages colleges to choose the less expensive of the government's student loan programs.

It requires the Secretary of Education to determine every year which loan program is more efficient. Schools are rewarded with additional scholarship funds for using the more efficient of the two programs. Competition will encourage both programs to improve the efficiency of their operations. Schools, students, and taxpayers will all benefit.

Estimates based on the most recent Bush Administration budget indicate that under our plan, each college will receive an incentive payment equal to one and a half percent of the total amount borrowed by students at the college.

In Massachusetts: students at Boston College will receive almost $1.4 million in additional financial aid. Students at UMASS Amherst will receive $1.3 million more. Students at Springfield College will receive over $700,000 more.

Students at Emerson College would receive nearly half a million dollars more.

For students nationwide, college will be more affordable for millions of young men and women at no additional taxpayer cost.

Title IV of the Higher Education Act today is called ''Student Assistance''—not ''Lender Assistance.'' The federal student aid system was created to help students and families afford college. But in recent years, it has been corrupted into a system that lines the pockets of the banks. It's time to throw the private money lenders out of the temple of higher education. Scarce Federal education dollars should go to deserving students, not greedy private lenders.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the Student Aid Reward Act of 2007 be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 572

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 ''Student Aid Reward Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. STUDENT AID REWARD PROGRAM.

Part G of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1088 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 489 the following:

''SEC. 489A. STUDENT AID REWARD PROGRAM.

''(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary shall carry out a Student Aid Reward Program to encourage institutions of higher education to participate in the student loan program under this title that is most cost-effective for taxpayers.

''(b) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the Student Aid Reward Program, the Secretary shall—

''(1) provide to each institution of higher education participating in the student loan program under this title that is most cost-effective for taxpayers, a Student Aid Reward Payment, in an amount determined in accordance with subsection (c), to encourage the institution to participate in that student loan program;

''(2) require each institution of higher education receiving a payment under this section to provide student loans under such student loan program for a period of 5 years after the date the first payment is made under this section;

''(3) where appropriate, require that funds paid to institutions of higher education under this section be used to award students a supplement to such students' Federal Pell Grants under subpart 1 of part A;

''(4) permit such funds to also be used to award need-based grants to lower- and middle-income graduate students; and

''(5) encourage all institutions of higher education to participate in the Student Aid Reward Program under this section.

''(c) AMOUNT.—The amount of a Student Aid Reward Payment under this section shall be not less than 50 percent of the savings to the Federal Government generated by the institution of higher education's participation in the student loan program under this title that is most cost-effective for taxpayers instead of the institution's participation in the student loan program that is not most cost-effective for taxpayers.

''(d) TRIGGER TO ENSURE COST NEUTRALITY.—

''(1) LIMIT TO ENSURE COST NEUTRALITY.—Notwithstanding subsection (c), the Secretary shall not distribute Student Aid Reward Payments under the Student Aid Reward Program that, in the aggregate, exceed the Federal savings resulting from the implementation of the Student Aid Reward Program.

''(2) FEDERAL SAVINGS.—In calculating Federal savings, as used in paragraph (1), the Secretary shall determine Federal savings on loans made to students at institutions of higher education that participate in the student loan program under this title that is most cost-effective for taxpayers and that, on the date of enactment of this section, participated in the student loan program that is not most cost-effective for taxpayers, resulting from the difference of—

''(A) the Federal cost of loan volume made under the student loan program under this title that is most cost-effective for taxpayers; and

''(B) the Federal cost of an equivalent type and amount of loan volume made, insured, or guaranteed under the student loan program under this title that is not most cost-effective for taxpayers.

''(3) DISTRIBUTION RULES.—If the Federal savings determined under paragraph (2) is not sufficient to distribute full Student Aid Reward Payments under the Student Aid Reward Program, the Secretary shall—

''(A) first make Student Aid Reward Payments to those institutions of higher education that participated in the student loan program under this title that is not most cost-effective for taxpayers on the date of enactment of this section; and

''(B) with any remaining Federal savings after making Student Aid Reward Payments under subparagraph (A), make Student Aid Reward Payments to the institutions of higher education eligible for a Student Aid Reward Payment and not described in subparagraph (A) on a pro-rata basis.

''(4) DISTRIBUTION TO STUDENTS.—Any institution of higher education that receives a Student Aid Reward Payment under this section—

''(A) shall distribute, where appropriate, part or all of such payment among the students of such institution who are Federal Pell Grant recipients by awarding such students a supplemental grant; and

''(B) may distribute part of such payment as a supplemental grant to graduate students in financial need.

''(5) ESTIMATES, ADJUSTMENTS, AND CARRY OVER.—

''(A) ESTIMATES AND ADJUSTMENTS.—The Secretary shall make Student Aid Reward Payments to institutions of higher education on the basis of estimates, using the best data available at the beginning of an academic or fiscal year. If the Secretary determines thereafter that loan program costs for that academic or fiscal year were different than such estimate, the Secretary shall adjust by reducing or increasing subsequent Student Aid Reward Payments paid to such institutions of higher education to reflect such difference.

''(B) CARRY OVER.—Any institution of higher education that receives a reduced Student Aid Reward Payment under paragraph (3)(B), shall remain eligible for the unpaid portion of such institution's financial reward payment, as well as any additional financial reward payments for which the institution is otherwise eligible, in subsequent academic or fiscal years.

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) The term 'student loan program under this title that is most cost-effective for taxpayers' means the loan program under part B or D of this title that has the lowest overall cost to the Federal Government (including administrative costs) for the loans authorized by such parts.

''(2) The term 'student loan program under this title that is not most cost-effective for taxpayers' means the loan program under part B or D of this title that does not have the lowest overall cost to the Federal Government (including administrative costs) for the loans authorized by such parts.''.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 573. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and the Public health Service Act to improve the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases in women; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, February is American Heart Month, and heart disease remains the Nation's leading cause of death.

Many women believe that heart disease is a man's disease and, unfortunately, do not review it as a serious health threat. However, every year, since 1984, cardiovascular disease claims the lives of more women than men. In fact, cardiovascular disease death rates have declined significantly in men since 1979, while the death rate for women hasn't experienced the same rate of decline. The numbers are disturbing: cardiovascular diseases claim the lives of more than 460,000 women per year; that's nearly a death a minute among females and nearly 12 times as many lives as claimed by breast cancer. One in three females has some form of cardiovascular disease. And one in four females dies from heart disease.

That is why I am pleased to join my colleague from Michigan, Senator STABENOW, to introduce important legislation, the HEART for Women Act, or Heart disease Education, Analysis and Research, and Treatment for Women Act. This important bill improves the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of heart disease and stroke in women.

In my State of Alaska—taken together—heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases are also the leading cause of death, totaling nearly 800 deaths each year. Women in Alaska have higher death rates from stroke than do women nationally. Mortality among Native Alaskan women is dramatically on the rise, whereas, it is actually declining among Caucasian women in the Lower 48.

Despite being the number one killer, many women and their health care providers do not know that the biggest health care threat to women is heart disease. In fact, a recent survey found that 43 percent of women still don't know that heart disease is the number one killer of women.

Perhaps even more troubling, is the lack of awareness among health care providers. According to American

Heart Association figures, less than one in five physicians recognize that more women suffer from heart disease than men. Among primary care physicians, only 8 percent of primary care physicians—and even more astounding—only 17 percent of cardiologists recognize that more women die of heart disease than men. Additionally, studies show that women are less likely to receive aggressive treatment because heart disease often manifests itself differently in women than men.

This is why the HEART Act is so important. Our bill takes a three-pronged approach to reducing the heart disease death rate for women, through; 1. education; 2. research; and, 3. screening.

First, the bill would authorize the Department of Health and Human Services to educate healthcare professionals and older women about unique aspects of care in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of women with heart disease and stroke.

Second, the bill would require disclosure of gender-specific health information that is already being reported to the Federal Government. Many agencies already collect information based on gender, but do not disseminate or analyze the gender differences. This bill would release that information so that it could be studied, and important health trends in women could be detected.

Lastly, the bill would authorize the expansion of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's WISEWOMAN program (the Well-Integrated Screening and Evaluation for Women Across the Nation program). The WISEWOMAN program provides free heart disease and stroke screening to low-income uninsured women, but the program is currently limited to just 14 States.

My State of Alaska is fortunate to have two WISEWOMAN program sites. These programs screen for high blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose in Native Alaskan women and provide invaluable counseling on diet and exercise. One program in Alaska alone has successfully screened 1,437 Alaskan Native women and has provided them with a culturally appropriate intervention program that has produced live-saving results.

Mr. President, heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases cost Americans more than any other disease—an estimated $430 billion in 2007, including more than $280 billion in direct medical costs. To put that number in perspective, that's about the same as the projected Federal deficit for 2007. We, as a nation, can control those costs—prevention through early detection is the most cost-effective way to combat this disease.

Tomorrow, as we celebrate Valentine's Day and see images of hearts just about everywhere, let us not forget that the heart is much more than a symbol—it is a vital organ that can't be taken for granted. Coronary disease can be effectively treated and sometimes even prevented—it does not have to be the number one cause of death in women. And, that is why I encourage my colleagues to support the HEART for Women Act.

By Mr. REID:

S. 574. A bill to express the sense of Congress on Iraq; read the first time.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 574

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON IRAQ.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect the members of the United States Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably in Iraq; and

(2) Congress disapproves of the decision of President George W. Bush announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq.

SEC. 2. FREQUENCY OF REPORTS ON CERTAIN ASPECTS OF POLICY AND OPERATIONS.

The United States Policy in Iraq Act (section 1227 of Public Law 109–163; 119 Stat. 3465; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d) FREQUENCY OF REPORTS ON CERTAIN ASPECTS OF UNITED STATES POLICY AND MILITARY OPERATIONS IN IRAQ.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this subsection, and every 30 days thereafter until all United States combat brigades have redeployed from Iraq, the President shall submit to Congress a report on the matters set forth in paragraphs (1)(A), (1)(B), and (2) of subsection (c). To the maximum extent practicable each report shall be unclassified, with a classified annex if necessary.''.

By Mr. DOMENICI (for himself, Mr. DORGAN, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. KYL, and Mrs. MURRAY)

S. 575. A bill to authorize appropriations for border and transportation security personnel and technology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I rise today with Senator DORGAN to introduce a bill of critical importance to the security of our borders: the Border Infrastructure and Technology Modernization Act.

It was two decades ago when an American border last underwent a comprehensive infrastructure overhaul. That was when Senator Dennis DeConcini of Arizona and I put forth a $357 million effort to modernize the southwest border. A great deal has changed since 1986, and more importantly, since September 11, 2001. Congress has acted to improve security at airports and seaports, but we have not yet addressed our busiest ports, located on our land borders. This is where our infrastructure is its weakest, and we must act to prevent terrorists from exploiting this weakness. It is critical that we give our northern and southern borders the resources they need to address their vulnerabilities.

In 2001, the General Services Administration completed a comprehensive assessment of infrastructure needs on the southwestern and northern borders of the United States. This assessment found that overhauling both borders would cost $784 million.

Since the publication of that assessment, many of the needs identified remain outstanding, and new needs have arisen as facilitating commerce has become more complicated in the face of new security concerns.

Congress must address these needs. We must give the Department of Homeland Security the tools it needs to secure our borders. The Border Infrastructure and Technology Modernization Act creates a number of those tools.

The bill requires the General Service Administration (GSA) to identify port of entry infrastructure and technology improvement projects that would enhance homeland security. The GSA would work with the Department of Homeland Security to prioritize and implement these projects based on need.

The Secretary of Homeland Security would have to prepare a Land Border Security Plan to assess the vulnerabilities at each port of entry on the northern border and the southern border. This plan will require the cooperation of Federal, State and local entities involved at our borders to ensure that the individuals with first hand knowledge of our border needs are consulted about the plan.

My bill would also modernize homeland security along the United States' borders by implementing a program to test and evaluate new technologies.

Because equipment and technology alone will not solve the security problems on our border, these test sites will also house facilities so personnel who must use these technologies can train under realistic conditions.

I believe that these measures are an important part of addressing this nation's homeland security needs, and I am pleased to introduce the bill with Senator DORGAN.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 575

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 ''Border Infrastructure and Technology Modernization Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COMMISSIONER.—The term ''Commissioner'' means the Commissioner responsible for United States Customs and Border Protection of the Department of Homeland Security.

(2) MAQUILADORA.—The term ''maquiladora'' means an entity located in

Mexico that assembles and produces goods from imported parts for export to the United States.

(3) NORTHERN BORDER.—The term ''northern border'' means the international border between the United States and Canada.

(4) SOUTHERN BORDER.—The term ''southern border'' means the international border between the United States and Mexico.

(5) UNDER SECRETARY.—The term ''Under Secretary'' means the Under Secretary for Border and Transportation Security of the Department of Homeland Security.

SEC. 3. HIRING AND TRAINING OF BORDER AND TRANSPORTATION SECURITY PERSONNEL.

(a) INSPECTORS AND AGENTS.—

(1) INCREASE IN INSPECTORS AND AGENTS.—During each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012, the Under Secretary shall—

(A) increase the number of full-time agents and associated support staff in the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement of the Department of Homeland Security by the equivalent of at least 100 more than the number of such employees in the Bureau as of the end of the preceding fiscal year; and

(B) increase the number of full-time inspectors and associated support staff in the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection by the equivalent of at least 200 more than the number of such employees in the Bureau as of the end of the preceding fiscal year.

(2) WAIVER OF FTE LIMITATION.—The Under Secretary is authorized to waive any limitation on the number of full-time equivalent personnel assigned to the Department of Homeland Security to fulfill the requirements of paragraph (1).

(b) TRAINING.—The Under Secretary shall provide appropriate training for agents, inspectors, and associated support staff of the Department of Homeland Security on an ongoing basis to utilize new technologies and to ensure that the proficiency levels of such personnel are acceptable to protect the borders of the United States.

SEC. 4. PORT OF ENTRY INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT STUDY.

(a) REQUIREMENT TO UPDATE.—Not later than January 31 of each year, the Administrator of General Services shall update the Port of Entry Infrastructure Assessment Study prepared by the United States Customs Service, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the General Services Administration in accordance with the matter relating to the ports of entry infrastructure assessment that is set out in the joint explanatory statement in the conference report accompanying H.R. 2490 of the 106th Congress, 1st session (House of Representatives Rep. No. 106–319, on page 67) and submit such updated study to Congress.

(b) CONSULTATION.—In preparing the updated studies required in subsection (a), the Administrator of General Services shall consult with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Under Secretary, and the Commissioner.

(c) CONTENT.—Each updated study required in subsection (a) shall—

(1) identify port of entry infrastructure and technology improvement projects that would enhance border security and facilitate the flow of legitimate commerce if implemented;

(2) include the projects identified in the National Land Border Security Plan required by section 5; and

(3) prioritize the projects described in paragraphs (1) and (2) based on the ability of a project to—

(A) fulfill immediate security requirements; and

(B) facilitate trade across the borders of the United States.

(d) PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION.—The Commissioner shall implement the infrastructure and technology improvement projects described in subsection (c) in the order of priority assigned to each project under paragraph (3) of such subsection.

(e) DIVERGENCE FROM PRIORITIES.—The Commissioner may diverge from the priority order if the Commissioner determines that significantly changed circumstances, such as immediate security needs or changes in infrastructure in Mexico or Canada, compellingly alter the need for a project in the United States.

SEC. 5. NATIONAL LAND BORDER SECURITY PLAN.

(a) REQUIREMENT FOR PLAN.—Not later than January 31 of each year, the Under Secretary shall prepare a National Land Border Security Plan and submit such plan to Congress.

(b) CONSULTATION.—In preparing the plan required in subsection (a), the Under Secretary shall consult with the Under Secretary for Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection and the Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies and private entities that are involved in international trade across the northern border or the southern border.

(c) VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The plan required in subsection (a) shall include a vulnerability assessment of each port of entry located on the northern border or the southern border.

(2) PORT SECURITY COORDINATORS.—The Under Secretary may establish 1 or more port security coordinators at each port of entry located on the northern border or the southern border—

(A) to assist in conducting a vulnerability assessment at such port; and

(B) to provide other assistance with the preparation of the plan required in subsection (a).

SEC. 6. EXPANSION OF COMMERCE SECURITY PROGRAMS.

(a) CUSTOMS-TRADE PARTNERSHIP AGAINST TERRORISM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commissioner, in consultation with the Under Secretary, shall develop a plan to expand the size and scope (including personnel needs) of the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism programs along the northern border and southern border, including—

(A) the Business Anti-Smuggling Coalition;

(B) the Carrier Initiative Program;

(C) the Americas Counter Smuggling Initiative;

(D) the Container Security Initiative;

(E) the Free and Secure Trade Initiative; and

(F) other Industry Partnership Programs administered by the Commissioner.

(2) SOUTHERN BORDER DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commissioner shall establish a demonstration program along the southern border for the purpose of implementing at least one Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism program along that border. The Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism program selected for the demonstration program shall have been successfully implemented along the northern border as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) MAQUILADORA DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commissioner shall establish a demonstration program to develop a cooperative trade security system to improve supply chain security.

SEC. 7. PORT OF ENTRY TECHNOLOGY DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Under Secretary shall carry out a technology demonstration program to test and evaluate new port of entry technologies, refine port of entry technologies and operational concepts, and train personnel under realistic conditions.

(b) TECHNOLOGY AND FACILITIES.—

(1) TECHNOLOGY TESTED.—Under the demonstration program, the Under Secretary shall test technologies that enhance port of entry operations, including those related to inspections, communications, port tracking, identification of persons and cargo, sensory devices, personal detection, decision support, and the detection and identification of weapons of mass destruction.

(2) FACILITIES DEVELOPED.—At a demonstration site selected pursuant to subsection (c)(2), the Under Secretary shall develop facilities to provide appropriate training to law enforcement personnel who have responsibility for border security, including cross-training among agencies, advanced law enforcement training, and equipment orientation.

(c) DEMONSTRATION SITES.—

(1) NUMBER.—The Under Secretary shall carry out the demonstration program at not less than 3 sites and not more than 5 sites.

(2) SELECTION CRITERIA.—To ensure that at least 1 of the facilities selected as a port of entry demonstration site for the demonstration program has the most up-to-date design, contains sufficient space to conduct the demonstration program, has a traffic volume low enough to easily incorporate new technologies without interrupting normal processing activity, and can efficiently carry out demonstration and port of entry operations, at least 1 port of entry selected as a demonstration site shall—

(A) have been established not more than 15 years before the date of the enactment of this Act;

(B) consist of not less than 65 acres, with the possibility of expansion onto not less than 25 adjacent acres; and

(C) have serviced an average of not more than 50,000 vehicles per month in the 12 full months preceding the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER AGENCIES.—The Under Secretary shall permit personnel from an appropriate Federal or State agency to utilize a demonstration site described in subsection (c) to test technologies that enhance port of entry operations, including those related to inspections, communications, port tracking, identification of persons and cargo, sensory devices, personal detection, decision support, and the detection and identification of weapons of mass destruction.

(e) REPORT.—

(1) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Under Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the activities carried out at each demonstration site under the technology demonstration program established under this section.

(2) CONTENT.—The report shall include an assessment by the Under Secretary of the feasibility of incorporating any demonstrated technology for use throughout the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection.

SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In addition to any funds otherwise available, there are authorized to be appropriated—

(1) to carry out the provisions of section 3, such sums as may be necessary for the fiscal years 2008 through 2012;

(2) to carry out the provisions of section 4—

(A) to carry out subsection (a) of such section, such sums as may be necessary for the fiscal years 2008 through 2012; and

(B) to carry out subsection (d) of such section—

(i) $100,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2008 through 2012; and

(ii) such sums as may be necessary in any succeeding fiscal year;

(3) to carry out the provisions of section 6—

(A) to carry out subsection (a) of such section—

(i) $30,000,000 for fiscal year 2008, of which $5,000,000 shall be made available to fund the demonstration project established in paragraph (2) of such subsection; and

(ii) such sums as may be necessary for the fiscal years 2009 through 2012; and

(B) to carry out subsection (b) of such section—

(i) $5,000,000 for fiscal year 2008; and

(ii) such sums as may be necessary for the fiscal years 2009 through 2012; and

(4) to carry out the provisions of section 7, provided that not more than $10,000,000 may be expended for technology demonstration program activities at any 1 port of entry demonstration site in any fiscal year—

(A) $50,000,000 for fiscal year 2008; and

(B) such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 2009 through 2012.

(b) INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS.—Funds authorized in this Act may be used for the implementation of projects described in the Declaration on Embracing Technology and Cooperation to Promote the Secure and Efficient Flow of People and Commerce across our Shared Border between the United States and Mexico, agreed to March 22, 2002, Monterrey, Mexico (commonly known as the Border Partnership Action Plan) or the Smart Border Declaration between the United States and Canada, agreed to December 12, 2001, Ottawa, Canada that are consistent with the provisions of this Act.

By Mr. DODD (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. FEINGOLD, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 576. A bill to provide for the effective prosecution of terrorists and guarantee due process rights; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Restoring the Constitution Act of 2007—a bill to provide for the effective prosecution of terrorists and guarantee due process rights. I am pleased to be joined by Senators LEAHY, FEINGOLD, and MENENDEZ as original cosponsors. This bill would make significant important changes to the Military Commissions Act of 2006 which became law last October.

I have served in this body for more than a quarter-century, but I remember few days darker than September 28, 2006, the day the Senate passed President Bush's Military Commissions Act. Let me be honest with you, I believe this body gave in to fear that day. I believe we looked for refuge in the rule of men, when we should have trusted in the rule of law.

Restoring the Constitution Act of 2007 is more than mere tinkering with provisions of the Military Commissions Act. This legislation, which is similar to the bill that I introduced in the last Congress, makes major and important changes to that law in order to ensure we have the essential legal tools to achieve a lasting American victory without violating American values.

What does this proposed legislation do?

It restores the writ of habeas corpus for individuals held in U.S. custody.

It narrows the definition of unlawful enemy combatant to individuals who directly participate in hostilities against the United States in a zone of active combat, who are not lawful combatants.

It requires that the United States live up to its Geneva Convention obligations by deleting a prohibition in the law that bars detainees from invoking Geneva Conventions as a source of rights at trial.

It permits the accused to retain qualified civilian attorneys to represent them at trial.

It prevents the use of evidence in court gained through the unreliable and immoral practices of torture and coercion.

It charges the military judge with the responsibility for ensuring that the jury is appropriately informed as to the sources, methods and activities associated with developing out of court statements proposed to be introduced at trial, or alternatively that the statement is not introduced.

It empowers military judges to exclude hearsay evidence they deem to be unreliable.

It authorizes the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces to review decisions by the military commissions.

It limits the authority of the President to interpret the meaning and application of the Geneva Conventions and makes that authority subject to congressional and judicial oversight.

It clarifies the definition of war crimes in statute to include certain violations of the Geneva Conventions.

Finally, it provides for expedited judicial review of the Military Commissions Act of 2006 to determine the constitutionally of its provisions.

To be clear—I absolutely believe that under very clearly proscribed circumstances military commissions can be a useful instrument for bringing our enemies to justice. But those who ask us to choose between national security and moral authority are offering us a false choice, and a dangerous one. Our Nation has been defeating tyrants and would-be tyrants for more than two centuries. And in all that struggle, we've never sold our principles—because if We did, we would be walking in the footsteps of those we most despise.

In times of peril, throwing away due process has been a constant temptation—but that is why we honor so highly those who resisted it. At Nuremberg, America rejected the certainty of execution for the uncertainty of a trial, and gave birth to a half-century of moral authority. Today I am asking my colleagues to reclaim that tradition, to put the principles of the Constitution above the passion of the moment. That reclamation can begin today—if we remedy President Bush's repugnant law. We can do it—and keep America Secure at the same time.

Freedom from torture. The right to counsel. Habeas corpus. To be honest, it still amazes me that we have to come to the floor of the Senate to debate these protections at all. What would James Madison have said if you told him that someday in the future, a Senator from Connecticut would be forced to publicly defend habeas corpus, the defendant's right to a day in court, the foundation of Our legal system dating back to the 13 century? What have we come to that such long-settled, long-honored rights have been called into question?

But here we are. And now it is upon us to renew them. I'd like to talk in detail about several key components of my legislation. The Military Commissions Act eliminated habeas corpus. Habeas corpus allows a person held by the government to question the legality of his detention. In my view, to deny this right not only undermines the rule of law, but damages the very fabric of America. It is not who we are, and it is not who we aspire to be. My bill reopens the doors to the Court house by restoring the writ of habeas corpus for individuals held in U.S. custody.

By approving the Military Commissions Act, Congress abdicated its constitutionally-mandated authority and responsibility to safeguard this principle and serve as a co-equal check on the executive branch. This law confers an unprecedented level of power on the president, allowing him the sole right to designate any individual as an ''unlawful enemy combatant'' if he or she engaged in hostilities or supported hostilities against the United States. In my view and in the view of many legal experts, this definition of ''unlawful enemy combatant'' is unmanageably vague. As we have all seen, ''unlawful enemy combatants'' are subject to arrest and indefinite detention, in many cases without ever being changed with a crime, let alone being found guilty. My bill would curtail potential abuse of the unlawful enemy combatant designation by narrowing the definition of unlawful enemy combatant to individuals who directly participate in hostilities against the United States in ''a zone of active combat'', and who are not lawful combatants. This correction is desperately needed to restore America's standing in the world and to right injustices that have recently been documented by international human rights organizations.

According to the Pentagon, last October, only 70 out of the 435 detainees housed at U.S. prison camps were expected to face a military trial, leaving hundreds of others to be held indefinitely. And while the Pentagon acknowledges that at least 110 of these detainees were labeled ''ready to release,'' for some reason they have been kept under lock and key. Then there are stories such as the one about Asif Iqbal, a British humanitarian aid volunteer who, according to a January 10, 2007 Associated Press story, was mistakenly captured in Afghanistan and subjected to isolation, painful positioning, screeching music, strobe

lights, sleep deprivation, and extreme temperatures. After three months, of enduring such treatment, Iqbal was released in 2004 without any charges brought against him.

Such sordid episodes have gravely undermined our apparent commitment to the Geneva Conventions and damaged our status both at home and in the global community. By failing to reaffirm our obligations under these vital treaties, the Military Commissions Act has only further eroded America's moral authority and perhaps ceded our nation's status as the leading proponent of international law and human rights. For this reason, the legislation I am offering today will reaffirm our obligations under the Geneva Conventions in several key ways. First, it would allow detainees to invoke the Geneva Conventions as a source of rights in their trials, overturning a ban put in place by the Military Commissions Act. Second, this legislation will limit the authority of the President to interpret and redefine the meaning and application of the Geneva Conventions by subjecting this authority to Congressional and judicial oversight. Lastly, my bill would statutorily define certain violations of the Geneva Conventions as war crimes. These provisions are all vitally important in allowing the United States to effectively wage the war on terror. The war that we are currently waging requires increasing international cooperation, but the President's plan puts us on a path of increasing isolation from even our staunchest allies.

Furthermore, this path is undermining our government's commitments to fundamental tenets of the American legal system. One of these tenets entails the right of the accused not only to confront his/her accuser but also to retain an attorney to represent him/her at trial. This is a basic right afforded to even the most egregious criminals under domestic law. And yet, under the administration's plan, this measure is being abandoned. In response, my bill sets standards for legal representation and allows for civilian legal counsel in military commission proceedings.

Even more importantly, my bill improves on these proceedings by prohibiting the use in court of any evidence that was gained through the unreliable and immoral practices of coercion. Incredibly, the Military Commissions Act lacks this blanket ban on evidence gained through torture. This is critically important for two very different reasons. Torture has been proven to be ineffective in interrogations, yielding highly unreliable information because a detainee, hoping to end the pain, will simply say whatever he believes an interrogator wants to hear. Second, torture allows foreign militaries to mistreat future American prisoners of war and use U.S. actions as an excuse. No one has said it with more authority than our colleague, Senator JOHN MCCAIN.

As he stated last year, ''the intelligence we collect must be reliable and acquired humanely, under clear standards understood by all our fighting men and women . . . the cruel actions of a few to darken the reputation of our country in the eyes of millions,''

To address these concerns, my bill restores to military judges the responsibility of ensuring that information introduced at trial has not been obtained through methods defined as cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment by the Detainee Treatment Act of 2005. Sadly, the Military Commissions Act shows disrespect for and mistrust of the highly trained professionals on our military's bench by stripping them of autonomy and authority. The legislation I am proposing today empowers military judges to exclude hearsay evidence they deem to be unreliable. In addition, this bill will grant military judges discretion in the event that classified evidence has a bearing on the innocence of an individual but is excluded due to national security concerns and declassified alternatives are insufficient. America's military judges have been fully trained and prepared to handle classified information. The Bush administration's failure to recognize this fact is an insult to the men and women of our military's bench and an affront to our military's justice system.

Unlike the current administration, I trust our courts to be able to handle the delicate legal and national security issues inherent in the cases involving so-called unlawful enemy combatants. This legislation therefore provides for appeals of the military commissions' decisions to be heard by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces. In my view, the right to an appeal is one of the most fundamental rights granted to anyone in our justice system. We 3 grant appeals to people accused of some of the most heinous crimes imaginable. We do this because we know that courts are not infallible. They can err in their decisions, and in order for these mistakes to be rectified and to avoid punishing innocent men and women, appeals must be allowed.

All of these provisions are important. But perhaps none is more urgent than the final measure in my bill, which requires expedited judicial review of the Military Commissions Act of 2006 to determine the constitutionally of its provisions. I believe that the United States Congress made a crucial mistake—that is why we must ensure that each provision of the Administration's Military Commissions Act is quickly reviewed by our Nation's courts. I believe that upon such review, those best qualified to make these judgments—members of our esteemed judiciary—will see to it that the most egregious provisions of this act will be overturned.

All 100 members of this body have been given the gravest of responsibilities. The people of this country have entrusted us with this Nation's security; and they have entrusted us with this Nation's principles. But those who argue that our principles stand in the way of our security are sadly, sorely mistaken: They are the source of our strength.

Five months ago, we departed from that source. But it is not too late to turn back. It is not too late to redeem our error. I implore my colleagues to join me.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I am pleased to cosponsor the Restoring the Constitution Act of 2007, which was introduced today by Senator DODD. It amends the deeply flawed Military Commissions Act of 2006 to restore basic due process rights and to ensure that no person is subject to indefinite detention without charge based on the sole discretion of the President.

Let me be clear: I welcome efforts to bring terrorists to justice. This administration has for too long been distracted by the war in Iraq from the fight against al Qaeda. We need a renewed focus on the terrorist networks that present the greatest threat to this country.

Last year, the President agreed to consult with Congress on the makeup of military commissions only because he was essentially ordered to do so by the Supreme Court in the Hamdan decision. Congress should have taken that opportunity to pass legislation that would allow these trials to proceed in accordance with our laws and our values. That is what separates America from our enemies. These trials, conducted appropriately, would have had the potential to demonstrate to the world that our democratic, constitutional system of government is not a hindrance but a source of strength in fighting those who attacked us.

Instead, we passed the Military Commissions Act, legislation that violates the basic principles and values of our constitutional system of government. It allows the government to seize individuals on American soil and detain them indefinitely with no opportunity for them to challenge their detention in court. And the new law would permit an individual to be convicted on the basis of coerced testimony and even allow someone convicted under these rules to be put to death.

The checks and balances of our system of government and the fundamental fairness of the American people and legal system are among our greatest strengths in the fight against terrorism. I was deeply disappointed that Congress enacted the Military Commissions Act. The day that bill became law was a stain on our Nation's history.

It is time to undo the harm caused by that legislation.

The Restoring the Constitution Act amends the Military Commissions Act to remedy its most serious flaws, and I am pleased to support it.

First of all, this legislation would restore the great writ of habeas corpus, to ensure that detainees at Guantanamo Bay and elsewhere—people who have been held for years but have not

been tried or even charged with any crime—have the ability to challenge their detention in court. Senator DODD's bill would repeal the habeas stripping provisions of both the Military Commissions Act and the Detainee Treatment Act.

Habeas corpus is a fundamental recognition that in America, the government does not have the power to detain people indefinitely and arbitrarily. And that in America, the courts must have the power to review the legality of executive detention decisions.

Habeas corpus is a longstanding vital part of our American tradition, and is enshrined in the U.S. Constitution.

As a group of retired judges wrote to Congress last year, habeas corpus ''safeguards the most hallowed judicial role in our constitutional democracy—ensuring that no man is imprisoned unlawfully.''

The Military Commissions Act fundamentally altered that historical equation. Faced with an executive branch that has detained hundreds of people without trial for years now, it eliminated the right of habeas corpus.

Under the Military Commissions Act, some individuals, at the designation of the executive branch alone, could be picked up, even in the United States, and held indefinitely without trial, without due process, without any access whatsoever to the courts. They would not be able to call upon the laws of our great nation to challenge their detention because they would have been put outside the reach of the law.

That is unacceptable, and it almost surely violates our Constitution. But that determination will take years of protracted litigation. Under the Dodd bill, we would not have to wait. We would restore the right to habeas corpus now. We can provide a lawful system of military commissions so that those who have committed war crimes can be brought to justice, without denying one of the most basic rights guaranteed by the Constitution to those held in custody by our government.

Some have suggested that terrorists who take up arms against this country should not be allowed to challenge their detention in court. But that argument is circular—the writ of habeas allows those who might be mistakenly detained to challenge their detention in court, before a neutral decision-maker. The alternative is to allow people to be detained indefinitely with no ability to argue that they are not, in fact, enemy combatants. Unless it can be said with absolute certainty that every person detained as an enemy combatant was correctly detained—and there is ample evidence to suggest that is not the case—then we should make sure that people can't simply be locked up forever, without court review, based on someone slapping a ''terrorist'' label on them.

We must return to the great writ. We must be true to our Nation's proud traditions and principles by restoring the writ of habeas corpus, by making clear that we do not permit our government to pick people up off the street, even in U.S. cities, and detain them indefinitely without court review. That is not what America is about.

But the Restoring the Constitution Act does far more than restore habeas corpus. It also addresses who can be subject to trial by military commission.

The Military Commissions Act was justified as necessary to allow our government to prosecute Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and other dangerous men transferred to Guantanamo Bay in 2006. Yet if you look at the fine print of that legislation, it becomes clear that it is much, much broader than that. It would permit trial by military commission not just for those accused of planning the September 11 attacks, but also individuals, including legal permanent residents of this country, who are alleged to have ''purposefully and materially supported hostilities'' against the United States or its allies.

This is extremely broad. And by including hostilities not only against the United States but also against its allies, the Military Commissions Act allows the U.S. to hold and try by military commission individuals who have never engaged, directly or indirectly, in any action against the United States.

Not only that, but the Military Commissions Act would also define as an unlawful enemy combatant subject to trial by military commission, anyone who ''has been determined to be an unlawful enemy combatant by a Combatant Status Review Tribunal or another competent tribunal established under the authority of the President or the Secretary of Defense.'' This essentially grants a blank check to the executive branch to decide entirely on its own who can be tried by military commission.

Senator DODD's bill makes clear that the President cannot unilaterally decide who is eligible for trial by military commission. Under the Dodd bill, in order to be tried by military commission, an individual must have directly participated in hostilities against the United States in a zone of active combat, or have been involved in the September 11 attacks, and cannot be a lawful enemy combatant.

Senator DODD's bill also addresses the structure and process of the military commissions themselves. It ensures that these military commission procedures hew closely to the long-established military system of justice, as recommended by countless witnesses at congressional hearings last summer.

Some examples of the ways in which the Dodd bill improves the military commission procedures include: It prevents the use of evidence in court gained through torture or coercion. It ensures that any evidence seized within the United States without a search warrant cannot be introduced as evidence. It empowers military judges to exclude hearsay evidence they deem to be unreliable. It authorizes the existing U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces to review decisions by military commissions, rather than the newly created ''Court of Military Commission Review,'' whose members would be appointed by the Secretary of Defense. And it provides for expedited judicial review of the Military Commissions Act to determine the constitutionally of its provisions before anyone is tried by military commission, so that we will not face even more delays in the future.

Many of these provisions were included in the bill passed by the Senate Armed Services Committee in September 2006, but then stripped out or altered in backroom negotiations with the Administration. The bill also improves changes to the War Crimes Act and emphasizes the importance of compliance with the Geneva Conventions.

In sum, Senator DODD's legislation addresses many of the most troubling and legally suspect provisions of the Military Commissions Act. Congress would be wise to make these changes now, rather than wait around while the Military Commissions Act is subject to further legal challenge, and another 4 or 5 years are squandered while cases work their way through the courts again.

In closing let me quote John Ashcroft. According to the New York Times, at a private meeting of high-level officials in 2003 about the military commission structure, then-Attorney General Ashcroft said: ''Timothy McVeigh was one of the worst killers in U.S. history. But at least we had fair procedures for him.'' How sad that Congress passed legislation about which the same cannot be said. We can and must undo this mistake.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, and Ms. MIKULSKI):

S. 577. A bill to amend the Commodity Exchange Act to add a provision relating to reporting and recordkeeping for positions involving energy commodities; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today with Senators SNOWE, LEVIN, CANTWELL, BOXER, FEINGOLD, BINGAMAN, LIEBERMAN, LAUTENBERG, and MIKULSKI to introduce a bill to provide necessary Federal oversight of our energy markets.

Just as is currently required for trades performed on the New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX), this bill would require record keeping and create an audit trail for all electronic over-the-counter energy trades.

Generally, in energy markets, the term ''over-the-counter trading'' refers to the trading of an energy commodity directly between two parties that does not take place on a regulated exchange.

Six years after the California energy crisis, this bill is long overdue. As global oil and gas prices increase and as we work to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions, the American public needs reliable, transparent energy markets that are not subject to manipulation by traders.

Specifically, the bill would: require traders who perform trades on electronic trading facilities such as the Intercontinental Exchange (ICE) to keep records and report large positions carried by their market participants in energy commodities for five years or longer. These are the same requirements that apply to traders that do business on NYMEX; require traders to provide such records to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) or the Justice Department upon request. Again, these are the same requirements for NYMEX traders; and require persons in the United States who trade U.S. energy commodities delivered in the U.S. on foreign futures exchanges to keep similar records and report large trades.

The Western Energy Crisis in 2000–2001 provided a wake-up call about the extent to which energy traders can impact demand and drive up prices.

California and the entire West Coast faced rolling blackouts and skyrocketing electricity costs, while companies like Enron, Duke, Williams, AES and Reliant enjoyed record revenues and profits.

In California, the cost of electricity was $8 billion in 1999, $27 billion in 2000, $27.5 billion in 2001, and $12 billion in 2002 after the crisis abated. Demand did not increase by more than 150 percent between 1999 and 2000. But prices did.

Why? Because companies like Enron manipulated the market in order to drive the price of electricity up.

As a result, Californians have been left with a $40 billion bill. This is an unacceptable burden.

One of the main causes of the crisis is a loophole in current law that allows for energy commodities—such as natural gas, electricity, oil, and gasoline—to be traded on over-the-counter markets with no Federal oversight.

While over-the-counter trades of all other commodities—pork bellies, soybeans, wheat and rice, for example—are regulated by the Federal Government, energy trades are not.

Our country currently faces natural gas prices that have been extremely volatile, and oil prices that have gone through the roof.

With gas prices reaching well above $2 per gallon across the country, and over $2.50 in my State of California, our constituents deserve to know why those prices are so high.

The New York Times has reported that manipulation of electronic energy trades has pushed these prices higher and higher.

Testifying at the Enron trial, the former Chief Executive Officer of Enron North America and Enron Energy Services, David Delainey was asked: ''Is volatility a good thing for a speculative trader?''

His response: ''Yes.''

When asked to explain his answer, he said: The higher the volatility that you have, the better—the higher the potential profit you can make from an open position you might have in the marketplace . . . if the price change is only a couple cents either way, you can't make a whole lot of money in trading.

And if you have, you know, 50, 60 cents, dollar moves in price you're going to make a lot more money for—for every position you might have . . .

Unfortunately, Enron's demise did not sound the death knell for unregulated over-the-counter energy trades. Instead, these trades now take place on the Intercontinental Exchange (ICE).

Over-the-counter trades performed on ICE are exempt from Federal oversight. In other words, the CFTC cannot require traders on ICE to keep records or report trades in energy commodities. As a result, the CFTC does not have a complete picture of what occurs in the energy markets.

The CFTC has recently asked ICE to provide information for certain electronically traded energy contracts. ICE has agreed to comply. I welcome these positive developments, but nonetheless believe that this legislation is necessary to remove any doubt as to the CFTC's authority to mandate these reports and to ensure these requirements are not administratively removed at some later date.

In this request, the CFTC has only asked ICE to report those trades that are performed using NYMEX-established prices. NYMEX does not establish prices for electricity, so none of the electricity trades will be reported. This means that under current circumstances, the CFTC still will not be getting a full picture of the energy market from ICE's reports.

Our bill will require reporting of all electronic over-the-counter energy trades and will provide legislative certainty that these trades will be reported.

We learned the hard way that if there is no oversight of these markets, they are subject to manipulation.

It is high time to fix this problem. Our bill will do just this.

That is why I urge my colleagues to support this bill. The legislation will simply provide the CFTC with the data it needs to ensure that manipulation and fraud are not taking place on our energy markets.

So who would be against this proposal?

The traders who are making millions of dollars off of volatility in these markets. And some of these traders are people who learned their skills at Enron—like star-Enron trader John Arnold who made $75 to $100 million in 2005 at Centaurus Energy, a hedge fund investing in energy commodities.

The other beneficiaries of high oil and natural gas prices are the energy companies themselves. Oil major Chevron made almost $13.4 billion in the first 9 months of 2006—a 34 percent rise in profits over the same 9 months in 2005.

The number 3 U.S. oil company, ConocoPhillips, reported a 25 percent surge in profits in the first 9 months of 2006, boosted by sharply higher crude oil prices. Net income in the first 9 months of 2006 rose to $12.35 billion from $9.85 billion in the same time period of 2005.

And ExxonMobil made more money in 2006 than any company in history. All of these record profits are due to the fact that oil prices are so high.

So while consumers are paying more than $2 a gallon at the pump, traders and oil companies are making out like bandits.

I hope that we have enough consensus this year to pass this legislation in order to shine some light on our energy markets and determine if speculation, manipulation, or hoarding is occurring in the oil, gas, and electricity markets.

I would like to thank the following organizations for their support of this bill: Agricultural Retailers Association, Air Transport Association of America, American Public Gas Association, American Public Power Association, Consumer Federation of America, Consumers Union, Industrial Energy Consumers of America, National Association of Wheat Growers, National Barley Growers Association, New England Fuel Initiative, Pacific Northwest Oil Heat Council, Petroleum Transportation and Storage Association, Petroleum Marketers Association of America, PG&E Corporation, Sempra, and Southern California Edison.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation and I ask unanimous consent that the text of the legislation be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 577

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 ''Oil and Gas Traders Oversight Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. REPORTING AND RECORDKEEPING FOR POSITIONS INVOLVING ENERGY COMMODITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2(h) of the Commodity Exchange Act (7 U.S.C. 2(h)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(7) REPORTING AND RECORDKEEPING FOR POSITIONS INVOLVING ENERGY COMMODITIES.—

''(A) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

''(i) DOMESTIC TERMINAL.—The term 'domestic terminal' means a technology, software, or other means of providing electronic access within the United States to a contract, agreement, or transaction traded on a foreign board of trade.

''(ii) ENERGY COMMODITY.—The term 'energy commodity' means a commodity or the derivatives of a commodity that is used primarily as a source of energy, including—

''(I) coal;

''(II) crude oil;

''(III) gasoline;

''(IV) heating oil;

''(V) diesel fuel;

''(VI) electricity;

''(VII) propane; and

''(VIII) natural gas.

''(iii) REPORTABLE CONTRACT.—The term 'reportable contract' means—

''(I) a contract, agreement, or transaction involving an energy commodity, executed on an electronic trading facility, or

''(II) a contract, agreement, or transaction for future delivery involving an energy commodity for which the underlying energy commodity has a physical delivery point within the United States and that is executed through a domestic terminal.

''(B) RECORD KEEPING.—The Commission, by rule, shall require any person holding, maintaining, or controlling any position in any reportable contract under this section—

''(i) to maintain such records as directed by the Commission for a period of 5 years, or longer, if directed by the Commission; and

''(ii) to provide such records upon request to the Commission or the Department of Justice.

''(C) REPORTING OF POSITIONS INVOLVING ENERGY COMMODITIES.—The Commission shall prescribe rules requiring such regular or continuous reporting of positions in a reportable contract in accordance with such requirements regarding size limits for reportable positions and the form, timing, and manner of filing such reports under this paragraph, as the Commission shall determine.

''(D) OTHER RULES NOT AFFECTED.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), this paragraph does not prohibit or impair the adoption by any board of trade licensed, designated, or registered by the Commission of any bylaw, rule, regulation, or resolution requiring reports of positions in any agreement, contract, or transaction made in connection with a contract of sale for future delivery of an energy commodity (including such a contract of sale), including any bylaw, rule, regulation, or resolution pertaining to filing or recordkeeping, which may be held by any person subject to the rules of the board of trade.

''(ii) EXCEPTION.—Any bylaw, rule, regulation, or resolution established by a board of trade described in clause (i) shall not be inconsistent with any requirement prescribed by the Commission under this paragraph.

''(E) CONTRACT, AGREEMENT, OR TRANSACTION FOR FUTURE DELIVERY.—Notwithstanding sections 4(b) and 4a, the Commission shall subject a contract, agreement, or transaction for future delivery in an energy commodity to the requirements established by this paragraph.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 4a(e) of the Commodity Exchange Act (7 U.S.C. 6a(e)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence—

(A) by inserting ''or by an electronic trading facility operating in reliance on section 2(h)(3)'' after ''registered by the Commission''; and

(B) by inserting ''electronic trading facility,'' before ''or such board of trade''; and

(2) in the second sentence, by inserting ''or by an electronic trading facility operating in reliance on section 2(h)(3)'' after ''registered by the Commission''.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. SMITH, Mr. REED, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mrs. CLINTON, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DODD, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. KERRY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. AKAKA, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 578. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to improve requirements under the Medicaid program for items and services furnished in or through an educational program or setting to children, including children with developmental, physical, or mental health needs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, it's a privilege to join my Senate and House colleagues in introducing the ''Protecting Children's Health in Schools Act of 2006.'' This bill will ensure that the Nation's 7 million school children with disabilities will have continued access to health care in school.

In 1975, the Nation made a commitment to guarantee children with disabilities equal access to education. For these children to learn and thrive in schools, the integration of education with health care is of paramount importance. Coordination with Medicaid makes an immense difference to schools in meeting the needs of these children.

This year, however, the Bush Administration has declared its intent to end Medicaid reimbursements to schools for the support services they need in order to provide medical and health-related services to disabled children. The Administration is saying ''NO'' to any further financial help to Medicaid-covered disabled children who need specialized transportation to obtain their health services at school. It is saying ''NO'' to any legitimate reimbursement to the school for costs incurred for administrative duties related to Medicaid services.

It's bad enough that Congress and the Administration have not kept the commitment to ''glide-path'' funding of IDEA needs in 2004. Now the Administration proposes to deny funding to schools under the Federal program that supports the health needs of disabled children. It makes no sense to make it so difficult for disabled children to achieve in school—both under IDEA and the No Child Left Behind.

At stake is an estimated $3.6 billion in Medicaid funds over the next five years. Such funding is essential to help identify disabled children and connect them to services that can meet their special health and learning needs during the school day.

This decision by the Administration follows years of resisting Medicaid reimbursements to schools that provide these services, without clear guidance on how schools should appropriately seek reimbursement.

The ''Protecting Children's Health in Schools Act'' recognizes the importance of schools as a site of delivery of health care. It ensures that children with disabilities can continue to obtain health services during the school day. The bill also provides for clear and consistent guidelines to be established, so that schools can be held accountable and seek appropriate reimbursement.

The legislation has the support of over 60 groups, including parents, teachers, principals, school boards, and health care providers—people who work with children with disabilities every day and know what is needed to facilitate their growth, development, and long-term success.

I urge all of our colleagues to join us in supporting these children across the Nation, by providing the realistic support their schools need in order to meet these basic health care requirements of their students.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 78—DESIGNATING APRIL 2007 AS ''NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH'' AND SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR RESEARCH INTO THE CAUSES AND TREATMENT OF AUTISM AND TO IMPROVE TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM AND THOSE WHO CARE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM

Mr. HAGEL (for himself, Mr. FEINGOLD, and Ms. STABENOW) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 78

Whereas autism is a developmental disorder that is typically diagnosed during the first 3 years of life, robbing individuals of their ability to communicate and interact with others;

Whereas autism affects an estimated 1 in every 150 children in the United States;

Whereas autism is 4 times more likely to occur in boys than in girls;

Whereas autism can affect anyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, or other factors;

Whereas it costs approximately $80,000 per year to treat an individual with autism in a medical center specializing in developmental disabilities;

Whereas the cost of special education programs for school-aged children with autism is often more than $30,000 per individual per year;

Whereas the cost nationally of caring for persons affected by autism is estimated at upwards of $90,000,000,000 per year;

Whereas despite the fact that autism is one of the most common developmental disorders, many professionals in the medical and educational fields are still unaware of the best methods to diagnose and treat the disorder; and

Whereas designating April 2007 as ''National Autism Awareness Month'' will increase public awareness of the need to support individuals with autism and the family members and medical professionals who care for individuals with autism: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2007 as ''National Autism Awareness Month'';

(2) recognizes and commends the parents and relatives of children with autism for their sacrifice and dedication in providing for the special needs of children with autism and for absorbing significant financial costs for specialized education and support services;

(3) supports the goal of increasing Federal funding for aggressive research to learn the root causes of autism, identify the best

methods of early intervention and treatment, expand programs for individuals with autism across their lifespans, and promote understanding of the special needs of people with autism;

(4) stresses the need to begin early intervention services soon after a child has been diagnosed with autism, noting that early intervention strategies are the primary therapeutic options for young people with autism, and that early intervention significantly improves the outcome for people with autism and can reduce the level of funding and services needed to treat people with autism later in life;

(5) supports the Federal Government's more than 30-year-old commitment to provide States with 40 percent of the costs needed to educate children with disabilities under part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411 et seq.);

(6) recognizes the shortage of appropriately trained teachers who have the skills and support necessary to teach, assist, and respond to special needs students, including those with autism, in our school systems; and

(7) recognizes the importance of worker training programs that are tailored to the needs of developmentally disabled persons, including those with autism, and notes that people with autism can be, and are, productive members of the workforce if they are given appropriate support, training, and early intervention services.

SENATE RESOLUTION 79—RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF REPRESENTATIVE CHARLES W. NORWOOD, JR., OF GEORGIA

Mr. REID (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. CHAMBLISS, and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 79

Resolved, That the Senate has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of the Honorable Charles W. Norwood, Jr., late a Representative from the State of Georgia.

Resolved, That the Secretary communicate these resolutions to the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy thereof to the family of the deceased.

Resolved, That when the Senate adjourns or recesses today, it stand adjourned or recessed as a further mark of respect to the memory of the deceased Representative.

SENATE RESOLUTION 80—TO AUTHORIZE TESTIMONY, DOCUMENT PRODUCTION, AND LEGAL REPRESENTATION IN STATE OF OREGON V. REBECCA MICHELSON, MICHELE DARR, AND VERNON HUFFMAN

Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 80

Whereas, in the cases of *State of Oregon* v. *Rebecca Michelson (2101093–1), Michele Darr (2101093–2), and Vernon Huffman (2101093–3),* pending in Multnomah County Circuit Court in Portland, Oregon, testimony and documents have been requested from Kellie Lute, an employee in the office of Senator Gordon Smith;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent employees of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for testimony relating to their official responsibilities;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate;

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Kellie Lute and any other employees or Senator Smith's office from whom testimony or the production of documents may be required are authorized to testify and produce documents in the cases of *State of Oregon* v. *Rebecca Michelson, Michele Darr, and Vernon Huffman,* except concerning matters for which a privilege should be asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent Kellie Lute and other employees of Senator Smith's staff in the actions referenced in section one of this resolution.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 11—PROVIDING THAT ANY AGREEMENT RELATING TO TRADE AND INVESTMENT THAT IS NEGOTIATED BY THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH WITH ANOTHER COUNTRY COMPLY WITH CERTAIN MINIMUM STANDARDS

Mr. FEINGOLD submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. CON. RES. 11

Whereas there is general consensus among the people of the United States and the global community that, with respect to international trade and investment rules—

(1) global environmental, labor, health, food security, and other public interest standards must be strengthened to prevent a global ''race to the bottom'';

(2) domestic environmental, labor, health, food security, and other public interest standards and policies must not be undermined, including those based on the use of the precautionary principle (the internationally recognized legal principle that holds that, when there is scientific uncertainty regarding the potential adverse effects of an action, a product, or a technology, a government should act in a way that minimizes the risk of harm to human health and the environment);

(3) provision and regulation of public services such as education, health care, transportation, energy, water, and other utilities are basic functions of democratic government and must not be undermined;

(4) raising standards in developing countries requires additional assistance and respect for diversity of policies and priorities;

(5) countries must be allowed to design and implement policies to sustain family farms and achieve food security;

(6) healthy national economies are essential to a healthy global economy, and the right of governments to pursue policies to maintain and create jobs must be upheld;

(7) the right of State and local and comparable regional governments of all countries to create and enforce diverse policies must be safeguarded from imposed downward harmonization; and

(8) rules for the global economy must be developed and implemented democratically and with transparency and accountability;

Whereas many international trade and investment agreements in existence and currently being negotiated do not serve these interests; and

Whereas many international trade and investment agreements in existence have caused substantial harm to the health and well-being of communities in the United States and within countries that are trading partners of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That any agreement relating to trade and investment that is negotiated by the executive branch with another country should comply with the following:

(1) REQUIREMENTS APPLYING TO ALL COUNTRIES.—

(A) INVESTOR AND INVESTMENT POLICY.—If the agreement includes any provision relating to foreign investment, the agreement may not permit a foreign investor to challenge or seek compensation because of a measure of a government at the national, State, or local level that protects the public interest, including a measure that protects public health, safety, and welfare, the environment, and worker protections, unless a foreign investor demonstrates that the measure was enacted or applied primarily for the purpose of discriminating against a foreign investor or foreign investment.

(B) SERVICES.—The agreement, to the extent applicable, shall comply with the following:

(i) IN GENERAL.—The agreement may not provide for disciplinary action against a government measure relating to—

(I) a public service, including public services for which the government is not the sole provider;

(II) a service that requires extensive regulation;

(III) an essential human service; and

(IV) a service that has an essentially social component.

(ii) SERVICES DESCRIBED.—A service described in clause (i) includes a public benefit program, health care, health insurance, public health, child care, education and training, the distribution of a controlled substance or product (including alcohol, tobacco, and firearms), research and development on a natural or social science, a utility (including an energy utility, water, waste disposal, and sanitation), national security, maritime, air, surface, and other transportation services, a postal service, energy extraction and any related service, and a correctional service.

(iii) REVISION OF COMMITMENTS.—The agreement shall permit a country that has made a commitment in an area described in clause (i) to revise that commitment for the purposes of public interest regulation without any financial or other trade-related penalty.

(iv) SUBSIDIES AND GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT.—The agreement shall ensure that any rule governing a subsidy or government procurement fully protects the ability of a government to support and purchase a service in a way that promotes economic development, social justice and equity, public health, environmental quality, human rights, and the rights of workers.

(v) REGULATION OF FOREIGN INVESTORS.—The agreement shall guarantee that all governments that are parties to the agreement may regulate foreign investors in services and other service providers in order to protect public health and safety, consumers, the environment, and workers' rights, without requiring the governments to establish their regulations to be the least burdensome option for foreign service providers.

(C) ENVIRONMENTAL, LABOR, AND OTHER PUBLIC INTEREST STANDARDS.—The agreement—

(i) may not supersede the rights and obligations of parties under multilateral environmental, labor, and human rights agreements;

(ii) shall, to the extent applicable, include commitments—

(I) to adhere to specified workers' rights and environmental standards;

(II) to enforce existing domestic labor and environmental provisions; and

(III) to abide by the core labor standards of the International Labor Organization; and

(iii) shall subject the commitments described in clause (ii) to binding enforcement on the same terms as commercial provisions.

(D) FOOD SAFETY.—The agreement may not—

(i) require international harmonization of food safety standards in a manner that undermines the level of human health protection provided under the laws of a country; or

(ii) restrict the ability of governments to enact policies to guarantee the right of consumers to know where and how food is produced.

(E) AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY.—The agreement may not, with respect to food and other agricultural commodities—

(i) contain provisions that prevent countries from—

(I) establishing domestic and global reserves;

(II) managing supply;

(III) enforcing antidumping provisions;

(IV) ensuring fair market prices; or

(V) vigorously enforcing antitrust laws, in order to guarantee competitive markets for family farmers; or

(ii) prevent countries from developing the necessary sanitary and phytosanitary standards to prevent the introduction of pathogens or other potentially invasive species that may adversely affect agriculture, human health, or the environment.

(F) GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY.—The agreement may not contain provisions that bind national, State, local, or comparable regional governments to limiting regulatory, taxation, spending, or procurement authority—

(i) without sufficient transparency as described in paragraph (4), including an opportunity for public review and comment; and

(ii) without the explicit, informed consent of the national, State, local, or comparable regional legislative body concerned.

(G) ACCESS TO MEDICINES AND SEEDS.—

(i) MEDICINES.—The agreement may not contain provisions that prevent countries from taking measures to protect public health by ensuring access to medicines.

(ii) SEEDS.—The agreement may not constrain the rights of farmers to save, use, exchange, or sell farm-saved seeds and other publicly available seed varieties.

(2) REQUIREMENTS APPLYING TO ONLY THE UNITED STATES.—

(A) TEMPORARY ENTRY OF WORKERS.—The agreement may not—

(i) make a new commitment on the temporary entry of workers, because such policies should be determined by the Congress, after consideration by the congressional committees with jurisdiction over immigration, to avoid an array of inconsistent policies; or

(ii) include any policy that fails to—

(I) include labor market tests that ensure that the employment of temporary workers will not adversely affect other similarly employed workers;

(II) involve labor unions in the labor certification process implemented under the immigration program for temporary workers granted nonimmigrant status under section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(H)(i)(b)), including the filing by an employer of an application under section 212(n)(1) of that Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(n)(1)); or

(III) guarantee the same workplace protections for temporary workers that are available to all workers.

(B) POLICIES TO SUPPORT UNITED STATES WORKERS AND SMALL, MINORITY, AND WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES.—The agreement shall preserve the right of Federal, State, and local governments to maintain or establish policies to support United States workers and small, minority, or women-owned businesses, including policies with respect to government procurement, loans, and subsidies.

(C) UNITED STATES TRADE LAWS.—The agreement may not—

(i) contain a provision that modifies or amends, or requires a modification of or an amendment to, any law of the United States regarding safeguards from unfair foreign trade practices, including any law providing for—

(I) the imposition of countervailing or antidumping duties;

(II) protection from unfair methods of competition or unfair acts in the importation of articles;

(III) relief from injury caused by import competition;

(IV) relief from unfair trade practices; or

(V) the imposition of import restrictions to protect national security; or

(ii) weaken the existing terms of the Agreement on Implementation of Article VI of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994, or the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, of the World Trade Organization, including through the domestic implementation of rulings of dispute settlement bodies.

(D) FOOD SAFETY.—The agreement may not—

(i) restrict the ability of the United States to ensure that food products entering the United States are rigorously inspected to establish that they meet all food safety standards in the United States, including inspection standards; or

(ii) force the United States to accept different food safety standards as ''equivalent'', in a manner that undermines the level of human health protection provided under domestic law.

(3) TREATMENT OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.—The agreement shall grant special and differential treatment for developing countries with regard to the timeframe for implementation of the agreement as well as other concerns.

(4) TRANSPARENCY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The process of negotiating the agreement shall be open and transparent, including through—

(i) prompt and regular disclosure of full negotiating texts; and

(ii) prompt and regular disclosure of negotiating positions of the United States.

(B) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF OFFERS AND REQUESTS.—In negotiating the agreement, any request or offer relating to investment, procurement, or trade in services must be made public within 10 days after its submission if such request or offer—

(i) proposes that specific Federal, State, or local laws or regulations in the United States, including subsidies, tax rules, procurement rules, professional standards, and rules on temporary entry of persons, be changed, eliminated, or scheduled under the agreement;

(ii) proposes to cover under the agreement—

(I) specific essential public services, including public benefits programs, health care, education, national security, sanitation, water, energy, and other utilities; or

(II) private service sectors that require extensive regulation or have an inherently social component, including maritime, air transport, trucking, and other transportation services, postal services, utilities such as water, energy, and sanitation, corrections, education and childcare, and health care; or

(iii) proposes an action or process of general application that may interfere with the ability of the United States or State, local, or tribal governments to adopt, implement, or enforce laws and regulations identified in clause (ii)(I) or to provide or regulate services identified in clause (ii)(II).

(C) REPRESENTATION OF INTERESTS.—The broad array of constituencies representing the majority of the people of the United States, including labor unions, environmental organizations, consumer groups, family farm groups, public health advocates, faith-based organizations, and civil rights groups, must have at least the same representation on trade advisory committees and the same access to trade negotiators and negotiating fora as those constituencies representing commercial interests.

(D) DISPUTE RESOLUTION MECHANISMS.—Any dispute resolution mechanism established in the agreement shall be open and transparent, including through disclosure to the public of documents and access to hearings, and must permit participation by nonparties through the filing of amicus briefs, as well as provide for standing for State and local governments as intervenors.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I am pleased to again submit a measure to begin to address one of the central problems our Nation faces, namely the loss of family-supporting jobs because of our flawed trade policies.

Today's announcement that the U.S. trade deficit for 2006 rose to $764 billion, setting a record for the fifth consecutive year, is a stark reminder of just how seriously flawed our trade policies are. Those policies have far reaching consequences, and they require a multifaceted response.

One response must be to take on the trade deficit directly, and I have been pleased to join the Senator from North Dakota, Mr. DORGAN, to do just that.

But we also must change the agreements into which we enter with our trading partners.

The record of the major trade agreements into which our Nation has entered over the past few years has been dismal. Thanks in great part to the flawed fast track rules that govern consideration of legislation implementing trade agreements, the United States has entered into a number of trade agreements that have contributed to the significant job loss we have seen in recent years, and have laid open to assault various laws and regulations established to protect workers, the environment, and our health and safety. Indeed, those agreements undermine the very democratic institutions through which we govern ourselves.

The loss of jobs, especially manufacturing jobs, to other countries has been devastating to Wisconsin, and to the entire country. When I opposed the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Uruguay round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade,

Permanent Normal Trade Relations for China, and other flawed trade measures, I did so in great part because I believed they would lead to a significant loss of jobs. But even as an opponent of those agreements, I don't think I could have imagined just how bad things would get in so short a time.

The trade policy of this country over the past several years has been appalling. The trade agreements into which we have entered have contributed to the loss of key employers, ravaging entire communities. But despite that clear evidence, we continue to see trade agreements being reached that will only aggravate this problem.

This has to stop. We cannot afford to pursue trade policies that gut our manufacturing sector and send good jobs overseas. We cannot afford to undermine the safeguards we have established for workers, the environment, and our public health and safety. And we cannot afford to chip way at our democratic heritage by entering into trade agreements that supercede our right to govern ourselves through open, democratic institutions.

The legislation I am introducing today addresses this problem, at least in part. It establishes some minimum standards for the trade agreements into which our Nation enters. It sets forth principles for future trade agreements. It is a break with the so-called NAFTA model, and instead advocates the kinds of sound trade policies that will spur economic growth and sustainable development.

The principles set forth in this resolution are not complex. They are straightforward and achievable. The resolution calls for enforceable worker protections, including the core International Labor Organization standards.

It preserves the ability of the United States to enact and enforce its own trade laws.

It protects foreign investors, but states that foreign investors should not be provided with greater rights than those provided under U.S. law, and it protects public interest laws from challenge by foreign investors in secret tribunals.

It ensures that food entering into our country meets domestic food safety standards.

It preserves the ability of Federal, State, and local governments to maintain essential public services and to regulate private sector services in the public interest.

It requires that trade agreements contain environmental provisions subject to the same enforcement as commercial provisions.

It preserves the right of Federal, State, and local governments to use procurement as a policy tool, including through Buy American laws, environmental laws such as recycled content, and purchasing preferences for small, minority, or women-owned businesses.

It requires that trade negotiations and the implementation of trade agreements be conducted openly.

These are sensible policies, and will advance the goal of increased international commerce.

The outgrowth of the major trade agreements into which we have entered has been a race to the bottom in labor standards, environmental standards, health and safety standards, in nearly every aspect of our economy. A race to the bottom is a race in which even the winners lose.

For any who doubt this, I invite you to ask the families in Wisconsin who have watched their jobs move to China.

We can't let this continue to happen. We need to turn our trade policies around. We need to pursue trade agreements that will promote sustainable economic growth for our Nation and for our trading partners. This resolution will begin to put us on that path, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 264. Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the joint resolution H.J. Res. 20, making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 265. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 259 submitted by Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. HAGEL, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. SMITH, Mr. BIDEN, and Mr. SALAZAR) and intended to be proposed to the joint resolution H.J. Res. 20, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 264. Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the joint resolution H.J. Res. 20, making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after "**SEC.**" and insert the following:

____. ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS TO ADDRESS SCHIP FUNDING SHORTFALLS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2104 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397dd) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(i) ADDITIONAL REDISTRIBUTION OF AMOUNTS NECESSARY TO ADDRESS FISCAL YEAR 2007 FUNDING SHORTFALLS.—

"(1) REDISTRIBUTION OF CERTAIN UNUSED FISCAL YEAR 2005 ALLOTMENTS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraphs (C) and (D), with respect to months beginning during fiscal year 2007 after April 30, 2007, the Secretary shall provide for a redistribution under subsection (f) from amounts made available for redistribution under paragraphs (2) and (3) to each shortfall State described in subparagraph (B), such amount as the Secretary determines will eliminate the estimated shortfall described in such subparagraph for such State for the month.

"(B) SHORTFALL STATE DESCRIBED.—For purposes of this paragraph, a shortfall State described in this subparagraph is a State with a State child health plan approved under this title for which the Secretary estimates, subject to subsection (h)(4)(B) and on a monthly basis using the most recent data available to the Secretary as of April 30, 2007, that the projected expenditures under such plan for such State for fiscal year 2007 will exceed the sum of—

"(i) the amount of the State's allotments for each of fiscal years 2005 and 2006 that was not expended by the end of fiscal year 2006;

"(ii) the amount, if any, that is to be redistributed to the State in accordance with subsection (h); and

"(iii) the amount of the State's allotment for fiscal year 2007.

"(C) FUNDS REDISTRIBUTED IN THE ORDER IN WHICH STATES REALIZE FUNDING SHORTFALLS.—The Secretary shall redistribute the amounts available for redistribution under subparagraph (A) to shortfall States described in subparagraph (B) in the order in which such States realize monthly funding shortfalls under this title for fiscal year 2007. The Secretary shall only make redistributions under this paragraph to the extent that such amounts are available for such redistributions.

"(D) PRORATION RULE.—If the amounts available for redistribution under paragraph (3) for a month are less than the total amounts of the estimated shortfalls determined for the month under subparagraph (A), the amount computed under such subparagraph for each shortfall State shall be reduced proportionally.

"(2) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN STATES WITH FISCAL YEAR 2005 ALLOTMENTS UNEXPENDED AT THE END OF THE FIRST 7 MONTHS OF FISCAL YEAR 2007.—

"(A) IDENTIFICATION OF STATES.—The Secretary, on the basis of the most recent data available to the Secretary as of April 30, 2007—

"(i) shall identify those States that received an allotment for fiscal year 2006 under subsection (b) which have not expended all of such allotment by April 30, 2007; and

"(ii) for each such State shall estimate—

"(I) the portion of such allotment that was not so expended by such date; and

"(II) whether the State is described in subparagraph (B).

"(B) STATES WITH FUNDS IN EXCESS OF 200 PERCENT OF NEED.—A State described in this subparagraph is a State for which the Secretary determines, on the basis of the most recent data available to the Secretary as of April 30, 2007, that the total of all available allotments under this title to the State as of such date, is at least equal to 200 percent of the total projected expenditures under this title for the State for fiscal year 2007.

"(C) REDISTRIBUTION AND LIMITATION ON AVAILABILITY OF PORTION OF UNUSED ALLOTMENTS FOR CERTAIN STATES.—In the case of a State identified under subparagraph (A)(i) that is also described in subparagraph (B), notwithstanding subsection (e), the amount described in subparagraph (A)(ii)(I) shall not be available for expenditure by the State on or after May 1, 2007, and shall be redistributed in accordance with paragraph (1).

"(3) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN STATES WITH FISCAL YEAR 2006 ALLOTMENTS UNEXPENDED AT THE END OF THE FIRST 7 MONTHS OF FISCAL YEAR 2007.—

"(A) IDENTIFICATION OF STATES.—The Secretary, on the basis of the most recent data available to the Secretary as of April 30, 2007—

"(i) shall identify those States that received an allotment for fiscal year 2006 under subsection (b) which have not expended all of such allotment by April 30, 2007; and

"(ii) for each such State shall estimate—

"(I) the portion of such allotment that was not so expended by such date; and

''(II) whether the State is described in subparagraph (B).

''(B) STATES WITH FUNDS IN EXCESS OF 200 PERCENT OF NEED.—A State described in this subparagraph is a State for which the Secretary determines, on the basis of the most recent data available to the Secretary as of April 30, 2007, that the total of all available allotments under this title to the State as of such date, is at least equal to 200 percent of the total projected expenditures under this title for the State for fiscal year 2008.

''(C) REDISTRIBUTION AND LIMITATION ON AVAILABILITY OF PORTION OF UNUSED ALLOTMENTS FOR CERTAIN STATES.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a State identified under subparagraph (A)(i) that is also described in subparagraph (B), notwithstanding subsection (e), the applicable amount described in clause (ii) shall not be available for expenditure by the State on or after May 1, 2007, and shall be redistributed in accordance with paragraph (1).

''(ii) APPLICABLE AMOUNT.—For purposes of clause (i), the applicable amount described in this clause is—

''(I) the amount by which the amount described in subparagraph (A)(ii)(I), exceeds the total of the amounts the Secretary determines will eliminate the estimated shortfalls for all States described in paragraph (1)(B) (after the application of paragraph (2)) for the fiscal year; multiplied by

''(II) the ratio of the amount described in subparagraph (A)(ii)(I) with respect to the State to the total the amounts described in subparagraph (A)(ii)(I) for all such States.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 2104(h) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1397dd(h)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4), by inserting ''or subsection (i)'' after ''this subsection'' each place it appears;

(2) in paragraph (5)(A), by inserting ''and subsection (i)'' after ''and (3)'';

(3) in paragraph (6), by inserting ''or subsection (i)'' after ''this subsection''; and

(4) in paragraph (7), by inserting ''and subsection (i)'' after ''this subsection''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE; APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by this section take effect on the day after the date of enactment of this Act and apply without fiscal year limitation.

SA 265. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 259 submitted by Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. HAGEL, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. SMITH, Mr. BIDEN, and Mr. SALAZAR) and intended to be proposed to the joint resolution H.J. Res. 20, making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes; which was ordered to line on the table; as follows:

On page 7, between lines 11 and 12, insert the following:

(23) Congress and the American people will continue to support and protect the members of the United States Armed Forces who are serving or who have served bravely and honorably in Iraq.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry be authorized to conduct a hearing during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, February 13, 2007, at 9:45 a.m. in 328A, Russell Senate Office Building. The purpose of this committee hearing will be to consider ''Rural Development—Challenges and Opportunities.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to hold a business meeting during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, February 13, 2007, at 10 a.m., in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The purpose of this meeting will be to consider and approve the following legislation following bills: S. 184, S. 509, S. 385, S. 93, S. 84, S. 39, and to make nominations for promotion in the United States Coast Guard.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to hold a hearing during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, February 13, 2007, at 10 a.m. in room SD–106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on the Stern Review of the Economics of Climate Change, examining the economic impacts of climate change and stabilizing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet for a hearing on Tuesday, February 12, 2007, at 10 a.m. in SD–106. The purpose of the hearing is to review the report and recommendations of the U.S. Climate Action Partnership.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to hold a hearing during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, February 13, 2007, at 10 a.m. in SD–430.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet on Tuesday, February 13, 2007, at 10 a.m. for a hearing titled ''The Homeland Security Department's Budget Submission for Fiscal Year 2008.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate for a hearing entitled ''Alternatives for Easing the Small Business Health Care Burden,'' on Tuesday, February 13, 2007, beginning at 10 a.m. in room 428A of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, February 13, 2007, to hold a hearing on Veterans Programs for Fiscal Year 2008.

The hearing will take place in room 418 of the Russell Senate Office Building beginning at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 13, 2007, at 2:30 p.m. to hold a closed hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President of the Senate, and after consultation with the majority leader, pursuant to Public Law 106–286, appoints the following Members to serve on the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China. The Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN), Co-Chairman; and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN).

AUTHORIZING LEGAL REPRESENTATION

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 80, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 80) to authorize testimony, document production, and legal representation in State of Oregon v. Rebecca Michelson, Michele Darr, and Vernon Huffman.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this resolution concerns a request for testimony,

documents, and representation in criminal trespass actions in Multnomah County Circuit Court in Portland, OR. In this action, anti-war protestors have been charged with criminally trespassing in the building housing Senator GORDON SMITH's Portland, OR office on December 12, 2006, for refusing repeated requests by the police to leave the premises. Trials on charges of trespass are scheduled to commence on February 26, 2007. The prosecution has subpoenaed a member of the Senator's staff who had conversations with the defendant protestors during the charged events. Senator SMITH would like to cooperate by providing testimony and any relevant documents from his staff. This resolution would authorize that staff member, and any other employee of Senator SMITH's office from whom evidence may be required, to testify and produce documents in connection with this action, with representation by the Senate Legal Counsel.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD, without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 80) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 80

Whereas, in the cases of State of Oregon v. Rebecca Michelson (2101093–1), Michele Darr (2101093–2), and Vernon Huffman (2101093–3), pending in Multnomah County Circuit Court in Portland, Oregon, testimony and documents have been requested from Kellie Lute, an employee in the office of Senator Gordon Smith;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent employees of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for testimony relating to their official responsibilities;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate;

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved that Kellie Lute and any other employees of Senator Smith's office from whom testimony or the production of documents may be required are authorized to testify and produce documents in the cases of State of Oregon v. Rebecca Michele Darr, and Vernon Huffman, except concerning matters for which a privilege should be asserted.

Sec. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent Kellie Lute and other employees of Senator Smith's staff in the actions referenced in section one of this resolution.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 574

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I understand that S. 574, introduced earlier today by Senator REID, is at the desk. I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 574) to express the sense of Congress on Iraq.

Mr. CARDIN. I now ask for its second reading and I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard. The bill will receive its second reading on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2007

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 12 noon Wednesday, February 14; that on Wednesday, following the prayer and the pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that there then be a period of morning business for 60 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with each side controlling 30 minutes; that at the close of morning business, the Senate resume consideration of H.J. Res. 20, the continuing funding resolution; that all time during the adjournment and morning business count postcloture.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL TOMORROW

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I now ask unanimous consent the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:09 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, February 14, 2007, at 12 noon.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING DREW WILLIAMS FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Drew Williams, 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 60, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Drew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the years Drew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Among his accomplishments, Drew has earned 42 merit badges and attended Camp Gieger twice. He has also earned the God and Me, God and Family and God and Church awards, and further has served Troop 60 of Savannah as librarian and historian.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Drew Williams for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF CAPTAIN CHUCK HOWELL

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Captain Chuck Howell for his dedicated and outstanding service to the Denton Fire Department and the City of Denton, Texas.

Captain Chuck Howell has recently been named Fire Officer of the Year for his leadership and devotion to the Denton Fire Department. As a confident and intelligent captain and fireman, Mr. Howell is not afraid to take command or defend a fire himself. He has gained much respect from his fellow firemen and maintains a level of competency that stands unparalleled.

It is with great honor that I recognize Captain Chuck Howell for his hard work and selfless dedication to the Denton Fire Department and the citizens of Denton, Texas. I am proud to represent him in Washington, and his service will be set as a standard of devotion and true leadership, one that will never be forgotten.

HONORING AND PRAISING THE NAACP ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 98TH ANNIVERSARY

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, on its 98th anniversary.

On February 12, 1909, the NAACP was founded by W.E.B. DuBois, Ida Wells-Barnett, Henry Moscowitz, Mary White Ovington, Oswald Garrison Villard, and William English Walling to embark on fight for the civil rights of Native Americans, Asian Americans, African Americans, and Jewish people. These brave men and women had a vision of equality and a commitment to fight for the downtrodden, in an era when people of color, meaning anyone who was nonwhite, were denied rights and subject to harassment and intimidation. Their commitment to establishing an organization that would stand up to power was unparalleled. The words, from the original charter, prove the need and urgency to establish such an organization. It stated, "To promote equality of rights and to eradicate caste or race prejudice among the citizens of the United States; to advance the interest of colored citizens; to secure for them impartial suffrage; and to increase their opportunities for securing justice in the courts, education for the children, employment according to their ability and complete equality before law." With the spirit of fighting for equality as the motivation and the constitution as the tool, the battle for equality would be with the courts and thus, they marched on.

In the beginning, the NAACP's efforts focused on fighting the segregation laws under Jim Crow. I vividly remember living with separate but equal as the accepted doctrine. I also recall stories of people who gave their lives fighting that injustice. Despite the struggle, the NAACP did not waver in the face of adversity and took its fight with separate but equal education to the highest court in the land, the Supreme Court, with the landmark case Brown vs. Board of Education and was victorious.

Today, the NAACP continues to be a voice for minorities and does excellent work with the continued fight for civil rights and equality. On this day, the 98th anniversary, I pay homage to the NAACP for work done in the past, present, and it is to be expected in the future.

IN HONOR OF SGT. FIRST CLASS FLOYD LAKE

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, Sgt. First Class Floyd Everett Lake was a courageous, dedicated and committed soldier who died on January 20, 2007 when the Blackhawk helicopter in which he was riding with fellow Virgin Islands soldier, Lt. Col. David C. Canegata III and ten other brave Americans was shot down over Baghdad, Iraq. Soldiers Canegata and Lake served together in the Virgin Islands National Guard, and at the Pentagon at the National Guard Bureau.

He was an exemplary soldier who cared for his family and his community and he served his country with distinction. He was said to be quiet and plainspoken, honest and forthright, caring, gentle and generous. In a single moment he was taken from his family, from his wife, Linda, mother, Mrs. Buchanan, children Andre, Keeshawn, Floyd, Jr., J'Nell, Tamila, his mother-in-law Junie and sisters and brothers Patricia, Bernadette, Cheryl, Odette, Zelda, Earl, and Asbert, many friends and his National Guard family.

The Gospel of John, Chapter 15, Verse 13 states that "Greater love than this has no man, but that he lay down his life for his friends." SFC Lake and his comrades have done just that.

God lent us a wonderful gift in the life of SFC Lake. He now returns to his loving embrace.

We honor him and thank him for his sacrifice. May he rest in God's eternal peace.

CONGRATULATING LIBERTY HILL HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the success and achievements of Liberty Hill High School in Liberty Hill, Texas. In particular, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to the Liberty Hill High School Panthers football team, who were the Division II, Class AAA champions this year. Winning the championship was an appropriate end to a great year for the Panthers and was very much deserved. Liberty Hill has long been recognized as a school dedicated to academic success, and with this feat they have shown that their prowess extends to the athletic fields as well.

Liberty Hill High School is an example of what a school can achieve with hard work and dedication. I admire what they do to positively mold their student-athletes into model citizens. I am very proud and honored to represent the Panther football team and all of Liberty Hill High School. I wish them congratulations and continued success in their future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO CARMEN SALINAS

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Carmen Salinas on her work representing Mexico as Señora Internacional during the Washington Birthday Celebration, which is the largest celebration of its kind in the United States.

Mrs. Carmen Salinas was born on September 4, 1933, in the City of Torreon, Coahuila, Mexico. Her early steps in the arts were marked by her strong desire to give the public a great performance. In 1964, Mrs. Salinas worked in television under the direction of Mr. Ernesto Alonzo in the productions of " La Vecindad," "La Frontera," "Sublime Redencion," and "El Chofer." Her theatrical work includes productions of "Cada Quien Su Vida," "Vine, Vi y Mejor Me Fui," but according to critics, her best performance was in "Aprendiendo a Ser Señora."

Mrs. Carmen Salinas' work on the big screen is to be admired. She has starred in big-screen productions including "Distrito Federal," "Paso de Cojo," "Que Viva Tepito," "Danzon," "Albures Mexicanos," and "Nos Reimos de la Migra," among many others. Her performances in the small screen include super hits such as "Abrazame Muy Fuerte," "Preciosa," "Mi Pequeña Traviesa," and "Maria Mercedes." She is also recognized as a successful entrepreneur, particularly for her theatrical presentation "Aventurera," one of Mexico's most popular theatrical productions in recent history, which also has been featured in many cities in the United States with great crossover appeal.

She was recently honored in New York by the A.C.E. Awards, and also received the "Palmas de Oro" award. The Hispanic community is proud to consider Mrs. Carmen Salinas as one of its most influential role models.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to recognize the dedication of Carmen Salinas to the Hispanic-American community in the United States.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO AMEND THE MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTION ACT: FEBRUARY 1, 2007.

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, I am introducing legislation to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act, MMPA, to remove the requirement in the act for commercial fisheries "to further reduce the incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals to an insignificant level approaching a zero mortality and serious injury rate," which is commonly referred to as the "Zero Mortality Rate Goal."

Congress enacted the MMPA in 1972, in part, to address the high mortality rate of marine mammals occurring in the yellowfin tuna purse seine fishery in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean. In response to these high mortality levels, Congress created a zero mortality rate goal for this fishery. At the time, Congress was very specific in how this goal should be applied to the fishery. The goal was not to shut down fisheries, but reduce the incidental mortality and serious injury rate of marine mammals. In this case, once the Secretary of Commerce was satisfied that the tuna fishermen were using the best available technology to assure minimal hazards to marine mammal populations, the goal of a reduced mortality rate was met. This standard also allowed the Secretary to take into account the economic and technological practicability of the best available technology.

In the 1980s, Congress reaffirmed the intent of zero mortality rate goal. Congress recognized the progress made by the purse seine fishery to reduce its mortality rates and maintained the technology standard for this fishery. The 1981 House Report stated zero mortality rate goal "is satisfied . . . by a continuation of the application of the best marine mammal safety techniques and equipment that are economically and technologically practicable."

It wasn't until the 1990s that Congress applied dolphin mortality limits to the yellowfin tuna purse seine fishery. These limits were based on the International Dolphin Conservation Act of 1992 and the International Dolphin Conservation Program Act of 1997. It is important to note that the mortality limits established in the 1992 act were based on reductions that could be achieved by the gear currently being used in the fishery.

For other fisheries, Congress maintained the zero mortality rate goal as a means to promote new technology to reduce the incidental taking of marine mammals. In the 1994 Marine Mammal Protection Act amendments, Congress created a new fishery regime which authorized limited incidental takes of marine mammals in commercial fisheries and retained the economic and technological practicability finding. In section 118, which guides the take reduction plan process, it specifically states "The long-term goal of the plan shall be to reduce, within 5 years of its implementation, the incidental mortality or serious injury of marine mammals incidentally taken in the course of commercial fishing operations to insignificant levels approaching a zero mortality and serious injury rate, taking into account the economics of the fishery, the availability of existing technology and existing state or regional fishery management plans."

In 2002, the National Marine Fisheries Service, NMFS, was sued by a number of environmental groups for not complying with the requirements of section 118, and as part of the settlement NMFS was required to define the zero mortality rate goal. NMFS established a threshold level for mortality and serious injury that would meet this requirement. NMFS defined an Insignificance Threshold in regulations and estimated this threshold level as 10 percent of the "Potential Biological Removal (PBR) level."

The MMP A has a number of guiding principles to assist in the protection of marine mammals. The overall goal of the Act is to maintain or restore marine mammal populations to their Optimum Sustainable Population. Another is the potential biological removal level, PBR, for a marine mammal stock which is defined as the "maximum number of animals, not including natural mortalities, that may be removed from a marine mammal stock while allowing that stock to reach or maintain its optimum sustainable population." When calculating PBR the agency takes into account all activities with incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals. However, the fishing industry is the only industry required to take on the burden of reducing the incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals through a take reduction team process.

Commercial fisherman do not want to kill marine mammals. They want to harvest fish. Fisherman have been willing participants and in some cases leaders in the research and development of gear to reduce interactions with marine mammals. In addition, the take reduction team process, with the help of commercial fishermen, has been successful in reducing interactions between fisheries and marine mammals. However, I believe the requirement for commercial fisheries to reduce their level of interactions with marine mammals to a level of 10 percent of PBR is overly burdensome.

For that reason, I am proposing this legislation which will remove the zero mortality rate goal from the act. It will retain the requirement for commercial vessel owners or operators to report all incidental mortality and injury of marine mammals during the course of a commercial fishery. Fisheries will continue to be listed as category I, II, or III based on the level of marine mammal mortality and injury occurring in the fishery. The Secretary will still be required to establish take reduction teams and develop take reduction plans to reduce the level of marine mammal mortality and serious injury to levels below PBR in commercial fisheries around the Nation.

This is common sense conservation legislation that should be enacted by this Congress.

RECOGNIZING JEREMY CHRISTIAN TYLER CRUZ FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam, Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jeremy Christian Tyler Cruz, 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 376 and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jeremy has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the years Jeremy has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Jeremy's dedication to his community is outstanding. He has received the World Conservation Award, the 12 Month Camper Award (four times), the 100 Nights Camper Award, and also planned and supervised the expansion of the main picnic shelter at Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary in Liberty, Missouri.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jeremy Christian Tyler Cruz for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF FIREMAN AND DRIVER BRIAN COX

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Brian Cox for his dedicated and outstanding service to the Denton Fire Department and the city of Denton, TX.

Mr. Brian Cox has recently been honored Firefighter of the Year for his leadership in the Denton Fire Department and the Denton Firefighter's Association. As a driver, his top priority is getting the fire team safely to the scene unharmed. Among his many duties, Mr. Cox also stays with the engine to ensure that water is pumped from the fire hydrant to the fire, while the remaining firefighters take charge of the fire inside the burning buildings. For the past 4 months he has willingly stepped in for a fellow injured officer and took upon himself the role of captain at station 3 on the C shift. A natural leader, Mr. Cox has aspirations of becoming a captain in the future and looks forward to taking charge of his own fire station.

A native of Denton, TX, Mr. Brian Cox graduated from Denton High School, after which he served in the Navy as a firefighter for 6 years. He is active in the Denton Firefighters Association, which works with city officials on the contract that allows negotiation with the city on fire-related issues. Mr. Cox is not only a loyal and modest fireman, but also a devoted husband to his wife, Triniki Cox, and loving father to their three children.

It is with great honor that I recognize Mr. Brian Cox for his hard work and selfless dedication to the Denton Fire Department and the citizens of Denton, TX. I am proud to represent him in Washington, and his service will be set as a standard of devotion and true leadership, one that will never be forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO MR. PERCY SUTTON—DESIGNATING THE FACILITY OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE LOCATED AT 365 WEST 125TH STREET IN NEW YORK, NEW YORK, AS THE ''PERCY SUTTON POST OFFICE BUILDING''

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life and legacy of Percy Sutton, a true leader in the Harlem community. He has worked as a stunt pilot, train conductor, military intelligence officer, civil rights attorney, broadcast company owner, TV producer, and borough president. But Sutton is most notably known as a mentor for young leaders in my congressional district.

Percy Sutton was born in San Antonio, TX on November 24, 1920, the youngest child of Samuel and Lillian Sutton's 15 children. Sutton attended and graduated from Prairie View A&M University, Tuskegee Institute, and Hampton Institute. A skilled pilot, Sutton served our country during World War II with the Tuskegee Airmen and won combat stars as an intelligence officer.

After receiving an honorable discharge with the rank of captain, Sutton enrolled in the Brooklyn College Law School and received his law degree in 1950. During the 1950s and 1960s, Sutton became one of American's best known lawyers, fighting for civil rights and representing many prominent African American figures, including Malcolm X.

Sutton served as borough president of the borough of Manhattan from 1966 until 1977. During his tenure he supported initiatives to forge economic revitalization in Harlem. It was Sutton, while borough president, who first presented the idea of tourism in upper Manhattan. He continues to encourage the revitalization of the Harlem community by supporting organizations which promote local empowerment and economic development.

Sutton is also a leader in the business world. In 1971, he created the Inner City Broadcasting Company. The company housed the first African American owned radio stations in New York City: WBLS and WLIB. Sutton initiated the revitalization of the legendary Apollo Theater in Harlem and successfully produced the nationally acclaimed television show, It's Showtime at the Apollo. In 1987, he went on to receive the Spingarn Medal from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, for his many achievements as a public servant, businessman, and community leader.

Percy Sutton is a great American and a good friend. He continues to be an inspiration for young African Americans. I urge you to support H.R. 954 to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 365 West 125th Street in New York, NY, as the ''Percy Sutton Post Office Building.''

IN HONOR OF LT. COL. DAVID C. CANEGATA III

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of a family man, a soldier, and a friend, LTC David C. Canegata III who was killed in Iraq on January 20 when the Black Hawk helicopter in which he and 11 of his colleagues were flying went down over Baghdad.

My district, the U.S. Virgin Islands mourned the loss of Lietenant Colonel Canegata and his fellow Virgin Islander SFC Floyd Lake for they were among the best and brightest of our National Guardsmen who have served their country faithfully in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba since the onset of hostilities on September 11.

The gospel of John, Chapter 15, Verse 13 states that ''Greater love than this has no man, but that he lay down his life for his friends.'' Lietutenant Colonel Canegata, who was a man of faith, has given us the greatest gift of all, the gift of love, through his service and sacrifice.

I knew David, or ''Tershie'' as he was affectionately called, since his early childhood as our families were close and his cousins were my best friends and so his passing is a very painful, personal loss.

David left a wonderful legacy of devotion to family, community, the National Guard, and his church. In his short life, he touched the lives of many in different parts of the world, but more than anything else, he was a father, who while giving his all to his own, extended his nurturing and love to the young people of his church and community. His brothers and sisters in arms, his National Guard family, remember him as a source of strength and inspiration and leadership.

On behalf of my family, staff, and the Congress of the United States, I extend our heartfelt sympathy and eternal gratitude to his wife, Shenneth, his parents David and Carmen, his children Nicole, David-Mychal, Andre, and Jessica, his siblings Diane, Terry, Yvette, and John, the entire Canegata clan, Speak the Word Ministries and his National Guard family. His life, and the loving, caring man of God that he became is a beautiful and enduring tribute to you, the family that nurtured him.

We all loved him, but now he is with the One who can love him more perfectly than we ever could.

David fought, defended, and protected us in war, but he was a man of peace. We honor him, we thank him, and we will never forget him, his ultimate sacrifice and the love he gave in the most profound way to all of us.

May he rest in Eternal Peace.

RECOGNIZING GREGORY DANIEL BEDSAUL FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Gregory Daniel Bedsaul, 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 145, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Gregory has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Gregory has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Gregory Daniel Bedsaul for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONGRATULATING COPPERAS COVE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the outstanding achievements of Copperas Cove High School in Copperas Cove, Texas. Copperas Cove High School has long been recognized as an institution that places a premium on academic success. Recently,

Copperas Cove added to their successes with a commendable performance by the Bulldawg football team, who advanced to the state championship game in 4A Division I. This marks the first time Copperas Cove has played for a state championship in any division and is the fruit of a season marked by hard work and dedication.

Copperas Cove High School has shown what a school can achieve with no small amount of persistence. I am sure that in addition to the achievements of this season they will have an even brighter future. I admire what they do both athletically and academically; I am proud to represent such a fine institution and wish them the best in their future endeavors. I would like to congratulate them on their efforts this season, and their well-deserved success.

TRIBUTE TO PAUL RODRIGUEZ

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Paul Rodriguez on representing the United States as Señor Internacional during the Washington Birthday Celebration, the largest celebration of its kind in the United States.

Mr. Rodriguez's career has spanned more than two decades and includes starring roles in over 30 films and countless television series and specials. Some of Mr. Paul Rodriguez's series include ''Trial and Error,'' ''Grand Slam,'' and for over four years he hosted ''El Show de Paul Rodriguez,'' an entertainment talk show for the Spanish-language Univision network. This particular show reached an international audience throughout the United States and 17 other countries in Central and South America.

His directorial debut came in 1994 with the film ''A Million to Juan,'' a family comedy in which he also wrote and starred. Mr. Rodriguez moved nicely from television to motion pictures, making his feature film debut in the picture comedy ''D.C. Cab,'' followed by many films such as ''Miracles,'' ''Born in East L.A.,'' and ''Made in America.'' Mr. Rodriguez recently had the opportunity to work with the legendary Clint Eastwood in the film ''Bloodwork.'' It is estimated that Mr. Paul Rodriguez has performed live to well to over one million concert goers from coast to coast. Within Hispanic communities, Mr. Rodriguez is considered the ''Original Latin King of Comedy.''

Mr. Paul Rodriguez remains strongly rooted in the Latino Community, working with civic and educational groups, and his main contributions go to The National Hispanic Scholarship Fund (NHSF), but he also contributes to such charitable efforts such as Comic Relief, and hosts the annual Elizabeth Glazer Pediatrics AIDS Foundation Celebrity Golf Tournament. Mr. Rodriguez is the one of the few stand-up comedians who performs in two languages (Spanish/English) and was voted as one of the most influential Hispanics in America. He has also been the recipient of the Ruben Salazar Award by the National Council of La Raza.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize the dedication of Paul Rodriguez to the Hispanic-American community in the United States.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE MARINE MAMMAL RESCUE ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENTS: FEBRUARY, 2007

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, Congressman HENRY BROWN (R–SC) and I are introducing legislation today that will extend the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program. The program was first authorized in 2000 to address the funding needs of facilities assisting the National Marine Fisheries Service with the recovery and rehabilitation of stranded marine mammals. The Prescott Grant Program has been very successful in supporting facilities around the nation volunteering facility space and staff time to rehabilitate marine mammals and return many of them to the wild. For those animals that cannot be returned to the wild, due to illness or other factors, the facilities have taken on the responsibility of caring for those marine mammals.

This legislation will increase the funding for the Department of Commerce from $4.0 million up to $6.0 million a year. The bill will cap administrative costs and roll over any unused funds into the grant program to be issued as grants in the following fiscal year. The Administration is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements to respond at-sea to marine mammals entangled in floating debris. It will create an emergency assistance process through which the agency will be able to enter into cooperative agreements with stranding facilities to facilitate the movement of funds to facilities responding to stranding events. In addition, the legislation will reauthorize funding for the Marine Mammal Unusual Mortality Event Fund, which allows the agency to respond to mass stranding events and reimburse facilities that have assisted in the response activity.

I applaud the public display facilities and marine mammal research institutions that have dedicated resources and time toward recovering and rehabilitating marine mammals. This legislation will allow the National Marine Fisheries Service and the stranding facilities to continue their important efforts in the future. I urge support for this important conservation measure.

RECOGNIZING BLAKE ALEXANDER MCCARTER FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Blake Alexander McCarter, 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 145, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Blake has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Blake has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Blake Alexander McCarter for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF FIREMAN CLINT STEPHENSON

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Fireman Clint Stephenson for his dedicated and outstanding service to the Denton Fire Department and the city of Denton, Texas.

Mr. Clint Stephenson has recently been named Rookie of the Year for his leadership and devotion to the Denton Fire Department. Mr. Stephenson never fails to put forth a positive attitude and he is continually respectful to his fellow firemen in the department. He pays close attention to detail during both station duties and on-scene care, leaving no room for error and helping others in need. Not only is he a dedicated and compassionate firefighter, but he is also a loyal coworker and friend.

It is with great honor that I recognize Mr. Clint Stephenson for his hard work and selfless dedication to the Denton Fire Department and the citizens of Denton, Texas. I am proud to represent him in Washington, and his service will be set as a standard of devotion and true leadership, one that will never be forgotten.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC FOR WINNING THE 2007 CARIBBEAN SERIES CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate, Las Aguilas Cibaeñas, the team representing the Dominican Republic at the 2007 Caribbean Series, for winning the championship on February 7. Wearing jerseys emblazoned with the words ''Dominicano Soy'' (I am Dominican), their pride in their country and in the game of baseball was evident as the team dominated this year's Caribbean Series, where they won a record five of their six games during the Series. Dominicans have once more demonstrated that they are the forerunners in the all-American sport of baseball. The Dominican Republic has now won 16 Caribbean Series titles, the most by anyone country in the history of these championship games. The Dominican Republic has won seven out of the last 11 Caribbean Series, demonstrating their passion and commitment to the sport.

Baseball is the national sport of the Dominican Republic and many of the best Dominican born baseball athletes play for U.S. Major League Baseball teams. Even in the poorest rural villages throughout the Dominican Republic, boys are swinging bats in well-tended baseball fields. They move with an athletic grace and throw without fear. They play barefoot sometimes, and swing with the entire body in one fluid poetic arc. They practice day in and day out with hopes of one day being the baseball player. They play for the love of the game, which is why professional baseball scouts from the United States go to the Dominican Republic in droves.

About 500,000 Dominicans live in New York, the city's second-largest Latino group after Puerto Ricans, according to census officials. The majority of New York's Dominicans live in and around Washington Heights in Upper Manhattan, part of my Congressional district. Baseball is a year-round sport for them. In the winter, after the baseball season finishes in the United States, they enjoy the Dominican baseball season, which includes the Caribbean Series games. This year the Series was watched by over 700,000 fans all over the world, the highest viewing ever.

Please join me in congratulating the team from the Dominican Republic for an outstanding demonstration of commitment, dominance and pride at the 2007 Caribbean Series.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

SPEECH OF

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 134, recognizing and honoring the employees of the Department of Homeland Security for their efforts and contributions to protect and secure the Nation. I would like to commend my colleagues, Congressman CARNEY and Congressman BILIRAKIS for their leadership in bringing this resolution to the floor today.

As an original member of the Committee on Homeland Security, I know firsthand the many challenges within the Department of Homeland Security. Last week, the committee conducted hearings on the status and budget of the agency. A concern that was expressed by a majority, if not all members of the committee, was the issue of employee moral at the agency. We know that it has not been easy to withstand and respond to the harsh and constant criticism resulting from the aftermath of 911 and other disasters that followed.

But, today, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize all of the DHS employees, especially those within FEMA who have had to bear the brunt of criticisms post-Katrina. Although this committee has conducted oversight hearings to address these criticisms, we also recognize and know firsthand all the good work that they do. In addition to supporting all that H. Res. 134 provides, I would also like to add that as the members of this committee begin the appropriation process, we will do everything possible to make sure that they have the resources they need to continue to effectively and efficiently get their job done.

Congratulations to the Department of Homeland Security on their fourth anniversary.

RECOGNIZING JAMES JOSEPH ARCANO FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize James Joseph Arcano, 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 145, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

James has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years James has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending James Joseph Arcano for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF TRAINING CAPTAIN BRAD LAHART

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Training Captain Brad Lahart for his dedicated and outstanding service to the Denton Fire Department and the City of Denton, Texas.

Captain Lahart has recently been named Employee of the Year for his leadership and devotion to the Denton Fire Department. As Training Captain, he ensures that all firefighters have proper training and certification, and works with the victim's assistance program to help victims of fires and other disasters. Mr. Lahart was project manager for Station 7, and is currently managing the construction of a new fire and police training center to be built at the Station 7 site. He has greatly contributed to the tripling of the department's documented training hours, which the firefighters need to retain their certification.

It is with great honor that I recognize Mr. Brad Lahart for his hard work and selfless dedication to the Denton Fire Department and the citizens of Denton, Texas. I am proud to represent him in Washington, and his service will be set as a standard of devotion and true leadership, one that will never be forgotten.

RECOGNIZING LEO T. MCCARTHY

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Ms. SOLIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend and fellow Californian, Leo T. McCarthy, who passed away February 5, 2007. A devoted public servant, Mr. McCarthy dedicated his life to serving his country and the people of the State of California.

During his long career of service to our Nation, Mr. McCarthy distinguished himself as a fierce advocate for economic justice, social equality, and freedom for all. Joining the United States Air Force in 1951, he served with distinction and honor during the Korean War. From there, Mr. McCarthy entered into public life and was elected as the youngest member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in city history. Soon after, he was elected to the California State Assembly, and quickly rose to become Speaker of the Assembly. As Speaker, he championed the causes of human rights, education, and environmentalism, securing major legislative victories while bringing more openness and transparency to the process.

Mr. McCarthy's tremendous record in the Assembly catapulted him to prominence and he was elected Lieutenant Governor of California in 1982. A brilliant executive, he expertly coordinated the relief effort for the devastating Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989. Recognizing his service, the people of California returned him to office for a record breaking three terms until he retired from politics in 1994. Even in retirement, he remained engaged in the lives of Californians, raising over one million dollars to endow the Leo T. McCarthy Center for Public Service and the Common Good at the University of California of San Francisco.

In addition to his dedicated public service, he was devoted to his family. Even while serving in Sacramento at the very top of California politics, he drove home almost every night to be with his wife, Jacqueline, and his children, Sharon, Conna, Adam, and Niall.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the very best that the State of California has to offer in Leo T. McCarthy. He was a leader, a statesman, and he will be sorely missed.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066 AND SUPPORTING AND RECOGNIZING A NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, February 19, we will mark the 65th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. This resolution authorized the internment of over one hundred thousand American citizens and legal resident aliens of Japanese, German, and Italian ancestry. At the hands of our government, Japanese, German, and Italian citizens suffered grievous violations of their civil liberties. These war-time measures were far-reaching, uprooting entire communities and targeting citizens as well as resident aliens.

Although the greatest numbers of those impacted by Executive Order 9066 were Japanese-Americans, little is known about the impact of the measure on Italian and German-

Americans. Like Japanese-Americans, Italian and German-Americans were branded ''enemy aliens'' and were required to carry identification cards, saddled with travel restrictions, had their personal property seized, and placed in internment. For example, 3,200 resident aliens of Italian background were arrested and more than 300 of them were interned. About 11,000 German residents—including some naturalized citizens—were arrested and more than 5,000 were interned.

Executive Order 9066 was finally rescinded by Gerald Ford on April 19, 1976 and in 1983, the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) concluded that the incarceration of Japanese-Americans had not been justified by military necessity. Rather, the report determined that the decision to incarcerate was based on ''race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.'' The Civil Liberties Act of 1988, based on the CWRIC recommendations, was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan and an appropriations bill authorizing reparations to be paid between 1990 and 1998 was signed by George H.W. Bush in 1989. Finally, in 1990, surviving internees began to receive individual redress payments and a letter of apology. Through these acts, our government has attempted to make amends, yet the initial effects of Executive Order 9066 remain in the hearts and minds of many Americans.

Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the Congressional Italian-American Delegation, I fully support H. Res. 122, which would effectively recognize the significance of the 65th anniversary of Executive Order 9066 and support the goals of the Japanese-American, German-American, and Italian-American communities in recognizing a National Day of Remembrance. This bill will go a long way in helping to increase public awareness of the events surrounding the restriction, exclusion, and internment of individuals and families during World War II, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately I was unable to cast my votes on the following rollcall votes on February 12, 2007. I request that the RECORD state my intentions on these votes had I been present to vote.

On rollcall No. 93—on the motion to Suspend the Rules and pass H. Res. 134, recognizing and honoring the employees of the Department of Homeland Security for their efforts and contributions to protect and secure the Nation, I would have voted ''yea.''

On rollcall No. 94—on the motion to Suspend the Rules and pass H. Con. Res. 44, honoring and praising the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on the occasion of its 98th anniversary, I would have voted ''yea.''

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 65TH ANNIVERSARY OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066 AND SUPPORTING AND RECOGNIZING A NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, February 19th marks the 65th anniversary of one of the greatest mistakes in our country's long history.

On that day in 1942, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which authorized the internment of tens of thousands of Japanese Americans. This executive order was also applied to a smaller group of Americans of both Italian and German descent.

In recognition of the 65th anniversary of the internments, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 122. This resolution supports the goals of the Japanese American, German American, and Italian American communities in recognizing a National Day of Remembrance for those individuals who were unjustly imprisoned.

It is said that those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it. A National Day of Remembrance would increase public awareness of the events surrounding the internment of innocent Americans and their families.

While our society has made important strides towards ending racial discrimination and inequality in the 65 years since President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, we still have a long road ahead of us.

Just last week, alarming statistics were released on the resurgence of the KKK and other hate groups in the United States.

This is why we must pass this resolution. Our government and our leaders cannot make the mistakes of the past. Instead they must guide us to a greater understanding and respect for all Americans.

WELCOME TO SPEAKER OF THE KYRGYZ PARLIAMENT, MR. MARAT SULTANOV

HON. CHRIS CANNON

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. CANNON. Madam Speaker, I rise to welcome to the United States and to my State of Utah the Speaker of the Kyrgyz Parliament, Mr. Marat Sultanov. Mr. Sultanov was hosted by leaders in Utah on February 3–5.

Kyrgyzstan is a small nation in the heart of Central Asia, landlocked and inhabited primarily by a Muslim population with a predominantly nomadic culture and heritage. Kyrgyzstan has demonstrated itself a friend and ally of the United States, especially in the fight against terrorism. The air base at the Manas International Airport in Bishkek is still the only military base in Central Asia supporting coalition forces operations against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan.

For some time the Kyrgyz Republic has been considered an advanced nation in terms of political and economic transformation. After the change of regime in 2005 and the election of a new president, Kyrgyzstan still faces many challenges. One great challenge for this nation stems from its proximity to Afghanistan, and the threat of increasing drug trafficking, weapons smuggling and radical militancy. Kyrgyzstan needs our support to progress with reforms for a better future for its citizens.

During his visit to the United States, and Utah in particular, Speaker Sultanov talked about those matters. His background and political career show his own contributions to the promotion of market-based economic reforms. Before his election to the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan, he was head of the National Bank and the Minister of Finances.

Speaker Sultanov's visit to Utah came at the invitation of Utah Senate President John Valentine, as a result of the Speaker's special interest in building strong, direct ties between the legislators of Kyrgyzstan and the legislature of Utah, as well as with the U.S. Congress.

While in Utah, Speaker Sultanov lectured at Utah Valley State College on the subject of ''The Kyrgyz Republic-Utah-Rocky Mountain States: A new level of cooperation through a sustainable Mountain Partnership.'' The Speaker will emphasize for the first time a new tack in the bilateral agenda, related to cooperation in the sphere of sustainable mountain development, which will be very important for both Kyrgyzstan and Utah.

The idea of sustainable development is directed toward fighting poverty, unemployment and inequality by looking for the exchange and implementation of best practices among the people who live in similar environments with similar challenges. Many of these challenges in mountain nations come because of remoteness, lack of resources and infrastructure.

The Rocky Mountain States and Utah are actively involved in this cooperative process. In November of last year several institutions from this region, including Vista 360 (Jackson, Wyoming), Utah Valley State College and the Utah-Russia Institute became members of the UN-related Mountain Partnership, which coordinates efforts on sustainable mountain development on a global level.

Another major project which Utah Valley State College is pursuing, together with its partners from the National Center of Development of Mountain Regions of Kyrgyzstan, is the international conference ''Women of the Mountains.'' A number of prominent women from around the world and from the Rocky Mountain region will take part in the Conference. The goal of the Conference is to unite leading scholars and institutions from the Rocky Mountain States in a regional approach toward sustainable mountain development. This conference will be free and open to the public on the UVSC Orem campus from March 8th–March 10th.

The conference will give scholars from the region an opportunity to talk to each other and identify positive examples of sustainable development in the Rocky Mountains and then to further these experiences both in this region and with interested partners around the world. UVSC intends that the Conference be held on an annual basis.

Representatives of Kyrgyzstan and other developing mountain nations have emphasized how important it is for them to have specific support from the mountain communities of

the United States. The historical development of the mountainous states in North America, and Utah in particular, are of particular interest to them. The new involvement and interest of the Rocky Mountain States and Utah in sustainable mountain development could help many of the transitioning economies to develop and implement more successful, pro-market policies.

This is a rewarding and noble goal, especially now, when we are witnessing growing challenges to stability and development around the world from the growth of poverty and unemployment, two primary sources feeding terrorism and militancy.

INTRODUCTION OF THE INDUSTRIAL HEMP FARMING ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the Industrial Hemp Farming Act. The Industrial Hemp Farming Act requires the Federal Government to respect State laws allowing the growing of industrial hemp.

Seven States—Hawaii, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Montana, North Dakota, and West Virginia—allow industrial hemp production or research in accord with State laws. However, Federal law is standing in the way of farmers in these States growing what may be a very profitable crop. Because of current federal law, all hemp included in products sold in the United States must be imported instead of being grown by American farmers.

Since 1970, the Federal Controlled Substances Act's inclusion of industrial hemp in the schedule one definition of marijuana has prohibited American farmers from growing industrial hemp despite the fact that industrial hemp has such a low content of THC (the psychoactive chemical in the related marijuana plant) that nobody can be psychologically affected by consuming hemp. Federal law concedes the safety of industrial hemp by allowing it to be legally imported for use as food.

The United States is the only industrialized nation that prohibits industrial hemp cultivation. The Congressional Research Service has noted that hemp is grown as an established agricultural commodity in over 30 nations in Europe, Asia, and North America. My Industrial Hemp Farming Act will relieve this unique restriction on American farmers and allow them to grow industrial hemp in accord with State law.

Industrial hemp is a crop that was grown legally throughout the United States for most of our Nation's history. In fact, during World War II, the Federal Government actively encouraged American farmers to grow industrial hemp to help the war effort. The Department of Agriculture even produced a film "Hemp for Victory" encouraging the plant's cultivation.

In recent years, the hemp plant has been put to many popular uses in foods and in industry. Grocery stores sell hemp seeds and oil as well as food products containing oil and seeds from the hemp plant. Industrial hemp is also included in consumer products such as paper, cloths, cosmetics, and carpet. One of the more innovative recent uses of industrial hemp is in the door frames of about 1.5 million cars. Hemp has even been used in alternative automobile fuel.

It is unfortunate that the Federal Government has stood in the way of American farmers, including many who are struggling to make ends meet, competing in the global industrial hemp market. Indeed, the founders of our Nation, some of whom grew hemp, would surely find that Federal restrictions on farmers growing a safe and profitable crop on their own land are inconsistent with the constitutional guarantee of a limited, restrained Federal Government. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to stand up for American farmers and cosponsor the Industrial Hemp Farming Act.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MOUNT VERNON RECREATION CENTER

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the staff of the Mount Vernon Recreation Center in Alexandria, Virginia on receiving the Heart of Potomac West Award.

The Mount Vernon Recreation Center has been a key partner in the Del Ray Potomac West community of Alexandria for decades. The Center's staff has built long-lasting relationships with the community, including neighbors, businesses, and visitors, by ensuring that the Center's doors are open and that every community member is welcome.

Each year, the Center staff helps to organize and assist with numerous events for the residents and businesses of Del Ray. These include the Annual Holiday Tree Lighting, the Annual Halloween Parade, Art on the Avenue, Cinema Del Ray, First Night on New Year's Eve, and countless programs for seniors and youth.

Without the support of these dedicated, hardworking, and caring staff members, such events could never take place.

The staff of the Mount Vernon Recreation Center has stood side by side with the community during times of crisis. When Del Ray lost two of its citizens, Kevin Shifflet and Nancy Dunning, the Center staff acted as a support beacon for a community in mourning, providing a home where citizens turned for comfort and support. These devoted and committed staffers have always gone far above and beyond the call of duty.

The Mount Vernon Recreation Center is a marvelous asset of the City of Alexandria, and this has occurred through the hard work and dedication of the Center staff. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Center staff on being awarded this great honor.

TRIBUTE TO CLERK OF THE HOUSE KAREN HAAS

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to rise and show my appreciation for Karen Haas, the outgoing Clerk of the House. Karen is truly deserving of recognition for a job very well done.

It is a pleasure to know Karen, as she is one of the most thoughtful and considerate people on Capitol Hill. She has done an exceptional job running the Clerk's office, and knowing that Karen was in charge meant other members and I knew that things were getting done right.

I can even say that I have had the privilege to "work" for Karen. When Karen ran the House floor operations, I would get calls at all times of the day asking if I could preside. I never hesitated to preside when Karen asked, nor did my colleagues.

Some people might have been surprised when Speaker HASTERT tapped Karen to fill the Clerk's position. I wasn't surprised; I knew he made a very good choice.

Karen has done a magnificent job as Clerk and we will truly miss having her in the Capitol. Karen, thank you for a job well done.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDENT AID REWARD ACT OF 2007

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today along with Representative THOMAS PETRI to introduce the Student Aid Reward Act of 2007, the STAR Act, a bill that is a vital part of strengthening America's middle class.

Since 2001, tuition and fees at public colleges and universities have exploded, increasing by 41 percent—after inflation. Students are graduating with greater amounts of debt than ever before, and unfortunately as many as 200,000 prospective students each year decide not to go to college because they can't afford it.

Already in this Congress we have taken great strides toward making a college education affordable for all qualified students through increased grant aid and more affordable student loans.

The Student Aid Reward Act continues the mission of putting students and families first by providing additional need-based grant aid to students without any cost to the taxpayer.

This legislation is simple: It encourages colleges to use the less expensive of the federal government's two student loan programs, and puts the savings back into the hands of students through need-based grant aid.

In order to do this, the Student Aid Reward Act calls on the Secretary of Education to determine which of the two Federally backed student loan programs is more efficient. Schools that elect to use the more efficient program would then be rewarded with additional scholarship funds for and graduate fellowship money for low- and middle-income students—all paid for by the savings generated by the bill.

According to the President's recently released 2008 education budget, student loans made through the more expensive program in 2007 cost $3 more for every $100 lent than the same loans made with U.S. Treasury funds.

At a time when our Federal Government is facing an extreme deficit, this is a win-win bill

for students, families, and taxpayers. This bill will not only increase efficiency in the loan programs, but will also generate increased competition, resulting in increased benefits for students and families.

The Student Aid Reward Act has also been introduced in the Senate by Senators EDWARD KENNEDY and GORDON SMITH.

No qualified person should ever be prevented from going to college because of the cost. We must ensure that every student in this country has the opportunity to pursue their dreams.

VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT SALUTES FATHER ROBERT DRINAN

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, last week, several of my colleagues and I memorialized the life and record of the late Father Robert Drinan, one of the most distinguished people to have served in this body. Father Drinan's political career began in 1970 when he ran for Congress as an opponent of American participation in the Vietnam War. He was a consistent fighter for peace throughout his life. When I returned to my district last weekend, I received from Father Drinan's sister-in-law, Helen Drinan, a woman who played a very important role in nurturing his political career, a copy of a letter she had received that meant a great deal to her and the Drinan family.

The letter is from the Vietnamese Ambassador to the United States, hailing Father Drinan ''as a tenacious advocate for social justice and a resilient fighter for peace.'' Madam Speaker, I ask that this letter from the Government of Vietnam to the Drinan family be printed here.

EMBASSY OF VIETNAM,
Washington, DC, January 31, 2007.

Mrs. HELEN DRINAN,
Newton, MA.

DEAR MRS. DRINAN, On behalf of the people and Government of Vietnam, I would like to extend the most profound condolences to you and to your family on the passing of your brother-in-law, Father and Congressman Robert F. Drinan.

Father Robert F. Drinan will be always remembered by many as a tenacious advocate for social justice and a resilient fighter for peace. For the Vietnamese people, he will remain a staunch fighter who made significant contribution to ending to the Vietnam War in the 1970s, thus bringing peace to the country after so many decades of wars.

May your family overcome this most difficult time.

Respectfully,

NGUYEN TAM CHIEN,
Ambassador.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDENT AID REWARD (STAR) ACT OF 2007

HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, today I am again joining with my colleague, Chairman GEORGE MILLER, to reintroduce our Student Aid Reward (STAR) Act, which would provide billions of dollars in additional aid to students at no additional cost to taxpayers. Now, more than ever, millions of low and middle-income families are struggling to help their children attend college in the face of rising tuition costs and limited financial assistance. The STAR Act is a fiscally-responsible plan that could help make college more affordable and accessible for these students.

The STAR Act is rooted in my longstanding belief that we have a fundamental obligation to our constituents to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse in government spending wherever it exists. Our legislation would encourage colleges and universities to utilize the less expensive of the federal government's two main student loan programs. In doing so, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that the STAR Act would save taxpayers $13.4 billion in wasteful subsidies—which would instead be devoted to increase student aid to low and middle-income students who need it most.

The real opportunity in this legislation is that it would allow for an increased investment in education while not costing taxpayers a single penny more. In fact, under the STAR program, there would be enough savings not only to return half to schools that switch to the more cost-effective program, but also to provide an additional 25 percent of those savings to schools that were previously enrolled in the cost-effective program and thus already saving taxpayers money. The final 25 percent would be devoted towards deficit reduction.

All these savings are to be made possible due to the startling difference in the cost between the two federal student loan programs. For the current fiscal year, the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program costs more than the exact same loan administered under the Direct Loan (DL) program. According to President Bush's 2008 education budget, student loans made through the more expensive program in 2007 cost $3 more for every $100 lent than the same loans made with U.S. Treasury funds.

Beyond the Office of Management and Budget, other budget experts continue to confirm this cost difference. Earlier this week, the Congressional Budget Office released a score that projected savings from this amendment in the amount of $13.4 billion over the next 10 years—and that's if only 15 percent of colleges choose to participate in the Student Aid Reward program by switching from the FFEL to the DL program. Those savings would be even more substantial with increased participation.

It is important to note that the STAR Act would not mandate that schools select the most cost-effective program, although we hope that they would. Under this bill, each college retains their ability to choose their student loan program. Those who choose to be more responsible with taxpayers money would be rewarded with a portion of the savings. Those that decide to continue with the more expensive program face no penalties, other than a missed opportunity to use taxpayer savings to boost their students' Pell Grants. Furthermore, each school would have the choice to leave the STAR program at the end of their 5-year contract if they are not satisfied with the results for their students.

A critical component of this program is that it is budget neutral. Any reward payments to schools are contingent upon actual taxpayer savings that year. We are confident that these savings not only exist, but amount to several billion dollars annually. Both the CBO and OMB continue to confirm this year after year.

The overarching reason that the FFEL program is so much more expensive than the DL program is the excessive subsidies paid to lenders each year to issue loans. As all lenders are guaranteed the exact same subsidies, regardless of their costs and efficiency, lenders do not compete for the benefit of taxpayers, only among themselves for market share. This practice is not only unnecessary but it is irresponsible—especially when the DL program has no similar costs.

The taxpayers not only pay interest subsidies to private lenders, they also subsidize the 13 guaranty agencies that purchase loans from the lenders after a certain period of time has passed. This is also a wasteful practice—especially when the DL program has no similar cost.

I would like to reiterate that this legislation would in no way mandate that schools choose the DL program over the FFEL program, or even that the DL program will always necessarily be the most cost-effective program. Instead, the legislation stipulates that the Secretary of Education shall determine each year which program is most cost-effective to taxpayers and that schools who participate in that program receive some of the savings. The Secretary would do this by making use of the best data available each year.

Madam Speaker, I believe that as stewards of taxpayers' money, Congress should always seek to make government more efficient and more accountable. Our legislation is smart policy: voluntary for schools, fiscally-responsible, and would provide over $10 billion in additional aid over the next 10 years. I encourage my colleagues to join Rep. MILLER and me in cosponsoring this legislation.

RECOGNIZING NICOLE MAYHEW AS SANTA ROSA COUNTY, FLORIDA'S TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the U.S. Congress, it is an honor for me to rise today to recognize Nicole Mayhew as Santa Rosa County's Teacher of the Year.

As a native of Northwest Florida, Nicole Mayhew joined the Santa Rosa County School District administration in 1996, after graduating from the University of West Florida with a degree in Primary/Elementary Education. Mrs. Mayhew has proudly served the School District for over 10 years, where she currently teaches first grade at West Navarre Primary School in Navarre, Florida. On January 26, 2007, with her husband Steven and her daughter Erin by her side, Nicole Mayhew was announced Teacher of the Year.

Mrs. Mayhew serves as a mentor to beginning teachers and supervises teachers from the University of West Florida. She is a member of the Santa Rosa County, Florida Reading Council and West Navarre Primary School's Parent-Teacher Organization, PTO, an organization of Parents and Teachers that

seeks to increase parent involvement in their child's education.

Out of her passion for teaching and her love for children, Nicole Mayhew sets high standards for all of her students and works with them to achieve their individual goals and the desired results of the overall academic performance of the class. She is the positive force behind each student's growth of mind, by giving them the confidence, knowledge, and inspiration needed to succeed.

The Teacher of the Year recognition highlights one year of teaching, but the proof of greatness lies well beyond the title—it lies in the hearts and minds of the students who have been deeply affected. Through her hard work and dedication, the impact she has had on her students and the community has proven her to be among the great teachers in Northwest Florida, and Santa Rosa County is honored to have her as one of their own.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the U.S. Congress, I am proud to recognize Nicole Mayhew on this outstanding achievement and her exemplary service in the Santa Rosa County School District.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SOUTH FLORIDA'S HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTATION AND EDUCATION CENTER

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor and pay tribute to all victims of the Holocaust and to congratulate South Florida's Holocaust Documentation and Education Center, its founders and museum curators for their fine work in educating and reminding the public about the Holocaust and remembering and honoring its victims.

An important part of the Center's permanent exhibits is one of only eight authentic World War II railcars that transported Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto to the Nazi death camps.

An estimated 3 million Jews were packed into the cars like the one on display in Hollywood, FL, which has a faded swastika still painted on the side. The persecuted Jews were often kept inside for days without food or water before being murdered. This railcar was used during the world's darkest time when over 6 million Jews were murdered along with approximately 3 million more victims of Nazi aggression, including; Christian Poles, Gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexual men, and people with disabilities.

This railcar will be placed on an unused track near the Holocaust Museum, which is located in my district at 2031 Harrison Street in Hollywood, FL, the center of the second-largest population of Holocaust survivors in the Nation.

To the residents of South Florida, the students enrolled in area schools, and to the millions of visitors to the region, I encourage you to visit the Holocaust Documentation and Education Center to study, understand and contemplate the consequences of man's inhumanity to man which occurred in Europe prior to and during World War II.

That the Holocaust Documentation and Education Center is one of four Holocaust museums in the country where these railcars are on display demonstrates that the Jewish community in South Florida is among the strongest in the Nation, forever committed to preserving the memory of the 6 million Jews who tragically were killed during the Shoah.

This railcar will undoubtedly serve as a reminder for eternity that the poignant expression "Never Again" will never ring hollow again.

I congratulate the Holocaust Documentation and Education Center for attaining and displaying this railcar, and for helping to teach the entire South Florida community lessons of tolerance and understanding.

STATEMENT RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY AS NATIONAL MARFAN AWARENESS MONTH

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in observance of February as National Marfan Awareness Month and to recognize the hundreds of thousands of Americans who are living with Marfan syndrome and related connective tissue disorders.

I am proud that the Nation's premier organization supporting the Marfan syndrome community, the National Marfan Foundation, is headquartered in my congressional district in Port Washington, NY. The NMF was founded 25 years ago by Priscilla Ciccariello, a woman of enormous compassion and vision. For the past quarter-century, the NMF has been dedicated to saving lives and improving the quality-of-life for Marfan patients through research, support services, education, and advocacy.

This year marks the 16th observance of National Marfan Awareness Month which is designed to educate the general public and healthcare providers about this challenging condition. Marfan syndrome is a genetic disorder of the connective tissue that can affect many body systems, including; the skeleton, eyes, heart, nervous system, lungs and blood vessels. Of primary concern to patients is the impact the syndrome can have on the aorta. In Marfan patients, the aorta (the large artery that carries blood away from the heart) is weakened and prone to enlargement and rupture, which is often fatal. Currently, there is no cure for Marfan syndrome but with early diagnosis, proper treatment and careful management, patients can live a normal lifespan.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House that we are at an unprecedented time of hope in the field of Marfan syndrome research. Just last month, the National, Heart, Lung and Blood Institute at the National Institute of Health, working closely with NMF, initiated a groundbreaking clinical trial on Marfan syndrome. This trial seeks to determine the efficacy of a medication currently used to control high-blood pressure for treating aortic growth in children with Marfan syndrome. The blood-pressure medication has shown a remarkable ability to halt and even reverse aortic growth in pioneering basic research conducted by Dr. Hal Dietz of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. I applaud NHLBI Director Dr. Elizabeth Nabel, and Dr. Gail Pearson, Chief of the NHLBI's Heart Development and Structural Diseases Branch, for their leadership in supporting this promising trial.

Madam Speaker, February was chosen as National Marfan Awareness Month in part to coincide with Abraham Lincoln's birthday. President Lincoln is believed to have been affected by Marfan syndrome based on the many outward signs of the disorder he portrayed. Marfan syndrome patients are frequently taller than non-affected members of their family and have disproportionately long limbs, fingers and toes. In addition, they often have an indented or protruding chest-bone, curved spine, high-arched palate, and loose joints. Other well known individuals who were afflicted with the Marfan syndrome include Jonathan Larson, the Tony Award winning playwright of the Broadway musical Rent, Flo Hyman, captain of the U.S. Olympic volleyball team that won a gold medal in 1984, Charles de Gaulle, the composer Sergei Vasilievich Rachmaninoff, and Mary, Queen of Scots.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 14,000 people die each year of aortic aneurysms and dissections, 20 percent of which can be contributed to genetic disorders such as Marfan syndrome. Unfortunately, a lack of awareness about Marfan syndrome continues to result in patients dying before being properly diagnosed and treated. Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me and the National Marfan Foundation in raising awareness of this life-threatening disorder so we can prevent future unnecessary tragedies.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY McNERNEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 12, 2007

Mr. McNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in proud support of H.R. 798, which will instruct the General Services Administration to install photovoltaic panels on the roof of the Department of Energy in Washington D.C.

As a country, our energy needs continue to grow, and yet we are still heavily dependent on foreign sources of oil. The Federal Government is the country's single largest energy consumer and is in a unique position to demonstrate a commitment to taking on the challenge of global warming through the use of sustainable energy technology.

The installation of photovoltaic panels on the roof of the Energy Department headquarters in Washington D.C. is a first—and important—step in that direction. Doing so will help demonstrate the power and promise of solar energy.

It is critical that we continue to push forward on this front and expand the menu of renewable energy solutions available for use. I have recently formed the Bipartisan Freshman Caucus on Energy and Climate and am committed to working with members on both sides of the aisle to move forward with more commonsense solutions like photovoltaic panels. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

HONORING ST. JOSEPH'S OF STRATFORD NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH AS THEY CELEBRATE THEIR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to join the Reverend Anthony Kopka, members of the congregation, and the Stratford community in extending my sincere congratulations to St. Joseph's of Stratford National Catholic Church as they celebrate its 100th Anniversary. This is a remarkable milestone for this community treasure and I am proud to help them celebrate this momentous occasion.

St. Joseph's was first organized in Bridgeport, Connecticut by a group of Polish Catholic immigrants in 1907 and later moved to Stratford, Connecticut after building a new church complex. St. Joseph's was born out of the congregation's desire to exercise more control over their parish. It was important to the Polish congregants that their church be led by a Polish priest, services held in Polish—in all, it was of the utmost importance to the congregants that their ethnic traditions and customs be preserved. In an effort to meet these needs, the Church became a part of the Polish National Catholic Church (PNCC)—a denomination which began in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

The PNCC blends traditional Apostolic and Catholic teaching with American democracy which is governed by a constitution patterned after that of the United States. The Church established executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government at national, diocesan, and parish levels. The result is a democratic Catholicism that among other things provides for ownership of parish property by the congregation, a voice and a vote for every member in most matters of the parish, and the election of parish delegates to meet with clergy at synods to elect bishops and determine church policy.

Since its inception in 1907, St. Joseph's has been an integral part of our community and has now grown to its current 300 parish members from 20 different Connecticut communities. Our churches play a vital role in our communities—providing people with a place to turn to for comfort when they are most in need. By strengthening our bonds of faith, St. Joseph's gives its members a place to find their spiritual center and to solidify and support their values. The members of the St. Joseph's have also given much to the City of Bridgeport and the Town of Stratford. Throughout the years, as their membership grew so did their commitment to the enrichment of our community.

For 100 years, the St. Joseph's of Stratford National Catholic Church has been a fixture in communities of Bridgeport and Stratford. Through their ministry and outreach efforts, they have left an indelible mark on our community and continue to enrich the lives of others. I am proud to stand today and extend my very best wishes to them as they mark this milestone in their history. Happy 100th Anniversary!

CONGRATULATIONS HELEN GALE FERGUSON ON HER 75TH BIRTHDAY

HON. JOHN P. SARBANES

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Helen Gale Ferguson and wish her well on the occasion of her 75th birthday. Helen was born in Newfoundland, Canada in February 1932, where she grew up with her siblings as the daughter of a fisherman and boat builder who sailed the waters of the northern Atlantic.

Upon completion of high school, Helen began working for the U.S. Air Force at Ernest Harmon Air Force Base in Stephenville, Newfoundland. It was there that she met and married Mark E. Ferguson, Jr., during his active duty assignment at the base. Following his honorable discharge from the Air Force, they settled with their children in 1960 in Glen Burnie, Maryland. In 1966, Helen proudly became a U.S. citizen during a ceremony in Annapolis, Maryland. Helen and Mark were married for 41 wonderful years until his passing in 1997.

Helen is the proud mother of four children. Her personal life is one of grace, quiet strength, and love of family. Her values have been passed down to her children, as each of them have chosen a life of service to our Nation. Her daughters Pamela and Patricia both work for the Department of Defense. Her son, David, works for the Department of the Treasury, and her son Mark serves as a Rear Admiral in the United States Navy. Helen is adored by her seven grandchildren Alex, Hannah, Andrew, Eric, Ellie, Ian, and Seth.

Madam Speaker, I know my colleagues will join me in sending our very best to Helen Ferguson on the occasion of her 75th birthday and recognizing her as a role model for her strength, dignity, and support for her family. Coming from a family of immigrants myself, I am particularly proud of her as a role model to all who come to this country from humble beginnings, and contribute to the rich fabric of America.

HONORING MISS GREATER SPRINGFIELD, CARESSA CAMERON

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Caressa Cameron for her year of service to the Miss America Organization and Greater Springfield area.

Ms. Cameron won the title of Miss Greater Springfield 2006 on February 12, 2006. She has worked tirelessly with the Boys and Girls Club to promote her platform of AIDS awareness through behavior modification in the Northern Virginia area.

During her reign, Ms. Cameron made numerous appearances around Springfield, including a gala fundraiser at Greenspring Retirement Community. She also spoke to students at Erving Middle School about "Right Decisions, Right Now," a Miss Virginia program.

Last June, Ms. Cameron competed in the Miss Virginia pageant in Roanoke, VA and placed 2nd runner-up. She was then asked to represent Virginia at the National Miss Sweetheart Pageant in Illinois and placed 4th runner-up to Miss National Sweetheart 2006.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I would like to thank Ms. Cameron for representing the Greater Springfield area with great pride and respect. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating her on this distinguished title and in wishing her the best of luck in all future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO DR. MILTON GORDON

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a man who has been dedicated to higher education and who is a model community servant to my district, Dr. Milton Gordon.

As Chancellor of California State University, Fullerton, Dr. Milton Gordon has been a visionary for the students and faculty as he works to promote higher education for women and minorities.

On February 27th, 2007, Dr. Gordon will be honored by KinderCaminata, a non-profit community organization in Orange County, California that sponsors educational outreach to kindergarten-age children and their families, focusing on promoting literacy, celebrating cultural heritage, and career education. Dr. Gordon will be receiving the "Corazón" Award from KinderCaminata. The tribute is a much deserved honor and should be celebrated by everyone in Orange County, California.

Below are remarks that illustrate Dr. Gordon's outstanding commitment to all the students that Cal State Fullerton seeks to serve. These remarks are taken from Dr. Gordon's report to the University's Latino Faculty and Staff in October 2006:

> We are here to strengthen our ties as a community that is working to make learning truly accessible and preeminent to all students and especially to Latino Students.
>
> Cal State Fullerton feels that a large measure of our success is due to our campus outreach efforts and service to the community. While demographic growth has also contributed to the Latino increase, without college readiness programs offered by CSUF, such as Gear Up and ENLACE, the educational obstacles faced by large numbers of Latino students would not have been overcome.
>
> But there is much more we need to do. We need to expand our efforts to work with parents and students in the middle and high schools of the county to increase the number of college ready Latino graduates. We continue to work with colleagues from Fullerton and Santa Ana Colleges to develop a work plan to improve county-wide Latino college readiness programs modeled after the Santa Ana Partnership and its ENLACE Program. We are in the process of creating additional programs in the sciences in collaboration with Fullerton College to increase the transfer of well prepared Latino Students into our Math-based programs in the sciences and engineering. We hope to expand such collaboration with transfer programs to Cal State Fullerton from all Orange County

community college campuses with high Latino enrollment.

We believe that our adhesion to the Cal State Fullerton mission to make this campus a place where ''learning is preeminent'' and our enforcement of rigorous academic standards have been keys to our success. By serving the learning needs of all students, we serve Latino students; by maintaining high learning expectations, we serve Latino students; by caring for the well-being of our students, we serve Latino students.

An activist community orientation defines the role the university will take in town grown partnerships. Such involvement better informs university personnel of the community's needs. These partnerships must engage students, faculty, staff, and campus administration in university-wide service commitments. The university must be a good neighbor and a good partner.

In working in the Latino community, campus personnel must be culturally aware and mindful of the central role family plays within the culture. We must have a clear and simple outreach message. In providing information on what students need to know to be college ready, make sure you know your audience. Our information must be available in straight-forward language that does not speak down to our audience and written in language understood by parents. We will be developing a Spanish-language campus website and improved, accessible messages in Spanish to reach out to our Latino parents and potential students.

All of the programs and services enumerated above define what it means to be a student-focused institution and are integral to making us a Hispanic Serving Institution in word and deed.

I personally look forward to our continued collaboration to make this a place where all students can be successful and achieve their dreams regardless of race, gender or ethnicity.

I look forward to Dr. Gordon's continued work for Cal State Fullerton and KinderCaminata and it is my pleasure to honor him today.

COMMENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN VOLLEYBALL TEAM FOR WINNING NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in favor of House Resolution 99, congratulating the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Women's Volleyball team on winning the 2006 NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship. December 16, 2006 marked the completion of a phenomenal year that resulted in a 33–1 record and the program's third national title, not to mention the largest audience ever for a woman's college volleyball game.

The hard work and determination of this team exudes the spirit of achievement that is reflected within the people of the great State of Nebraska. Junior Sarah Pavan has continued a Husker tradition of achievement in athletics and academics by being named the ESPN the Magazine Academic All-American of the Year. This honor brings the university's all-time total of Academic All-Americans to 234 and 29 for the program. These totals lead the nation in both categories.

Head coach John Cook, along with the entire coaching staff, should be commended for their training and dedication to a team that became only the third team in NCAA history to be ranked number one in the American Volleyball Coaches Association poll for an entire season. Also to the credit of Coach Cook, this is the second title that the team has earned under his direction.

Therefore, I ask my colleagues to consider the great honor that the University of Nebraska Volleyball team has brought to themselves, their families, their university, and the State of Nebraska and vote for House Resolution 99.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS FOR SECTION 511 REPEAL

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today, pleased to introduce a piece of legislation along with my co-sponsor and esteemed Ways and Means colleague, Congressman WALLY HERGER, that will repeal a law that unfairly burdens local governments with annual procurement spending over $100 million, which includes Miami-Dade County.

The legislation would repeal Section 511 of the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005 which was slipped into the legislation without an up-or-down vote on the amendment.

Section 511 requires local governments that spend over $100 million in procurements, primarily located in large urban centers, to deduct a 3 percent withholding tax from payments made to their vendors for federal income tax purposes. This legislation will become effective in 2011.

We have the opportunity with this legislation to help repeal Section 511 which unfairly burdens our cities and urban centers where many people living below the poverty line reside. If Section 511 is not repealed, the poor will be further squeezed as the cost of future increased procurement contracts will be passed on to the neediest people, while services and day-to-day operations may be jeopardized too.

According to Miami-Dade County officials, the withholding tax will raise the cost of purchases by 3 percent or more and Miami-Dade County would have to absorb an annual increase in the cost of goods and services in excess of $57 million, given the annual value of contracts for goods and services awarded by Miami-Dade County will exceed $1.9 billion.

Small businesses and companies pursuing government contracts, many of whom operate on tight margins or irregular cash flows, would also be adversely affected in this bid process, while large companies with established reserves could better absorb this withholding tax.

Devolution of taxation down from the federal government to state and local governments is a problem that we must fix. This is but one small, but very important step toward doing just that.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WITHHOLDING TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2007

HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, I have long championed tax relief for small businesses because I believe such firms are the life-blood of our economy. As a small businessman myself, I know how small business owners struggle to remain profitable in a highly competitive and extremely challenging environment. Yet they continue to be the drivers of much of our nation's economic and new job growth. It is for this reason that I have strongly supported increases to the current section 179 small business expensing limits, an end to the onerous death tax, and the reduced double taxation of capital gains and dividends. I am concerned, however, that a little known revenue raising provision, passed as part of the tax reconciliation bill last May, will hamper small business creative spirit by significantly and adversely changing the way governments pay for the goods they use and services they require.

Effective in 2011, section 511 of the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005 will require federal, state, and local governments to withhold 3 percent from payments for goods and services, excluding payments to non-profits and those made by governments with less than $100 million in annual expenditures. This onerous provision will not take effect for just under four years. But I believe we have to begin addressing the impacts it will have on honest taxpaying businesses now, and actively seek alternatives to withholding.

Thousands of businesses and individuals across the country are reimbursed by governments for various reasons every day. In my Northern California congressional district, governments rely on local and regional businesses all the time to maintain public services—from the electrician who re-wires a city council chamber in Redding to the construction company that builds an interchange at a dangerous stretch of highway in Butte County. When the Feather River needs a new setback levee, or an existing levee in the network requires urgent repairs to protect the community, the Army Corps of Engineers employs local businesses for construction and materials. Similarly, when an escape route from a fire-prone community requires widening, the government turns to local sources to get the job done.

In 2011, however, firms providing these necessary goods and services to governments will see 3 percent of their payments withheld.

I am troubled that the withholding provision will effectively force firms to float a new interest-free loan to the federal Treasury if they do business with a local, state or federal government. In addition, unlike other income-based withholding, which is actually based on tax liability, the new government withholding provision is based on government payments with no relationship to a company's taxable income. This means that, while businesses will be deprived of much needed cash flows for day-to-day operations, the 3 percent provision could end up significantly over withholding for tax purposes. The Joint Committee on Taxation confirmed this in its description of the

provision, stating ''sellers of goods and materials are more likely to have overwithholding and, thus, bear more of the burden of a flat rate because of the lower profit margin on such sales relative to sales of services.''

The provision would also disproportionately harm small- and medium-sized businesses that operate on low margins, and contractors that frequently employ subcontractors. It is conceivable that, faced with 3 percent withholding on a revenue source, companies that do business with governments may inflate contract costs to compensate, shift costs to subcontractors, or simply hire fewer employees over the course of the year. Others may resort to increased debt financing to make up for reduced cash flows. In addition, governments at all levels have expressed concerns over the new administrative burdens that such withholding will require.

Among the reasons for inclusion of this provision was a desire to reduce America's tax gap, or the difference between the taxes we believe should be collected in a given year, and those that actually are. The Internal Revenue Service currently estimates the net tax gap to be in the area of $290 billion. Whether due to taxpayer error or willful tax avoidance, the tax gap is a very real problem that can undermine taxpayer confidence in the voluntary nature of our tax system, and encourage continued non-compliance. According to the National Taxpayer Advocate, the ''cost'' of the tax gap could be equated to a $2,000 annual ''surtax'' on each taxpayer to subsidize non-compliance. The result is that the tax gap ends up ''harming compliant taxpayers because they pay their correct tax liability while others do not.''

Like many, I believe that bridging the tax gap and encouraging tax compliance should remain a top priority of both Congress and the Administration. Where identification of specific non-compliant sectors of the economy has been difficult, the Administration should continue to investigate ways it can use its existing authority to improve the collection and utilization of nonwage taxpayer information for enforcement purposes. In addition, as better information on noncompliance is generated, Congress should actively consider whether additional legislation is needed to crack down on tax cheats.

Prior to implementing a new tax collection regime, such as the 3 percent withholding provision, we should investigate what other methods are at our disposal to deal with the outstanding problems of non-compliance. To this end, I believe that any solution that aims to reduce the tax gap should consider the impacts of new burdens on taxpayers.

For this reason, I am pleased to join my fellow Ways and Means Committee member, Representative KENDRICK MEEK of Florida, in introducing the ''Withholding Tax Relief Act of 2007.'' This bill mirrors legislation I introduced toward the end of the 109th Congress along with Senator LARRY CRAIG of Idaho.

While I recognize the underlying problem of tax compliance must be addressed, I believe this problem—as it pertains to businesses and individuals that provide goods and services to governments—can be tackled in a less intrusive manner than withholding, and with positive results. As reported by the Joint Committee, the withholding provision is estimated to increase revenues coming into the Treasury by $6.079 billion in its first year of implementation, and between $215 million and $235 million per year over the next 4 years. Further, the Joint Committee recognizes that the ''significant revenue effect'' in the year of implementation ''is largely attributable to accelerating tax receipts,'' indicating that the additional compliance sought by this provision is really in the ballpark of $235 million. Still, in order to recapture this amount of unpaid taxes, the withholding provision will affect over $6 billion of government payments to honest businesses and individual taxpayers.

It is unrealistic to think that we could ever reduce non-compliance to zero, especially given the enormous complexity of our current tax code. But apart from fundamental tax reform and simplification, increased compliance should remain an objective. Congress and the Administration should continue to pursue increased compliance alternatives, including the use of the Federal Government's already broad authority to levy Federal payments, improving coordination and use of taxpayer information, requiring new information reporting, or increasing enforcement. Ultimately, though, any alternatives that focus on compliance should be balanced against the new burdens such compliance mechanisms would cause. We should avoid placing unnecessary burdens on all honest taxpayers in a particular sector of the economy to force the compliance of the few.

Although I recognize that repeal of the 3 percent withholding provision will leave the actual problem of non-compliance unanswered, I believe withholding is the wrong policy approach to this issue. Repeal, as proposed in the ''Withholding Tax Relief Act of 2007,'' serves as a reminder of the importance of this issue, and the need to seriously address the impacts this policy will have on businesses in the congressional district I represent and elsewhere in the country. In addition, we must also begin discussion of alternatives to withholding. I intend to continue working with others in the 110th Congress on ways to reduce any eventual burdens this provision will cause, as well as alternatives to withholding that will reduce taxpayer non-compliance.

TRIBUTE TO THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF IRON COUNTY, MISSOURI

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mrs. EMERSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 150th anniversary of the establishment of Iron County, MO. I congratulate Iron County and all of its residents as they celebrate this milestone.

On this occasion, I am reminded of Iron County's rich Civil War history and its economic and recreational contributions to our State and Nation. Iron County is the home of Fort Davidson State Historic Site, which commemorates the Civil War battle at Fort Davidson where an outmanned Union army delayed a Confederate invasion of nearby St. Louis. The delay allowed the Union to successfully defend St. Louis and ultimately achieve victory in the war.

Additionally, Iron County is well known for its natural beauty and abundance of resources. Settled beautifully along the oldest mountain range on our continent, the Ozark Highland, Iron County has helped supply our Nation with lead and electricity for decades.

Iron County is the home of strong family values that form the foundation of our communities. I thank those whose daily works of neighborliness and good citizenship make Iron County a wonderful place in which to live and work. My thoughts and prayers will continue to be with the residents of Iron County whom I have come to know well and deeply respect. Again, congratulations to Iron County, MO, on 150 years of wonderful history.

COMMEMORATING THE NATIONAL PSORIASIS FOUNDATION'S FOURTH ANNUAL CAPITOL HILL DAY FEBRUARY 2007

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the National Psoriasis Foundation and its fourth annual Capitol Hill Day, to be held February 26, through which the Foundation and nearly 100 advocates from across the country will seek to bring much-needed attention to an often overlooked and serious disease that affects constituents in each of our districts. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as many as 7.5 million Americans are affected by psoriasis—a chronic, inflammatory, painful, disfiguring and disabling disease for which there are limited treatments and no cure. Ten to 30 percent of people with psoriasis also develop psoriatic arthritis, which causes pain, stiffness and swelling in and around the joints. There are an average of 17,000 people living with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis in every congressional district. (Estimate based on 2000 Census Data/Census apportionment population with the average size of a congressional district of 646,952 and prevalence rate of 2.6 percent.) In my district, there are nearly 20,000 constituents and 320,000 Pennsylvanians state-wide affected by psoriasis.

Psoriasis is widely misunderstood, minimized and under-treated. In addition to the pain, itching and bleeding caused by psoriasis, many affected individuals also experience social discrimination and stigma. Many people also mistakenly believe psoriasis to be contagious. Psoriasis typically first strikes between the ages of 15 and 25 and lasts a lifetime. As such, psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis impose significant burden on individuals and society; together they cost the Nation 56 million hours of lost work and between $2 billion and $3 billion in treatments each year.

Despite the serious adverse effects that psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis have on individuals, families and society, psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis are under-recognized and under-funded by our Nation's research institutions. The NIH has spent less than one dollar per person with psoriasis on average each of the last 10 years. At the historical and current rate of psoriasis funding, NIH funding is not keeping pace with research needs. I urge my colleagues to take action this year to boost funding for psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis, support efforts to improve and expand psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis data collection,

study and improve access to care and treatment for these diseases, and help debunk the myths associated with psoriasis.

I thank the National Psoriasis Foundation for all of its efforts and leadership over the last four decades and am grateful to the Foundation and its members for their ongoing commitment to improving quality of life for people with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the outstanding advocacy and leadership of my constituent, Lara Wine Lee, who has psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis and who has helped to educate me and my staff about the challenges for people living with these terrible conditions. Again, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting our tens of thousands of constituents with psoriasis and the National Psoriasis Foundation. I call upon this Congress to take action to expand psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis research and ensure access to care and treatment for this disease and stand ready to lead this important effort.

A TRIBUTE TO VIOLETTA KOVÁCS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to a wonderful Hungarian author, Violetta Kovács. Ms. Kovács devotion to man's best friend is dutifully communicated in her eloquent prose and knowledge of dogs.

As the President of the Hungarian Journalist Association's Animal Welfare Division for the last 10 years, she has played an integral role in the introduction and enactment of the Hungarian Animal Welfare Act. This important piece of legislation finally criminalized acts that, until then were merely moral transgressions, the torture of animals in Hungary.

Madam Speaker, her passion for animals can be seen in her legislation and also her superbly written and popular books, like: From Guide Dogs to Dog Stars, Sounds of a Dog's Heart and Dog Commando. In these books she calls attention to the loyalty, bravery and sacrifice inherent in the character of dogs. Dogs are always on man's side helping to prevent crimes, capturing criminals, collecting evidence and rescuing those lost or stranded in the wilderness. They were at the side of firemen and other search and rescue teams that worked so valiantly during those dark days after September 11th, searching relentlessly for survivors.

Madam Speaker, in Dog Commando, Violetta paid tribute to the K9 teams and rescue dogs she witnessed combing the ruins of the horrible terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Those powerful moments made her realize what we really owe our best friends and this cannot be forgotten, even in our most tragic hours. Reading her book we witness the true stories of Officer Frank McDermott and Mark Day with their beloved four-legged partners and their colleagues from all over the world. These fine people talk about their dogs with deep emotions, sometimes with tears, each and every one indicating an invisible, unique and everlasting bond between man and animal.

Madam Speaker, as the co-chair of the Congressional Friends of Animals Caucus, I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Violetta Kovács for her endless efforts in animal protection, and to the K9 and rescue dogs of the world for their service to the mankind.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, February 13th, I was unavoidably delayed and was unable to cast a vote on H. Res. 157 Providing for consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 63) disapproving of the decision of the President announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq.

I would like the RECORD to reflect that if I had not been delayed, I would have voted "no" on H. Res. 157.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1879–S1927

Measures Introduced: Twenty bills and four resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 559–578, S. Res. 78–80, and S. Con. Res. 11. **Pages S1902–03**

Measures Passed:

Honoring Representative Charles W. Norwood, Jr.: Senate agreed to S. Res. 79, relative to the death of Representative Charles W. Norwood, Jr., of Georgia. **Pages S1890–91**

Senate Legal Representation: Senate agreed to S. Res. 80, to authorize testimony, document production, and legal representation in State of Oregon v. Rebecca Michelson, Michele Darr, and Vernon Huffman. **Pages S1926–27**

Continuing Appropriations: Senate resumed consideration of H.J. Res. 20, making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto:

Pending:

Reid Amendment No. 237, to change an effective date. **Pages S1889–90, S1891–97**

Reid Amendment No. 238 (to Amendment No. 237), of a technical nature. **Page S1889**

Motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations, with instructions to report back forthwith, with Reid Amendment No. 239, to change an effective date. **Page S1889**

Reid Amendment No. 240 (to the instructions of the motion to recommit), of a technical nature. **Page S1889**

Reid Amendment No. 241 (to Amendment No. 240), of a technical nature. **Page S1889**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 71 yeas to 26 nays (Vote No. 46), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the resolution. **Page S1890**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at 1 p.m., on Wednesday, February 14, 2007, and that all time during the adjournment and Morning Business count post-cloture. **Page S1927**

Appointments:

Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: The Chair, on behalf of the President of the Senate, and after consultation with the Majority Leader, pursuant to Public Law 106–286, appointed the following Senators to serve on the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: Senators Baucus, Levin, Feinstein, Dorgan, and Brown. **Page S1926**

Messages From the House: **Page S1901**

Messages Referred: **Page S1901**

Measures Read the First Time: **Page S1901**

Executive Communications: **Pages S1901–02**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S1902**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page S1903**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S1903–25**

Additional Statements: **Page S1901**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S1925–26**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S1926**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—46) **Page S1890**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m., and as a further mark of respect to the memory of the late Honorable Charles W. Norwood, United States Representative from the State of Georgia, in accordance with S. Res. 79, adjourned at 5:09 p.m., until 12 noon, on Wednesday, February 14, 2007.

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: Committee concluded a hearing to examine challenges and opportunities relating to rural development, after receiving testimony from Charles W. Fluharty, University of Missouri-Columbia Truman School of

Public Affairs, and Rural Policy Research Institute; Chuck Hassebrook, Center for Rural Affairs, Lyons, Nebraska; Vernon R. Kelley, Three Rivers Planning and Development District, Pontotoc, Mississippi; Mary Holz-Clause, Iowa State University Agriculture Marketing Resource Center, Ames; and Joseph M. Sertich, Jr., Northeast Minnesota Higher Education District, Chisholm, on behalf of the Rural Community College Alliance.

OIL AND NATURAL GAS ROYALTY MANAGEMENT

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies concluded an oversight hearing to examine Outer Continental Shelf oil and natural gas royalty management by the Department of the Interior, focusing on energy production on the Outer Continental Shelf and revenue from Federal and Indian mineral leases, after receiving testimony from C. Stephen Allred, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land and Minerals Management.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BUDGET

Committee on the Budget: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2008 for the Department of Health and Human Services, after receiving testimony from Michael O. Leavitt, Secretary of Health and Human Services.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 184, to provide improved rail and surface transportation security, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 509, to provide improved aviation security, with amendments;

S. 385, to improve the interoperability of emergency communications equipment, with amendments;

S. 93, to authorize NTIA to borrow against anticipated receipts of the Digital Television and Public Safety Fund to initiate migration to a national IP-enabled emergency network capable of receiving and responding to all citizen activated emergency communications;

S. 84, to establish a United States Boxing Commission to administer the Act;

S. 39, to establish a coordinated national ocean exploration program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute; and

A promotion list in the United States Coast Guard.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee held a hearing to examine "Stern Review of the Economics of Climate Change" which analyzes the economic impacts of climate change and stabilizing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, receiving testimony from Nicholas Stern, Adviser to Her Majesty's Government on the Economics of Climate Change, London, United Kingdom; Henry D. Jacoby, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge; and Gary W. Yohe, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut.

Hearings recessed subject to the call.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee concluded a hearing to review and report the recommendations of the United States Climate Action Partnership Report, after receiving testimony from Chad Holliday, E.I. DuPont de Nemours and Company, Inc., Wilmington, Delaware; Fred L. Smith, Jr., Competitive Enterprise Institute, and Jonathan Lash, World Resources Institute, both of Washington, DC; Peter A. Darbee, PG&E Corporation, San Francisco, California, on behalf of the U.S. Climate Action Partnership; Harold G. Hamm, Continental Resources, Inc., Enid, Oklahoma; Stephen A. Elbert, BP America Inc., Warrenville, Illinois; and Kevin Book, Arlington, Virginia.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND BUDGET

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2008 for the Department of Homeland Security, after receiving testimony from Michael Chertoff, Secretary of Homeland Security.

HEALTHY FAMILIES ACT

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee concluded a hearing to examine The Healthy Families Act, focusing on safeguarding Americans' livelihood, families and health with paid sick days, after receiving testimony from Rajiv Bhatia, University of California at San Francisco, and San Francisco Department of Public Health; Debra L. Ness, National Partnership for Women and Families, and Heidi I. Hartmann, George Washington University Institute for Women's Policy Research, both of Washington, D.C.; Jody Heymann, McGill University Institute for Health and Social Policy, Montreal, Quebec, Canada; and G. Roger King, Jones Day, Columbus, Ohio.

SMALL BUSINESS HEALTH CARE

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: Committee concluded a hearing to examine alternatives

for easing small business health care costs, after receiving testimony from Jon M. Kingsdale, Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Health Insurance Connector Authority, Boston; Mary Beth Senkewicz, MBS Consulting, Ann Sullivan, Women Impacting Public Policy, and William F. Sweetnam, Jr., Groom Law Group, former Benefits Tax Counsel, Office of Tax Policy, Department of the Treasury, all of Washington, D.C.; and Tarren Bragdon, Maine Heritage Policy Center, Portland.

VETERANS PROGRAMS BUDGET

Committee on Veterans Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2008 for veterans programs, after receiving testimony from R. James Nicholson, Secretary of Veterans Affairs; Carl Blake, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Dennis M. Cullinan, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, and Steve Robertson, American Legion, all of Washington, D.C.; Joseph A. Violante, Disabled American Veterans, Cold Spring, Kentucky; David G. Greineder, AMVETS, Lanham, Maryland; and John Rowan, Vietnam Veterans of America, Silver Spring, Maryland.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 31 public bills, H.R. 1006–1036; 1 private bill, H.R. 1037; and 13 resolutions, H.J. Res. 25–36; and H. Res. 158 were introduced. **Pages H1563–64**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H1564–65**

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein she appointed Representative Kagen to act as Speaker Pro Tempore for today. **Page H1473**

Recess: The House recessed at 9:35 a.m. and reconvened at 10:00 a.m. **Page H1477**

Suspensions—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures which were debated on Monday, February 12:

Recognizing the significance of the 65th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt: H. Res. 122, to recognize the significance of the 65th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and to support the goals of the Japanese American, German American, and Italian American communities in recognizing a National Day of Remembrance to increase public awareness of the events surrounding the restriction, exclusion, and internment of individuals and families during World War II, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 426 yeas with none voting "nay," Roll No. 95 and **Pages H1489–90**

Lino Perez, Jr. Post Office Designation Act: H.R. 437, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 500 West Eisenhower Street in Rio Grande City, Texas, as the "Lino Perez, Jr. Post Office", by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 421 yeas with none voting "nay," Roll No. 98. **Pages H1491–92**

Disapproving of the decision of the President announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq: The House began debate on H. Con. Res. 63, to disapprove of the decision of the President announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq. Further proceedings were postponed until Wednesday, February 14. **Pages H1492–H1562**

H. Res. 157, the rule providing for consideration of the resolution, was agreed to by a Recorded vote of 232 ayes to 192 noes, Roll No. 97, after agreeing to order the previous question by a Recorded vote of 227 ayes to 197 noes, Roll No. 96. **Pages H1478–89, H1490–91**

Moment of Silence: The House observed two separate moments of silence in memory of the Honorable Charlie Norwood. **Pages H1500–01, H1502**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page H1562.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes and two Recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1489–90, H1490–91, H1491, and H1491–92. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 9:00 a.m. and adjourned at 11:35 p.m.

Committee Meetings

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a hearing on U.S. Navy/Marine Corps Fiscal Year 2007 Supplemental Request. Testimony was heard from the following officials of the Department of the Navy: Donald Winter, Secretary; and ADM Michael G. Mullen, USN, Chief of Naval Operations; and GEN James T. Conway, USMC, Commandant of the Marine Corps.

HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Homeland Security held a hearing on Aviation Security Challenges. Testimony was heard from Edmund S. (Kip) Hawley, Director, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security; and Cathleen Berrick, Assistant Director, GAO.

The Subcommittee also held a hearing on Transportation Security Challenges. Testimony was heard from Edmund S. (Kip) Hawley, Director, Transportation Security Administration, Cathleen Berrick, Assistant Director, GAO; and public witnesses.

INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, held a hearing on Overview of National Forest Service. Testimony was heard from the following officials of the USDA: Mark E. Rey, Under Secretary, Natural Resources and Environment; and Abigail R. Kimball, Chief, U.S. Forest Service.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS' AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans' Affairs, and Related Agencies held a hearing on Related Agencies. Testimony was heard from the following officials of the American Battle Monuments Commission: GEN. Frederick M. Franks, Jr., U.S. Army (Ret), Chairman; and BG. John W. Nicholson, U.S. Army (Ret) Secretary; John Paul Woodley, Jr., Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), Arlington National Cemetery; and Timothy C. Cox, Chief Operating Officer, Armed Forces Retirement Home.

AFGHANISTAN SECURITY AND STABILITY

Committee on Armed Services: Held a hearing on an assessment of security and stability in Afghanistan and developments in U.S. strategy and operations. Testimony was heard from Mary Beth Long, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, International Security Affairs, Department of Defense; John Anthony Gastright, Jr., Deputy Assistant Secretary, South and Central Asian Affairs and Coordinator for Afghanistan, Department of State; and LTG General Karl Eikenberry, USA, former Commander, Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan.

MILITARY HEALTH CARE BUDGET

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Military Personnel held a hearing to review the fiscal year 2008 military health care budget and the challenges facing the military health care system. Testimony was heard from William Winkenwerder, M.D., Assistant Secretary, Health Affairs, Department of Defense.

MARINE CORPS/NAVY RESET REQUIREMENTS

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Seapower and Expeditionary Forces and the Subcommittee on Readiness held a joint hearing on U.S. Marine Crops and U.S. Navy reset requirements. Testimony was heard from LTG Emerson Gardner, USMC, Deputy Commandant, Programs and Resources; and VADM Jonathon Greenert, USN, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Integration of Capabilities and Resources, both with the Department of the Navy.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BUDGET FY 2008

Committee on the Budget: Held a hearing on the Department of Health and Human Services Fiscal Year 2008 Budget. Testimony was heard from Michael O. Leavitt, Secretary of Health and Human Services.

CLIMATE CHANGE PRIVATE SECTOR VIEWS

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality held a hearing entitled ''Addressing Climate Change—Views from Private Sector Panels.'' Testimony was heard from former Representative Philip R. Sharp of Indiana; and public witnesses.

FDA's DRUG SUPPLY SAFETY

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''The Adequacy of FDA to Assure the Safety of the Drug Supply. Testimony was heard from Senator Grassley; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES; OVERSIGHT PLAN

Committee on Financial Services: Ordered reported the following bills: H.R. 835, To reauthorize the programs of the Department of Housing and Urban Development for housing assistance for Native Hawaiians; and H.R. 556, amended, National Security Foreign Investment Reform and Strengthened Transparency Act of 2007.

The Committee approved an Oversight Plan for the 110th Congress.

FUTURE OF THE UN

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Held a hearing on the Future of the United Nations under Ban Ki-Moon. Testimony was heard from former Senator Timothy E. Wirth of Colorado; former Senator George Mitchell of Maine and former Co-Chair, U.S. Institute for Peace Task Forces on the United Nations; and John Bolton, former U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

BORDER SECURITY

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Border, Maritime, and Global Counterterrorism held a hearing entitled ''Border Security: Infrastructure, Technology, and the Human Element.'' Testimony was heard from the following officials of the Department of Homeland Security; David V. Aguilar, Chief, Border Patrol, U.S. Customs and Border Protection; and RADM David Pekoske, USCG, U.S. Coast Guard.

RAIL AND MASS TRANSIT SECURITY

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection held a hearing entitled ''Rail and Mass Transit Security: Industry and Labor Perspectives.'' Testimony was heard from Fred Weiderhold, Inspector General, AMTRAK, and public witnesses.

FEDERAL AGENCY REGULATORY PLANNING AND REVIEW

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law held an oversight hearing entitled ''Amending Executive Order 12866: Good Governance or Regulatory Usurpation?'' Testimony was heard from Steven D. Aitken, Acting Administrator, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OMB; Curtis W. Copeland, Specialist in American National Government, CRS, Library of Congress; and public witnesses.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH REFORM ACT; WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION ENHANCEMENT ACT

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Held a hearing on the following: the Executive Branch Reform Act of 2007; and the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2007. Testimony was heard from Tom Devine, Legal Director, GAO; and public witnesses.

EARTH AND CLIMATE SCIENCE

Committee on Science and Technology: Held a hearing on National Imperatives for Earth and Climate Science (National Academy of Sciences Decadal Survey) Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FEDERAL AGENCY REGULATORY PLANNING AND REVIEW

Committee on Science and Technology: Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight held a hearing on Amending Executive Order 12866: Good Governance or Regulatory Usurpation? Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION PARTNERSHIPS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Highways and Transit held a hearing entitled ''Public-Private Partnerships: Innovative Financing and Protecting the Public Interest.'' Testimony was heard from Tyler Duvall, Assistant Secretary, Transportation Policy, Department of Transportation; Frank Busalacchi, Secretary of Transportation, State of Wisconsin; and public witnesses.

RAIL WORKER FATIGUE

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials held a hearing entitled ''Fatigue in the Rail Industry.'' Testimony was heard from Joseph Boardman, Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration, Department of Transportation; Mark V. Rosenker, Chairman, National Transportation Safety Board; and public witnesses.

MEDICARE BUDGET PROPOSALS FY 2008

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing on the Medicare portions of the President's Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Proposals. Testimony was heard from Leslie V. Norwalk, Acting Administrator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, Department of Health and Human Services.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND POVERTY; SUBCOMMITTEE ORGANIZATION

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support held a hearing on

economic opportunity and poverty in America. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

Prior to the hearing, the Subcommittee met for organizational purposes.

EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Oversight held a hearing on Earned Income Tax Credit Outreach. Testimony was heard from Richard J. Morgante, Commissioner, Wage and Investment Division, IRS, Department of the Treasury; and public witnesses.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2007

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Armed Services: to receive a briefing regarding Iranian activities in Iraq, 3 p.m., S–407, Capitol.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the semiannual monetary policy report to the Congress, 10 a.m., SD–106.

Committee on the Budget: to hold hearings to examine the President's fiscal year 2008 budget proposals on tax compliance, 10 a.m., SD–608.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Trade, Tourism, and Economic Development, to hold hearings to examine overseas sweatshop abuses, focusing on their impact on U.S. workers and the need for anti-sweatshop legislation, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Subcommittee on Fisheries and Coast Guard, to hold an oversight hearing to examine recent setbacks to the Coast Guard Deepwater Program, 2:30 p.m., SR–253.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: business meeting to consider S. 556, to reauthorize the Head Start Act, S. 558, to provide parity between health insurance coverage of mental health benefits and benefits for medical and surgical services, and the nomination of Leon R. Sequeira, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary of Labor, 9:30 a.m., SD–430.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: business meeting to consider S. 4, to make the United States more secure by implementing unfinished recommendations of the 9/11 Commission to fight the war on terror more effectively, to improve homeland security, S. 343, to extend the District of Columbia College Access Act of 1999, S. 457, to extend the date on which the National Security Personnel System will first apply to certain defense laboratories, a proposed bill to preserve existing judgeships on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, S. 550, to preserve existing judgeships on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, S. 171, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 301 Commerce Street in Commerce, Oklahoma, as the "Mickey Mantle Post Office Building", S. 194 and H.R. 49, bills to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1300 North Frontage Road West in Vail, Colorado, as the "Gerald R. Ford, Jr. Post Office Building", S. 219 and H.R. 335, bills to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 152 North 5th Street in Laramie, Wyoming, as the "Gale W. McGee Post Office", S. 303, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 324 Main Street in Grambling, Louisiana, shall be known and designated as the "Coach Eddie Robinson Post Office Building", S. 412 and H.R. 521, bills to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2633 11th Street in Rock Island, Illinois, as the "Lane Evans Post Office Building", H.R. 433, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1700 Main Street in Little Rock, Arkansas, as the "Scipio A. Jones Post Office Building", H.R. 514, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 16150 Aviation Loop Drive in Brooksville, Florida, as the "Sergeant Lea Robert Mills Brooksville Aviation Branch Post Office", and H.R. 577, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3903 South Congress Avenue in Austin, Texas, as the "Sergeant Henry Ybarra III Post Office Building", 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold hearings to examine judicial security and independence, 10 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Rules and Administration: to hold hearings to examine Senate Committee budget Requests, 11:30 a.m., SR–301.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Agriculture, to meet for organizational purposes; followed by a hearing on the 2007 Farm bill proposals of the Department of Agriculture, 10 a.m., 1302 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, on Budget Overview, 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, hearing on the Fiscal Year 2008 National Defense Budget request from the Department of the Army, 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities, hearing on the challenges for the Special Operations Command (SOCOM) posed by the global terrorist threat, 2 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on the Budget, hearing on Members Day, 2 p.m., 210 Cannon.

Committee on Education and Labor, to consider the following: Oversight Plan for the 110th Congress; and to mark up the following bills: H.R. 800, Employee Free Choice Act; and H.R. 493, Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2007, 1:30 p.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled "Covering the Uninsured Through the Eyes of a Child," 2 p.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Middle East and South Asia, hearing on Next Steps in Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process, 2:30 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, Preparedness, and Response Threats, Cybersecurity, and Science and Technology, hearing entitled "Understanding the Budget and

Strategic Agenda of the Science and Technology Directorate,'' 2:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Intelligence, Information Sharing, and Terrorism Risk Assessment, hearing entitled ''The President's Proposed FY2008 Budget for the Department of Homeland Security: The Office of Intelligence and Analysis,'' 3:30 p.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security and International Law, hearing on Proposed Immigration Fee Increase, 2:15 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, to mark up the following bills: H.R. 984, Executive Branch Reform Act of 2007; and H.R. 985, Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2007, 10 a.m., 2157 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Information Policy, Census, and National Archives, hearing entitled the State of FOIA: Assessing Agency Efforts to Meet FOIA Requirements,'' 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science and Technology, hearing on the Administration's FY 2008 Research and Development Budget Proposal; and to adopt the Committee Oversight Plan for the 110th Congress, 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, hearing entitled ''The Small Business Administration's Response to the 2005 Gulf Coast Hurricanes,'' 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on the President's Federal Aviation Administration's Budget, 2 p.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Water Resources and the Environment, hearing entitled ''Agency Budgets and Priorities for FY 2008,'' 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Health, hearing on Department of Veterans Affairs Fiscal Year 2008 Health Budget, 2 p.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, hearing on the direction and content of U.S. Trade Agenda, 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Social Security, hearing on Social Security Administration (SSA) disability claims backlogs, 2 p.m., B–318 Rayburn.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

12:00 noon, Wednesday, February 14

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: After the transaction of any morning business (not to extend beyond 1:00 p.m.), Senate will continue consideration of H.J. Res. 20, Continuing Appropriations.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, February 14

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Resume consideration of H. Con. Res. 63—Disapproving of the decision of the President announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq.

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