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No. 49

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 21, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Reverend Thomas J. McCarthy, St. Paul Catholic Church, Salem, Ohio offered the following prayer:

God, we acknowledge Your gracious presence among us. We acknowledge the human limitations that bind us. We know how many of Your people depend upon our wisdom and our ways to better their lives and brighten their tomorrows. We are aware of Your call to serve Your people well.

With these huge tasks ahead of us, we call upon You for wisdom, guidance and a sense of concern for what is right and good. Give us a generous share of Your spirit and Your love for Your people. Guide our minds and hearts in the right ordering of human affairs.

We seek today to be a source of hope and assistance to Your people; we seek today to find the opportunity to make peace with justice for all people the badge of our service. In this we ask Your continued help. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan 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.

WELCOMING AND HONORING FATHER THOMAS J. MCCARTHY

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

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I want to thank Father McCarthy for your inspiring prayer.

Albert Einstein once said that "Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile." And for almost 46 years Father Tom McCarthy has served the Diocese of Youngstown as a priest, and in that service he has lived that motto.

A Warren native, Father McCarthy attended St. Mary's School and St. Mary's High School, which was the predecessor to my alma mater, John F. Kennedy High School. After his seminary training, he was ordained on August 15, 1961 in St. Columba Cathedral by Bishop Emmet Walsh.

Those who know him would describe Father McCarthy as pastoral, charming, gregarious, a great friend, funny, everything Irish, and above all, holy in his service to God.

Father McCarthy has served at many parishes in the Youngstown Diocese, including St. Ed's in Youngstown, St. Joseph's in Austintown, St. William's in Champion, St. Michael's in Canfield, Blessed Sacrament in Warren and St. Joseph's in Mantua.

Father McCarthy has also spent much of his career in service to other priests. He has served as Diocesan Director of Vocations, Priest Personnel Adviser, a member of the Priest Personnel Board, and for 6 years served as a director of that board. Father McCarthy also spent time in Chicago as president of the National Federation of Priests' Councils. Since 2003, he has served as the Bishop's Delegate for Retired Priests.

I am happy to have invited, along with my colleague, Charlie Wilson, Father McCarthy to Washington, D.C. I thank him for his service to our community, for his prayer this morning, and for his many, many years of service to the Catholic Church.

WELCOMING AND HONORING FATHER THOMAS J. MCCARTHY

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

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I join my distinguished colleague from Ohio, Mr. RYAN, in welcoming Father Thomas McCarthy to the Congress today.

After an active and impressive career serving the people of northeastern Ohio, Father McCarthy has retired to St. Paul's Parish in Salem, which is in Ohio's Sixth Congressional District which I represent. As the Sixth District Representative in Congress, I am honored to represent Father McCarthy, and I am also pleased to welcome him here today.

While Father McCarthy may have officially retired, he is showing no signs of slowing down. To this day, Father McCarthy remains active in the diocese, where he serves as the Bishop's Delegate for Retired Priests.

The people at St. Paul's describe Father McCarthy as a beloved and dedicated member of their close-knit community. They say he is someone who

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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never hesitates to help someone in need, whether that means making a late-night hospital visit to pray with the sick, or comforting a family member during the death and funeral of a loved one.

We are so lucky to have Father McCarthy among us here today in Congress. We are even more fortunate to have his unwavering commitment and faith guiding us each day in the Ohio Valley.

IRAQ SUPPLEMENTAL

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

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, the House is scheduled to take up an emergency supplemental spending bill to fund our troops in Iraq. But the other side has worked themselves into a dilemma over this bill to pander to their left-wing base. The Democrats have included language in the bill that sets an arbitrary date for withdrawing our troops, whether we have achieved victory or not. While that pleases the far left, the more moderate Democrats are rightfully concerned about congressional micromanagement of the war. So what is the solution? Load the bill up with pork to pressure Members to vote for it.

At last count, the supposed emergency supplemental now contains more than \$20 billion in unrelated spending. I think most Americans agree that the money they want to spend on spinach subsidies and peanut storage would be better spent on body armor and Humvees for our troops.

Madam Speaker, this bill fails both our troops in combat and the taxpayer here at home. Let's stop playing politics with emergency war funding, Madam Speaker. Let's have a clean supplemental.

IN MEMORY OF BISHOP G.E. PATTERSON

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

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, yesterday in Memphis, Tennessee, a giant of a man passed away: G.E. Patterson, the bishop of the Church of God in Christ, a congregation of over 6.5 million people worldwide headquartered in Memphis, Tennessee.

Bishop Patterson was born in Humboldt, Tennessee. He lived to the age of 67. He was a giant, godly man, who I last saw in November at a rally with President Clinton and Cybill Shepherd. At that time, Bishop Patterson knew he was dying, he had prostate cancer, but he knew where he was going. He was a bishop. He was a saint. He was a man who graced this planet. He was a valuable citizen and knows where he was going, and he is there now. I hope you will all share with me a moment of reflection upon the great life of Bishop

Patterson and what he has meant to this world.

THE MESSAGE COUNTS

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

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, in the upcoming debate on the supplemental, I just want to point out to my friends on both sides of the aisle that the message counts.

As we prepare for the debate on the supplemental appropriations bill, I want to caution my colleagues to bear in mind that our words are heard and seen all over the world by the Iraqi people, by our allies, and by our enemies.

The President has given guidance on benchmarks for the Iraqi Government to meet, but this does not give Congress license to attach timelines and penalties. If we do, we are undermining the authority of General Petraeus, to whom we have entrusted this very important mission.

Perhaps those who would vote in Congress to set deadlines, or any other maneuver aimed at limiting the ability of the White House and the Department of Defense to manage this dangerous situation under the guise of sending a message to the Iraqi leadership, will consider how their message will be received and interpreted by others.

The future stability of Iraq and the national security of the American people would be better served with a message that clearly states "We will stand with our allies and partners until Iraq's goal of stability is utilized."

□ 1010

AN APPEAL FOR SENIORCARE

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

Mr. KAGEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to respectfully request that the administration be kind to Wisconsin's elders by granting a waiver to SeniorCare, an extraordinarily successful prescription drug program. SeniorCare does three things we should all appreciate: It saves tax dollars, it is nearly half the cost of Medicare part D, and it offers a broader range of prescription drugs to our elders.

The AARP found that 94 percent of SeniorCare enrollees are better served by SeniorCare than by part D. And SeniorCare is easy to understand. It has a simple, one-page application form and an annual fee of only \$30. Simply put, SeniorCare is a better program than Medicare part D and it should be imitated across America.

But SeniorCare cannot continue without permission from the Bush administration. I am appealing to the conscience of the President. Please, please be kind to our elders. Allow

SeniorCare to continue, for it saves not only taxpayers' money, it also saves their very lives.

SUPPORTING THE TROOPS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, our men and women in uniform deserve our wholehearted, unequivocal support protecting our freedoms. Our distinguished colleague, former Vietnam POW, Congressman SAM JOHNSON, has filed a discharge petition to bring to the floor of the House his bill, which declares to the United States Armed Forces that Congress will fully fund and support their mission. Unlike the proposed supplemental bill which undercuts our military, the Johnson legislation provides Members the opportunity to cast a clear vote in support of our troops.

As a 31-year veteran and also the father of four sons in the military, including one that served in Iraq, I understand the importance of supporting our troops. Bin Laden and his cohorts are committed to our destruction, declaring the Iraq war as the third world war and the central front in the global war on terrorism. Democrats and Republicans should work together to promote our troops' success to protect American families.

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

SUPPORT H.R. 1234

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Four years ago this week, in violation of international law, standing upon a mountain of lies, the United States went to war against the people of Iraq. The U.S. now has a moral responsibility for the deaths of as many as 1 million innocent Iraqis, for the destruction of Iraq and the theft of billions in Iraq oil assets.

Those who told lies to take us into war should be held accountable under the U.S. Constitution and at the International Criminal Court. Instead of true accountability on the war, the President and the Vice President could get over \$100 billion to keep the war going through the end of their term. More war, more civilian deaths, more soldiers killed or maimed. Less money for housing, for health care, for education, for seniors as we borrow money from Beijing to fight a war in Baghdad.

Instead of accountability, the appropriations bill will mandate the privatization of \$6 trillion in Iraqi oil assets and provide money which can be used to attack Iran to try to grab another \$7 trillion in Iranian oil assets for the oil companies.

Support the troops. Stop the war. End the occupation. Support H.R. 1234.

DEMOCRAT MAJORITY BUYING VOTES

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, many of us in this Chamber find it absolutely incomprehensible that there are those who believe that the best course of action in the face of a determined enemy is to tell that enemy that we are less than determined. Yet that is exactly what the Iraq supplemental financing bill does.

What message do we send our brave military men and women when we won't guarantee them the resources and equipment that they need without including a litany of restrictive and arbitrary timetables? What will our soldiers on the front lines of this war think when they hear that salmon fisheries and spinach growers are being used to buy votes?

This Iraq supplemental bill is just one more step in what has become a long list of unprecedented attempts by this majority to accept defeat at any cost. For those of us in Washington, we get to face this moment in the warmth and comfort of our homes and our offices. For so many Americans, they will face this moment in the harsh reality of a war zone. We must not forget what is at stake. Our military will not and the American people will not.

THE DEMOCRATIC BUDGET

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, Democrats this week complete committee work on a 2008 budget that finally moves us away from the fiscal irresponsibility, reckless spending and record deficits of the past 6 years. When President Bush first came into office, America had just had 4 consecutive years of budget surplus, forecast to continue as far as the eye can see. Now, 6 years later, Republicans have turned a projected \$5.5 trillion surplus into a \$3 trillion deficit. They borrowed more money from foreign nations in the past 6 years than we had in the past 212 years combined.

Fortunately, Democrats have a new set of priorities, one that moves America towards a balanced budget for the first time in 6 years.

IRAQ

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

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the majority party's Iraq supplemental appropriations bill. I returned from Iraq last week where I met with our troops. The one question I was asked repeatedly was, "Why doesn't Congress support us?" I told them that I do support them. Unfortunately, this bill does not.

Right now, we have the A-Team in Iraq and they are producing results. I saw it firsthand:

Sunnis working with Shia and the United States Marine Corps in the al-Anbar province.

Sunnis looking forward to the next elections.

An oil distribution plan that is on the brink of completion.

The majority supplemental bill is simply defeat on the installment plan. How can Congress convey our support for the troops in Iraq and at the same time pass a bill which pulls the rug from the very people we claim to support? Plain and simple, this supplemental as written by the majority is a blueprint for defeat.

I urge my colleagues to reject this bill and pass a clean supplemental bill that provides support to those who are fighting and dying. We owe them that much.

DEMOCRATS WILL CLEAN UP FISCAL MESS CREATED OVER THE LAST 6 YEARS

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Good morning, Madam Speaker.

This week, the House Budget Committee will prepare a Democratic budget that begins the process of fixing a fiscal mess created by President Bush and congressional Republicans over the last 6 years. This is not something that can be done in one year. After all, it took the prior Congresses and administration 6 years to turn a \$5.6 trillion surplus into a \$2.8 trillion deficit. That's a fiscal collapse over a 6-year period of more than \$8 trillion. The misguided budget priorities of this administration have forced the President to borrow more money from countries like Japan and China than all of his 42 predecessors combined. That is not only a budget concern but also a serious national security concern.

It's time that we get our fiscal house in order. The Democratic budget will restore fiscal sanity here in Washington by actually balancing the budget over the next 5 years. This is something that the Republicans were not able to accomplish over the last 6. The Democratic budget will bring about change and a new direction in sound budgetary policies.

□ 1020

MICROMANAGEMENT OF WAR WRONG

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I have a very easy question: What does support for spinach farmers have to do with fighting the war in Iraq and Afghanistan? The easy answer is: Nothing.

But in the emergency war supplemental appropriation bill that we are considering this week, spinach farmers will be getting support. In fact, there is over \$21 billion of unrelated spending in the bill; pork, pure and simple. And the purpose is simply to buy votes.

I thought the Democrats promised to stop all of this. I thought they said they were going to clean up Washington and not waste taxpayers' money. This is hypocrisy, and you have to ask why they need to buy votes if they are so confident in their slow-bleed strategy.

I said during the debate on this non-binding resolution that the House considered a few weeks ago that micro-management from the White House is wrong and micromanagement from the floor of this House is worse.

The emergency supplemental is not nonbinding, it is for real, and many Democrats will be joining Republicans to vote to let the generals run the war, not politicians, regardless of money for spinach farmers.

BRING OUR TROOPS HOME

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

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, there are those who say we need to support our troops. The question is what troops, the same troops we have sent out three and four times? I have asked my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to please look at the armed services numbers and see the strain that we are putting on our military.

I have also asked them to think about if they had family members there, would they still be talking about supporting the troops in such a way as to put them in harm's danger?

Supporting our troops means getting them out of a civil war. Support our country by caring for our own people and bringing our money home to protect our borders in this country.

We need to spend money to build our military back up. We need to protect our borders, and we need to support our troops and support their families by bringing our troops home now.

PREVENTION OF VETERAN SUICIDES

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

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Joshua Omvig Suicide Prevention Act, of which I am a cosponsor. The House will consider this important legislation today.

Roughly one in five military personnel returning from active duty suffers from a debilitating condition called post-traumatic stress syndrome. Unfortunately, the effects of PTSD have hit close to home for one family in my district. Their son, Sergeant

Charles Call, of the United States Army, always dreamed of serving his country. He even left his unit, which was not being sent to Iraq, and joined another that was being deployed so he could be with those fighting for our freedom and safety. He loved his country and was willing to make that sacrifice.

After returning from Iraq, he developed the symptoms of PTSD. Despite his attempts to seek help from the local veterans hospital, he did not receive the treatment he so desperately needed; and, sadly, Sergeant Call took his own life on February 3, 2006.

With the passage of this legislation, we can finally provide a safety net for our veterans coming home and prevent tragedies like that of Sergeant Call. It is crucial that they have the resources needed to pursue healthy lives upon returning to civilian life. Screening of all returning combat veterans and 24-hour access to counseling are just some of the options we must offer.

I support this in the name of Sergeant Charles Call.

ASSISTANCE TO THOSE INJURED IN COMBAT

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

Mr. HODES. Madam Speaker, we have entered the fifth year of the war in Iraq, and thousands of soldiers have returned home wounded and in need of serious medical care. The situation at Walter Reed made it clear that changes must be made to ensure that our wounded troops receive timely comprehensive care that extends through the length of their condition.

To provide these crucial services, more is needed for defense health care than the President requested. The status quo is simply not acceptable for our troops who are injured while serving our country. We owe them our real support.

The emergency supplemental proposed by this Democratic Congress nearly doubles the amount of funding requested by the President for military health care. These additional funds will enhance medical services for active duty forces, mobilized personnel and their families, including: post-traumatic stress disorder counseling, traumatic brain injury care and burn treatment.

The funds will also help prevent health care fee increases for troops and address the problems found at Walter Reed.

Madam Speaker, passage of this bill supports our troops and will ensure that they receive the quality care they deserve.

HONORING U.S. MARSHAL AWARD WINNERS

(Mr. BOOZMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise this morning to honor two exceptional people honored recently by the director of the United States Marshal Service. They are two of four honored nationwide.

Mike Blevins, the chief deputy marshal for the Western District of Arkansas, has been awarded the Meritorious Service Award, recognizing his exemplary service to the Marshal Service the last 31 years. Mike is a great example for all of us, and I greatly appreciate his service to community and country.

Trent Thompson, an Eagle Scout, was also named Citizen of the Year by the service. Thompson's Eagle Scout project was making wood memorial markers honoring deputy marshals from the Western District who fell in the line of duty since its inception. Trent is a fine young man, and I appreciate his leadership at such a young age.

I congratulate both of these people who by example indeed have done so much for the people of the Third District of Arkansas, and I congratulate them for their honors.

TROOPS DESERVE OUR SUPPORT

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

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, when our Nation is at war, it is our government's responsibility to provide the best protection and care for the men and women who willingly volunteer to serve in our armed services.

Now as we enter the fifth year of the Iraq war, it is no secret that the administration's strategy has dangerously eroded our military readiness. Troops are being sent overseas without the proper training, equipment and armor necessary to keep them safe.

And as the conditions at Walter Reed's Building 18 starkly testify, we must bring much more attention and support to our troops when they return home.

Madam Speaker, this Democratic Congress is committed to supporting our men and women in uniform. The supplemental legislation coming before this House will provide an additional \$1.7 billion for military health care, including conditions at Walter Reed, \$1.7 billion for veterans health care, \$2.5 billion for improving the readiness of our troops, and \$1.4 billion for military housing. As long as they are at war, our troops deserve our support.

ATTORNEY GENERAL GONZALES SHOULD RESIGN

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

Mr. CARNEY. Madam Speaker, I am here today to ask for the resignation of

U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales.

I came to Congress with a pledge to bring back accountability to our Federal Government. Attorney General Gonzales has put his political agenda over the needs of our Justice Department. It is time for real oversight on these issues, and it begins by calling for Mr. Gonzales' resignation.

I am disgusted that this administration is more concerned about protecting themselves rather than the American people. We need unbiased, honorable men and women representing our country in this judicial system, not political favors or hand-outs.

We need a full investigation into the allegations of the plan to remove U.S. Attorneys from their posts anytime they defect from the administration's political agenda. This week, the Justice Department released thousands of pages of e-mails and internal documents related to the U.S. Attorney scandal. The documents are still under review, but it is clear that congressional oversight is needed so we can prosecute offenders.

The House Judiciary Committee is continuing its investigation into this serious matter, and I will continue to fight to ensure that U.S. Attorneys are free from political pressure and have the tools they need to prosecute criminals.

NO MORE BLANK CHECKS

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

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. Madam Speaker, when I ran for Congress, I promised to stand up for our veterans and our men and women in uniform. I promised I would do everything in my power to fight and win the war on terror.

Poor political leadership and gross mismanagement has put America in the middle of an increasingly violent religious civil war.

Our troops completed their mission. They removed a brutal dictator, and through \$400 billion of our hard-earned money and our brave men and women's blood, sweat and tears, we gave the Iraqi people the hope for a better life through democracy.

This week I am going to vote to give the President the money he requested. But for the first time, we have the opportunity to hold him accountable to the American people for the promises that he made to us.

This bill gives the President the mandate to keep troops in Iraq for as long as it takes to destroy the terrorists. It sets requirements for troop readiness, provides money to rebuild our military, and gets our troops and our veterans the resources and the help they need.

Mr. President, no more blank checks. Congress and the American people for

the first time in over 4 years are holding you to your word.

□ 1030

TIME FOR THE TRUTH

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, from the beginning, the Bush administration has offered a litany of reasons to justify their decision to fire the U.S. Attorneys. Unfortunately, the answers they provided have never even held up for 48 hours.

First, the Bush administration said the attorneys were fired because of performance-related issues. Yet we find out these attorneys have exemplary records. The Deputy Attorney General did not even review the file of one of the fired U.S. Attorneys.

Then the administration said it was an internal staffing issue and pointed the finger at Harriet Miers. And now other top White House officials not only knew about it from the beginning, but were behind the firings.

Yesterday the White House said that they will talk to Congress, but they will not take the oath and swear to tell the whole truth.

The White House says they have nothing to hide, but they are only willing to speak behind closed doors, not under oath. Our goal is to finally get to the truth, but not to create a confrontation.

The scandal at the Justice Department has gone on long enough. Careers have been destroyed, and legitimate public corruption cases have been derailed. It is time for accountability. It is time for the truth.

DEMOCRATS TRYING TO FIX THE FINANCIAL MESS THAT WAS CREATED OVER THE LAST 6 YEARS

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

Mr. HILL. Madam Speaker, this week the House Budget Committee will mark up its fiscal year 2008 budget. After 6 years of fiscal recklessness, the Democratic budget will actually aim to balance in 2012, something that Republican budgets have been unable to achieve over the last 6 years.

It is important that the American people remember how we got to where we are today. In 2001, President Bush inherited a \$5.6 trillion surplus, but over the next 6 years, with help from Congress, the President turned that surplus into a \$2.8 trillion deficit.

Congress has been so fiscally irresponsible that President Bush has borrowed more money from other nations than all 42 of his predecessors combined.

This is not a fiscal record to be proud of. The President's attempt to finesse his budget has been uncovered by a

nonpartisan CBO that concludes the President's budget does not reach balance in 5 years.

Madam Speaker, Democrats have a different set of priorities, and ours begin with actually aiming to balance the budget for the first time in 6 years.

WHAT ARE ROVE AND MIERS AFRAID OF? WHY WON'T THEY TESTIFY UNDER OATH?

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, yesterday the White House said that political strategist Karl Rove and former appointee to the U.S. Supreme Court Harriet Miers would be made available to the Senate for an interview regarding the growing U.S. Attorneys scandal. However, the White House refused to allow them to testify under oath or in public.

Is the White House serious? Do they honestly believe this Congress will allow them to get away with this?

It would be one thing if the Bush administration had been completely honest with the Congress over the last month, but every day there are new details that completely contradict what was said the day before.

Last month, Attorney General Gonzales said there was no coordination between the Justice Department and the White House in the firing of the eight U.S. Attorneys. But we now know that Karl Rove and Harriet Miers were involved from the very beginning.

The administration has stalled and deceived at every step during this investigation. With that track record, why should this administration believe the Congress would agree to unacceptable secret testimony without being under oath?

U.S. ATTORNEY SCANDAL

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

Mr. ARCURI. Madam Speaker, Democrats made a promise last November to bring accountability back to Congress and the Federal Government. In just a few short months, we have conducted thorough and meaningful oversight on a series of issues that would have been swept under the rug by the previous Republican leadership, which sadly was often more concerned with protecting the administration than doing the right thing.

Earlier this week, the Justice Department, at the request of congressional Democrats, released thousands of pages of e-mails and internal documents related to the firing of eight U.S. Attorneys by the administration. The documents indicate that the administration's contention that the attorneys were dismissed for performance-related reasons simply is not true.

This Congress is seeking to attain the rest of the story by asking senior

White House officials involved in the U.S. Attorney scandal to testify under oath. Unfortunately, the administration does not want to comply and provide the American people with the facts.

As a former elected district attorney, I know how critically important it is for prosecutors to be independent and to perform their job without fear of retaliatory firings.

It is time for this administration to do the right thing and hold those responsible for the scandal accountable.

IRAQ SUPPLEMENTAL

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, the Iraq supplemental will be coming to the floor this week, and it brings together many of the recommendations that we have heard from the nonpartisan Iraq Study Group, from the Pentagon and the President himself, but it provides more resources for our troops in the field and when they come home, and finally provides accountability for this administration.

First, the legislation demands that the Iraqi Government meet benchmarks the President himself outlined earlier this year.

Second, the legislation calls for responsible redeployment out of Iraq at the beginning of next year. The Democratic Congress did not come up with this date out of the blue. This was in the recommendations from the Iraq Study Group.

Third, the supplemental includes important funding for our military that was requested by the Pentagon.

This week marks an important milestone to begin a new direction in Iraq and begin to phase our troops home, and to bring about a regional solution for what is going on in the Middle East.

EQUIPMENT FOR OUR MILITARY

(Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas. Madam Speaker, thanks to the long contributions of our soldiers and our veterans, America has amassed the most powerful military in the history of mankind. It is so powerful that we almost cannot imagine, we can almost imagine its resources are infinite, but they are not.

They are limited, and due to the ever-expanding, ever-deteriorating war in Iraq, they are stretched dangerously thin. Our soldiers and our families, they will never complain, and that is why we must speak for them. We must ask, no, we must demand, that they have the equipment, the training and the support that they need to succeed, and today they do not.

Since the Iraq war began in 2003, the Army has lost nearly 2,000 wheeled vehicles and more than 100 armored vehicles. Almost half of the U.S. Army's

entire supply of ground equipment is now deployed in the Middle East. The constant demands of combat and the treacherous terrain are wearing out equipment at up to nine times the usual rate.

America's military is overburdened, and now our Nation must seriously discuss how to best deploy our depleted forces against the dangers of our day.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In response to one of the earlier 1-minute speeches, the Chair must note that Members should direct remarks in debate to the Chair and not to the President.

GULF COAST HURRICANE HOUSING RECOVERY ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 254 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 1227.

□ 1039

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1227) to assist in the provision of affordable housing to low-income families affected by Hurricane Katrina, with Mr. CARDOZA (Acting Chairman) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Tuesday, March 20, 2007, amendment No. 5 printed in part B of House Report 110-53 by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN), as modified, had been disposed of.

□ 1040

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. NEUGEBAUER

The Acting CHAIRMAN. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in part B of House Report 110-53.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 6 offered by Mr. NEUGEBAUER:

Strike section 306 (relating to transfer of DVP vouchers to voucher program).

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 254, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) and a Member opposed each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, this is a pretty simple and straightforward amendment. It just simply just strikes section 306 from this bill.

What we do in this legislation already is we extend many of the vouchers for the disaster voucher program. But what we are trying to do in this bill is not only just say we want to extend them, but that we want to make them permanent.

Actually, this is not the place to debate whether we need to add additional vouchers to the voucher section 8 program. One of the concerns I have about this is that the scoring on this is an additional authorization of \$735 million, nearly three-quarters of \$1 billion. We are not opposed to debating whether we need to add additional vouchers or change the formula in the future, but this is not the place to do that.

What I said yesterday and continue to say is we are using these disaster programs to push forward things that other people have been working on in other agendas and trying to do this on the backs of the people that have suffered a great disaster.

One of the things I want to go back to is the fact that we stated yesterday that it's not like this Congress has not responded to the people in Louisiana and Mississippi; \$110 billion has been authorized by this Congress for the disaster relief, and \$116.7 billion in CDBG money has been provided to give flexibility for the housing needs of the people in this area.

When we go back to the city of New Orleans itself prior to the hurricane, we had 7,000 public housing units in New Orleans, and 2,000 of those were already scheduled to be torn down, and 5,100 were online, and not all of those occupied. Now approximately 2,000 units already have been repaired, 1,200 have been returned.

Ten billion dollars has been allocated to the Road Home Program in Louisiana. Let me repeat that, \$10.5 billion authorized, \$300 million spent, a full 3 months after the hurricane.

The problem making these vouchers permanent is we are giving preference to folks that are living in communities where other people have been in line. One of the things that I think there is a misconception on is we have talked the last few days about what is going on in New Orleans and what the future is. In 2019 or thereabouts, New Orleans will celebrate its 300th anniversary. For 300 years, that community has been building to what it was pre-Katrina.

There is some misconception in the next 6 months by extending some of these programs and moving forward that all of a sudden everything is going to be back to normal in New Orleans. That is not going to be the truth.

What we need to do is begin to build the housing back, letting that go forward. I know that yesterday, the distinguished chairman said, well, the reason we have to go back and get the units back in order is so that is not keeping them from building new units. In fact, it is. The fact is, we can't tear down some of those units. That is the very land that we are talking about

going back and reusing. It doesn't make sense to me to go back and rebuild all of these units or remodel them, only to come back eventually and have to tear them down so that we can do the new planned communities.

We should go back to the basic tenets of this bill. The basic tenets of this bill was to hopefully get off high center those few glitches that, quote, the leadership in New Orleans and Louisiana say is keeping them from moving their reconstruction forward. It hasn't stopped the people in Mississippi, but for whatever reason, it has stopped the people in Louisiana and moved forward.

Mr. Chairman, we should not extend permanently these vouchers. This is not the form for that. It's not appropriate, it's not fiscally responsible for us to do that. We have extended those vouchers to meet the current needs of some of the folks. We really don't even know how much people will think about returning. But one of the things about making these vouchers permanent, I believe you will ensure that some of these people don't return because many of them have moved on to other places.

Now, we are saying we are going to make your vouchers permanent. We are going to put you in front of people that have been in those communities for a number of years and have been waiting in line to be eligible for this very assistance.

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

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Massachusetts is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The gentleman from Texas once again referred to an earlier amendment from yesterday, but trying to understand this particular amendment has nothing to do with whether you construct or destruct or replace public housing. What this says is the following: There were people who were living in the gulf area who were receiving some form of assistance under HUD programs. Some of them lived in public housing, some of them were in vouchers, some of them were living in subsidized housing for the elderly and the disabled. The places where they were living were washed away in the most literal, physical sense.

We all agree that we have not yet, in the gulf area, replaced that housing. It's true there have been slowdowns, for instance, in Road Home money in New Orleans. But in Mississippi earlier this year, the Oreck Vacuum Company, which to its credit had tried to help the people in the gulf by reopening a factory that the company had in the gulf, shut the factory down because, they explained, the shortage of housing made it impossible for them to recruit

people. There was a physical shortage of housing, and we have people who were once living in the area who have moved to other places. Some of them may still be in the area.

We know that employment in the gulf area hasn't yet returned to its prior level, and we have this chicken-and-egg problem of housing and unemployment. We have now about 12,000 people, who were affected by this amendment, who were previously receiving HUD assistance. Because of the hurricane, the form of assistance they were receiving is no longer possible. They are the ones who were on these disaster vouchers.

Now, before we brought this bill out, those people were legally going to lose those vouchers as of the end of this fiscal year, September 30, an uncontested part of the bill. I appreciate the minority's acquiescence in that. There is some agreement here between us. An uncontested part of this bill extends into November.

The amendment today says that those people who were on HUD assistance before, they have to have been eligible before and still be eligible by various income and other qualifications for HUD assistance, that if as of December 31 of this year they have not been able to find alternative housing, we will not administer what my friend from Texas called "tough love" by kicking them out.

I do not think these are appropriate candidates for tough love. These are not people who are in some situation through their own lack of character. They are people who were displaced by a great physical disaster.

Now, I will acknowledge that the minority side in our committee offered an amendment in particular or raised an issue that we thought was correct. As originally drafted, this particular language would have not only extended the vouchers for those who have been in the disaster situation, but would have continued them, adding to the stock.

Now, we did that because the gentleman from Texas correctly said you don't want to put these people ahead of other people who might be necessarily, who might have a need. So we wanted these to be additional vouchers, not to bite into the other section 8. But we incorrectly, in my judgment, drafted this originally so that even after the current recipients, the current recipients of the disaster vouchers, the victims of New Orleans, as they no longer needed the vouchers or were no longer eligible for them the vouchers would continue to be part of the overall number.

We offered an amendment, unanimous in the committee, that said, no, they will be what we call disappearing vouchers. That is, there is a fixed number of people who now have these vouchers.

As those people die, find other housing, become economically ineligible, as we hope many of them will be as they are able to return to jobs, for whatever

reason, as they no longer need the vouchers or are eligible for them, the vouchers will cease to exist.

□ 1050

So they are permanent in one sense, but not in another. They are permanent as long as this universe of 12,000 recipients of HUD help before the hurricane still need them. But as the people in that category no longer need them or are ineligible, they will disappear. So they are not permanent in that sense.

Now, again, we have acknowledged that there have been slowdowns in trying to rebuild the housing. So the question is, if we cut this off as of December 31, what will happen to those people? How many thousands of them will have no place to live?

And then, by the way, they will become competitors with others for section 8. This is a separate category of vouchers for people who were victims of disasters. Some of them live now in other parts of the country. Abolish this separate category as of December 31, and then these people will be competing with other people.

And again I want to go back to a point I made yesterday. I don't understand the resistance to reaching out to these people. They were living in their homes, and a hurricane wiped their homes out. They are not wealthy people. They are not middle-income people. They are people who were otherwise eligible for HUD programs. They were people who were complying with the terms of those programs because they hadn't been expelled from them, and their homes were destroyed.

And we had hoped that by now we would have done a better job collectively of helping them relocate. We haven't. There is plenty of blame to go around. One place that does not seem to me the blame sticks is with these people, these people who had vouchers, who had public housing residences.

And the question now is, do we say to these victims of the hurricane, we are sorry that it has taken us 18 months to get things organized? But you know what? You have only the rest of this year to find a new place to live.

There are elderly people here. There are disabled people here. There are others. They came from a place where we know employment hasn't come back. Why the insistence on treating them as people who are somehow looking for something they don't deserve? Why the refusal to say, you know, we haven't done the right thing in terms of overall. We hope we will, but as long as you are in this situation where you were displaced physically by a disaster, and as long as back in your home area there isn't sufficient replacement housing, and you know, in Mississippi and it is true, Mississippi has done better on the CDBG than Louisiana. But you just have to pick up the paper to read about the insurance fights. There hasn't been a massive amount of rebuilding in Mississippi either.

You then are telling the people who were the recipients of these vouchers as of December 31 you are on your own. Find the housing, or compete with a number of other people for limited stock.

These vouchers go only to people who had previously been on HUD assistance who were physically displaced by the hurricane, and the vouchers are only for them. And as they begin to find other housing, as they die off, as they will, as people get new jobs and aren't eligible, the vouchers will disappear.

I very much hope that this amendment is defeated.

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

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, just to clarify a couple of things. What I think the question is here is not the fact that this Congress has reached out. We have reached out. I think we have all acknowledged that these families and folks in this area have suffered a tremendous disaster.

The problem is, the question today, is how long is the disaster relief going to be extended to these people. I mean, when is the disaster over? And the problem I have with this bill is it says we are going to do it permanently.

Now, the gentleman from Massachusetts stated that they disappear. Well, the scoring that the CBO did on this did an 8 percent attrition rate, saying that 8 percent of these are going to begin to roll off over a 10-year period, and that is how they came up with the scoring of \$735 million. So that attrition has taken place in there.

What I would submit to you is we temporarily extended these. We may need to extend a piece or a portion of them in the future. But what we are saying with this bill is we are going to make disaster assistance permanent by making these vouchers permanent.

At this time I would like to yield to the distinguished ranking member of the Housing Subcommittee on Financial Services, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT).

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for all his hard work on this bill as well as on this amendment, which I support.

My problem with it is that right now we are doing a lot of housing law on these disasters, and what we are doing is setting precedent. And if this trend in the weather continues, I think we'll probably see a lot more. So I think we have to be very careful in how we move on this, because if it is made permanent, then the disaster voucher program will serve as a model for the future disasters, forcing Congress to act similarly time and time again.

Assisted families will continue to receive this rental subsidy for several months. This is to continue allowing time to transition to other types of housing, including home ownership. And I think that what we are doing is really making, prematurely making these DVPs permanent, so that as long

as the recipient remains eligible for assistance it eliminates other approaches.

Authorizing this, according to the Congressional Budget Office, puts the cost at about \$11,900 per voucher per year. And I really wonder, we all have the goal of really getting the people, the victims of this disaster, back where they want to be, back in a home. And I don't know that by extending the time more, we have got until December, will encourage them, give them the incentive then to get moving. I think extending it through December 31 of 2007 allows Congress and HUD to assess the appropriate long-term solutions.

What we have been talking about with all of these vouchers, we have got other ways to do this. And we put in the bill the survey, and until this survey is completed, it may be difficult to identify the need for a permanent disaster voucher program extension, as the disaster voucher program provides assistance to many of these former HANO tenants. So I think we are kind of putting the cart before the horse. We really need to know where the people are, if they are coming back, and what their future plans are. And until HUD has the opportunity to do that, which they have said they would do soon, but not soon enough in time for this bill. So I think that this is premature, making these vouchers permanent, so long as the recipient remains eligible for their assistance.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLEAVER), a member of the committee.

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Chairman, I want to first express appreciation to the ranking member and the maker of this motion for spending time down in New Orleans with the committee at Dillard University and then going over into Mississippi. I think it was very important for the people of Mississippi to see Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle coming into that devastated region, expressing concern and interested in putting forth legislation to help them out of something that has devastated their lives, yet they are not responsible for.

I have got to oppose the gentleman from Texas' amendment. Let me just say that there are good and decent people who are poor. That is about the only thing good I can say about poverty.

□ 1100

I know it personally. We are on a first-name basis. I grew up with poverty. I know it well. And so I had a clear picture of what happened after Katrina and Rita.

Only one in six New Orleanians owns an automobile. One in six. That means that this city is a city of poverty. And when you think about the individuals at the Dome begging for help, probably 95 to 98 percent of them had no automobiles.

My son was in New Orleans when the flood hit, a student at Dillard University. He had an automobile, and even with an automobile, he had difficulty getting out of New Orleans, ended up spending the night on a Wal-Mart parking lot. But he had a car, and he was able to get out.

This is a very, very poor city. We are told that the poor shall be with us always, but then there is a transition word: "unless." And the "unless" is something that I think this bill addresses. Unless men and women are willing to do what is necessary to enable people who are in poverty to escape.

One of the things that this amendment does not take into account, for example, is 202 housing. I know the program well. I served as mayor of Kansas City. We did about 10 section 202 projects during my administration.

Section 202 projects are designed to accommodate the elderly. In some instances HUD has allowed for 202 housing to be used by people who suffer from extremely difficult ailments, physical problems. So the people who live in 202 are either elderly, certified already as elderly with low income or no income, or they suffer from some malady, some physical, maybe even mental, malady. If this amendment is approved, it would mean that the people who are elderly and poor who were displaced from their 202 housing and are now living with a relative someplace or in some temporary housing, they end up being punished again because this means that there would be no opportunity for them to even return to the conditions under which they lived.

These are not people who are somehow refusing to work or people who somehow don't want to find permanent housing. This was, in fact, permanent housing. Section 202 housing is permanent housing. And if you look at the HUD statistics, you will find that people who leave 202 housing generally leave it for the funeral home. They die in 202 housing. These are the elderly, and this Congress should exercise all the care we can conjure to take care of the poor and the elderly, particularly those living in section 202 housing.

Now, my hope is that the gentleman from Texas would consider in his amendment, even though I would still oppose it for other reasons, at least eliminating 202 elderly housing.

Additionally, HUD has a program, 811 housing, for the disabled. The same thing would apply for the disabled. These are people who lost housing because of Katrina and Rita, and then they end up being told, if this amendment were to pass, that they still will not be helped even to return to the conditions under which they lived prior to the flood, even if those conditions were not at the highest living standard. The disabled are all just saying, we want to return to where we lived. And, yes, it is permanent housing. It is not temporary. It was designed by HUD

and approved by Congress as permanent housing. Sections 811 and 202 are permanent housing projects. We cannot do additional damage to the elderly and the poor.

Now, I think one of the things that we need to consider here as well is that this amendment would strike 1,200 vouchers to families who actually need them. And during our committee debate, I think the gentleman and the ranking member will remember that there was a discussion about substitute language, a compromise, if you will, using the word "sunset." And if we had used the word "sunset," and if it had been placed in the language of the bill, perhaps that would have satisfied Members on the other side who have difficulty with the term "disappearing vouchers." But that is exactly what would happen. That would be a sunset on the vouchers when they are no longer needed.

Striking 1,200 vouchers from families who need them is very, very wrong. It certainly is unintentional in terms of wreaking havoc on those families, but that is exactly what would happen if this amendment is approved. Its impact would only hurt families who need the housing assistance.

Now, the one thing I would like to leave in terms of what I hope can happen from this discussion today is that if we are unwilling or unable to continue assistance for previously, previously federally assisted individuals and families in public housing section 8, 202 or 811 projects for the disabled, we are going to do immense damage and hurt families who don't deserve to be hurt further.

If you can imagine living in a 202 housing project and realizing that you are never going to live in your dream home. There is no such thing as sitting down one day with an architect and designing your dream home. It won't happen. If you live in a 202 or an 811 HUD project, you are already in nirvana. That is as far as you are going to go. And we cannot tell those residents that they cannot return to those living conditions.

The point I am trying to make, and perhaps poorly, is that we are hurting people who would have no other way of living. And if you are opposed to permanent housing, you are opposed to the 202 program not only in New Orleans, but all around this country. In every major city in the country there is at least one, and perhaps several, 202 project, and in every community there is at least one 811 project. And if it is wrong in New Orleans, it is wrong anywhere and everywhere.

My hope, to the gentleman who has proposed the amendment, is that you withdraw the amendment and express appreciation for the debate, acknowledge that you were trying desperately to make sure that we don't overspend any taxpayer money that we don't have to expend. And I will lead a delegation from this side to congratulate the maker of this amendment for a valiant effort to do the right thing that is

not quite as right as, in his heart, he would like for it to be.

□ 1110

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the gentleman from Missouri for his eloquent comments about the poor and the elderly. First of all, I want to make a couple of points. One, I understand when he speaks about that, he shared his family's story with me, it is a great story. It is an American success story, and I know that he knows a lot about public housing.

One of the things I want to say about my amendment, my amendment does not show a lack of support for 202 housing or any other housing. I believe in and have supported housing proposals that this Congress has put forward. We have a number of wonderful, affordable housing programs that are administered through HUD, and we need to continue those. In fact, we are trying to get those programs off high center down in New Orleans in the hurricane area, because that is, long term, a better housing solution for many of the victims of the hurricane.

The other thing that I think needs to be clarified, and I know the gentleman didn't intend to misrepresent this, this bill does not take away any benefits from any poor or elderly people. This bill extends that. My amendment does not take that away. What my amendment says is it is probably not good policy just to permanently extend this disaster program.

What we do in the bill is already extend this program to many of our senior citizens. In fact, prior to the hurricane, there were 8,500 people on section 8 vouchers. Today there are about 12,000 people using these emergency vouchers.

So what we are really trying to do with this bill, if we go back again, sometimes we get off track, what is the purpose of this bill? The purpose of this bill is to get permanent housing back in New Orleans and Mississippi for all income groups; poor, elderly, the families that were residing there. We have allocated a substantial amount of resources to do this. But what we are saying with this amendment is we should not make disaster assistance permanent. We were extending it in this bill, and that makes sense, because, unfortunately, the folks in New Orleans are way behind schedule. They need to get off high center and get back on schedule.

This amendment does not, and people listening to this debate today need to be clear, this amendment does not take away vouchers from anybody. What it doesn't do is just write a continuing blank check.

In many of the cities and places where people that were displaced from this disaster are living, there are housing units available to them. It may be that they decide to make a permanent

decision to reside in those communities that they have gone to. Many of them have gone back to cities closer to maybe their children or their families. We need to give them the opportunity. But what we don't need to do is create a whole new voucher program with this disaster.

As the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Housing said, we are setting precedent every time we get up with one of these disasters and we try to outdo the last disaster. I think the American people have said, why don't you all come up with a plan and stick with it? We came up with a plan. We executed that plan. We sent the resources down to those areas. From a Federal perspective, I don't know how much more money we can throw at that initiative to get it off high center.

One of the things we need to be clear on about this amendment, it doesn't take anything away from elderly people, it doesn't take anything away from poor people, it doesn't make a statement that we shouldn't have a permanent housing solution. A permanent housing solution is a better solution. But when you extend and make permanent some of these other side programs, you keep taking away resources that could go to the permanent housing.

As I made the statement yesterday when we talked about going back and building maybe some housing for elderly and other folks down there, we don't need to go back and do it where they were before, because I have seen those units, and I know why a lot of people haven't gone back, because the thought of having to go back to those units, and I don't care how much money you spend on them, it wasn't a good situation before, it won't be a good situation today.

You need to support this amendment because it is fiscally responsible. It meets the needs of the people. But it does say before we begin to create a whole new level of voucher programs, we need to have that debate in another forum, not on the backs of the resources needed for the people to rebuild after Katrina.

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

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to transfer control of the time from the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) to myself.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield to myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I have worked with Mr. NEUGEBAUER, and he has been exceptionally cooperative, understanding the plight of the poor and those people who have been displaced who were victims of Katrina and Rita, and I am convinced, having listened to this discussion and this debate, that there is simply a misunderstanding, because I don't think that he intends for those

people who were already assisted by HUD, those people, for example, who were living in section 8 housing, they were renting from landlords and the building was destroyed, to somehow not be permanently assisted and get back on their section 8.

I don't think that he means that those people who were in public housing units who were assisted by HUD, if their unit does not get repaired, I don't think he means that they should not have a section 8. I don't think he means that for the disabled. I don't think he means that for the homeless.

So I am going to chalk this up to a misunderstanding and miscommunication, and, as we continue this debate, I hope that we are able to help my colleague on the opposite side of the aisle understand what he is proposing.

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

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS), the distinguished ranking member of the full committee.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, let me start by saying that the minority is not opposed to a debate on section 8 vouchers for evacuees. We understand, and we have said on this floor that they have left New Orleans, they are in other cities, and there is a temporary need. We don't know how long that temporary need is. There is a temporary need for housing. Some of them will drop off in eligibility, and we are hearing that may be 8 percent. But this is a 10-year permanent program.

One of my concerns is they won't want to return to New Orleans with this section 302 housing that we are creating, a more or less permanent program where they can stay in Houston or they can move from Houston to Dallas.

Now, yesterday we talked about what I consider is a rush to go back and take some of these dilapidated units, units that weren't habitable even before the hurricane, and fix them up. We say we need to do that because we needed to get everybody back to New Orleans as soon as we could.

What we said yesterday, we talked about East Lake in Atlanta, where they took a large public housing project which was, as I said, 56th out of 56. It was the most dangerous precinct in the city of Atlanta. Seventy percent of the youth in some of these public housing projects ended up in the State penitentiary. There was an article in the New York Times about that in New York. We wanted to replace that with mixed-income units. That is going to take time. For that to happen, we will have to have some people stay in other cities.

But we don't think that we can determine right now what we need 10 years from now and commit to spending \$735 million. At the same time, if we are

going to do that, why do we go back and replace all these units? These people are either going to come back, or they are not. They are not going to do both. But it seems as if we are creating public housing for everyone in New Orleans that has a potential of coming back, and, at the same time, we are creating a program over here where everybody can stay away from New Orleans.

The end result is, I think, a lack of planning. I think we ought to, instead of replacing the failed public housing in New Orleans that we all agree was a disaster, we ought to replace it with something where people have a safer home, a better community, more quality of life. While we do that, we determine how long that is going to take and fashion this program around what we think is a better day for people in New Orleans, a better public housing system there.

Instead, I think we are creating two stand-alone programs, both designed for the same group of evacuees. It simply is going to create a disincentive to come back. At the same time, we are creating housing in New Orleans that is really not suitable for anyone, replacing units that need to be torn down and replaced with better units.

As I have said, this is the greatest natural catastrophe this Nation has faced. That, if anything, ought to lead us to do this right, and not just throw money at it, but to spend it wisely.

□ 1120

This amendment by Mr. NEUGEBAUER is a way to do that. Section 302 is a duplication of effort, and I think it is ill conceived.

I will close with this: Yesterday, if I heard it once, I heard it a hundred times. And we agree, we want people to come back to New Orleans as long as there is suitable housing there and to do so as soon as possible. This section 302, which the gentleman from Texas would strike, is a disincentive to New Orleans recovering as soon as possible.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. PERLMUTTER).

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Chairman, I think our friends on the other side of the aisle have framed this in a way that I think is legitimate, which is, how long will this relief be extended. We talked about this in committee. And my feeling is the relief has got to be extended until we actually get on the job.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER mentioned the fact that there has been a substantial amount of money appropriated and obligated to repairing and reconstructing these homes in New Orleans, but a very small portion of it has yet to be extended.

We had a debate over a couple of sections; one, that vouchers, it has been 18 months or 19 months now, shouldn't be available for people outside of New Orleans; and now we are saying those same vouchers shouldn't be available

for them in New Orleans. The problem that we have here, Mr. Chairman, is the fact that the job hasn't been done. There have been mistakes, missteps, miscommunication. Eighteen months seems like a long time, but very little has been done to reconstruct or renovate or rebuild the homes for so many people that were displaced. That is the bottom line here.

The bottom line is, coming from Colorado, coming from my background, my faith, we want to help people who are poor, we want to help them if they have been displaced by a huge natural disaster. They haven't been able to return because, through no fault of their own, things haven't been rebuilt or reconstructed. I can't see why we would want to strike section 306 because we haven't gotten the job done. Not through any fault of the people who have been dispersed throughout the country, but because of some problem either between the administration and the State of Louisiana or whatever. That is what has got to be straightened out here. We can't cut out this section and look ourselves in the mirror thinking that we have done the job.

The people that were displaced are entitled to return to New Orleans, they are entitled to return to these homes, and that is what this bill is about. That is why we brought this bill. You know, in a perfect world, everything should have been done by now, but it has not been finished, not anywhere near it. So we have got to step forward again.

We aren't trying to outdo ourselves. We are trying to finish what all of you started 18 months ago; but for whatever reason, we can blame the administration, we can blame the State, we can blame a lot of things, but it hasn't been finished. Our job is to finish the job and allow people to return to their homes in New Orleans as quickly as possible and not to cut this section 306.

So I am going to urge the House to defeat this amendment. I understand Mr. NEUGEBAUER's desire to be fiscally responsible, I couldn't agree with him more. But the fact of the matter is the money is out there, things haven't been finished, and these vouchers are important to keep for the people.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I appreciate the gentleman from Colorado's remarks. I think what you hear from both of us is frustration that things haven't moved along faster.

What I would point out to the gentleman and to the folks on the other side of the aisle is the point that we have been making that we believe that this keeps people in limbo, causes them not to begin to make some kind of a permanent housing decision. I use the example that in New Orleans today there are about 2,000 units of public housing that are available today, but they have about 400 or 500 vacancies that people are not applying for.

Secondly, they have had to go back on a number of occasions because those

units have been vacant so long, they had to go back and make them ready again. In that climate, when a unit sits vacant for a short period of time or an extended period of time, the unit gets stale and they have to go back and do some mold mitigation and some other things because there is not someone occupying it.

The point here is we have extended the benefits. The benefits are in this bill for all of the people that have been talked about here this morning. But what we are saying is two things: One, we are trying to permanently increase the amount of section 8 vouchers available in a bill that is about disaster. Secondly, we are talking about extending things where people do not have to come to some kind of a decision about what they want to do.

We want them to go back to New Orleans. I think the people of New Orleans want the people to come back, they want to have the community and the sense of community that they had prior to the storm. But I will tell you that I think we are being the enemy here by not bringing some deadlines and definition to this disaster program. At some point in time the disaster piece is over and the recovery piece has to begin.

We have made an allowance for the transition to do that, but when you make something permanent, even when you say, well, it disappears, what we know about Federal programs is they don't have a history of disappearing. Once we put them on the books, they generally stay with us.

We have the ability down the road, this Congress will, if in fact there needs to be another extension, and in fact the administration has some flexibility. But when you put the word "permanent" on anything, it is permanent.

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

Ms. WATERS. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO).

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Chairman, I don't get it. I am just reading section 306 as being stricken now, and it says, this is a direct quote, blah, blah, blah, "for the period that such household is eligible for such voucher assistance." Once the household is no longer eligible, the voucher disappears. What is permanent about that? Subsection 3 says, "Such vouchers shall not be taken into consideration for purposes of determining any future allocation of amounts to such tenant-based rental assistance for any public housing agency." What is permanent about that?

Now I don't know, if you just don't like the section 8 program, I respect that. That is a respectful and honest difference of opinion on how to help people have a home, have a roof above their head. But let's just try to get rid of the entire section 8 program. Let's not just pick on the people that got hurt the most in this entire country and have been shafted from the day of the hurricane until now.

I haven't looked at the numbers, but your own numbers a few minutes ago where there were 8,000 before the hurricane and now there are 12,000, maybe I missed something. That is not as big an increase as I would have suspected would happen if there was such a big sham going on.

And by the way, if it is all about a sham, you have got to give these people in New Orleans credit. They had a house, they were poor, they qualified for a Federal program that has been around for years, and they somehow mysteriously worked it so that their houses would be destroyed so they could stay on this program. Their houses and their jobs, by the way; that is why you have 12,000 people eligible because they have no jobs. The economy hasn't come back. When they get their jobs back and the economy comes back, they will no longer be eligible and they will be off the rolls and we will be back to 8,000. This is not a permanent program.

Again, if you just don't like the section 8 program, I respect that. We will have a legitimate difference of opinion on that; that's above the board. I understand that that is a philosophical view that I don't share, but I respect it. But you can't just go and take the people in this country that got hurt the worst, for no cause of their own, and somehow think they are trying to scam the system because they happen to live in the path of the worst hurricane this country has seen in my lifetime.

You can't pretend that this is a permanent program when the language itself says it is temporary. As long as these people are eligible, they would have a section 8 certificate. If they get their jobs back and the economy comes back and they make enough money to no longer be eligible, they will be off the rolls, we will be back to the 8,000. And then maybe we will have the discussion we should be having, which I would disagree with then, but it is an honest one; we just get rid of the section 8 program altogether and that is the end of it.

In the meantime, quit trying to pick on the people that got hurt the most in this country, no cause of their own, no fault of their own. I can't imagine anybody down there, any little old lady is sitting there trying to figure out how to scam the system so they can rebuild the house that shouldn't be rebuilt, so they don't have a job. If that is happening, find me the three people that are doing that, and I will agree with you and we will get them off the rolls.

□ 1130

Other than that, let's get on with fixing New Orleans so we can get back on track for this country and for this world.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I appreciate the gentleman from Massachusetts' point. One, I don't see anywhere in here where there is any

expression on my part or have I made the point that I am against section 8 vouchers. What I am for, and as the gentleman mentioned, if we have an opportunity and a place and a forum to debate the section 8 program, many of us believe that there can be some things done to the section 8 program to actually make it a more effective program.

The other piece of the deal is that we are not taking away any section 8 vouchers with my amendment. In fact, as I mentioned a while ago, there were 8,500 section 8 vouchers in New Orleans prior to the storm. Anybody that is living in Houston or Oklahoma, anywhere else right now, that wants to come back to New Orleans, there is a section 8 voucher, if they qualify, available for them today.

I don't understand this. I think the other side is trying to somehow argue against my amendment because they know what making something permanent means. It means permanent. They want to try to say that we are somehow depriving people of the ability to have vouchers. If people qualify for vouchers in Houston, they can qualify for them in Houston. If they want to come back to New Orleans, they can come back to New Orleans. There are vouchers available for them there. We made sure, and I thought it was the right policy, and the gentlewoman from California made this point, I believe, in the hearing, that we need to make sure that we keep New Orleans' hold on the programs that they had available. I believe this bill takes steps to do this.

Really what we are talking about, we need to get back to what this amendment does. It just says, you know what, it doesn't make sense in this bill to make this disaster relief permanent when it goes to section 8 vouchers. It doesn't take vouchers away from anybody. It doesn't say anything about 202 housing. It doesn't say anything about rebuilding the affordable housing projects in New Orleans. It just says it is not appropriate policy to start using disaster bills to make other programs permanent.

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

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Orleans (Mr. JEFFERSON).

Mr. JEFFERSON. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me.

I am having a great deal of trouble connecting the debate here to the reality that people are facing back home. Starting out, you have to know, and just look back to what the conditions were in New Orleans before the storm. Before the storm there wasn't enough affordable housing there even then. There were 18,000 people on a waiting list, 10,000 or so for public housing, 8,000 or so for section 8 vouchers. There were people on waiting lists for 202 housing. All sorts of needs were there. The folks who were down and out then are worse off now. And the folks who

were doing a little bit better than are worse off than they were. And so the need has expanded for more assistance there rather than less.

With respect to the issue of permanency, which seems to be the gravamen of the gentleman's objection here, we are talking about people who were eligible for section 8 or 202 or whatever the programs might have been before the storm, who were displaced to other places, and who will remain eligible there in these new places. We passed laws early on after the storm to make sure that people were eligible who otherwise might have lost their eligibility because of the fact they were just physically in another place. We took care of that.

Now, none of us here would have anticipated it would have taken so long to get people back in their places, to get folks back to New Orleans, to get this whole thing fixed. But it has. For whatever reason, it has. We can cast blame here or there, but whatever the reason is, people have not been able to come back home.

I can tell you this much. There aren't many people I have met, and I have been all over the place, in Memphis and in San Antonio and in Houston and in Atlanta, just above in Baton Rouge and up the river. There aren't many people out there who do not want to make their way back home. They are trying desperately to get home. Many of them are close in, doubled up and tripled up in houses, trying to find a way back home. They do not want to be outside of New Orleans. They do not want to be away. We don't need to worry about creating a disincentive for people who return. They want to return home right now, already. Believe me, at the bottom of it all, people want to come back home.

Our objective here is to say as long as they are displaced through no fault of their own, as long as programs aren't working to get them back home right now, we have got to make sure that they have a chance to live decently and in some order outside of the city. That is really all that is going on here. You need to understand that the need remains, and it is even greater than it was before the storm for the programs we are talking about here.

As to this notion of setting a deadline, we have tried this before in almost every program. All we do is just kind of make people's lives unsettled. We say to people who are in assisted housing in someplace in Houston that by deadline X, you must be out of your place. This is, simply put, to put pressure on people to hope they'll find a way to find a house somewhere. They can't, and so the deadline gets moved anyhow. If we set a deadline here, it can only be arbitrary. We don't know that by December such and such there won't be a need for these programs. We don't know that. What this legislation does is take the more reasonable view that so long as they need the program, then they remain eligible. When they

don't need it, then the eligibility disappears, and the people are no longer on the program.

That is the only sensible way to deal with this, because no one of us knows, no one of us here can say today when this disaster will be at its end, when recovery will be done. We need to see this through and be logical about it.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, can I inquire as to the time both sides have left here?

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Texas has 6 minutes remaining. The gentlelady from California has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND).

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I want to thank the gentleman from Texas for having this amendment. I have called this Congress the smoke-and-mirrors Congress because of the way the majority party has presented their case to the public, and it has been a process of smoke and mirrors. This seems to be a fuzzy math program.

If you have 7,000 section 8 homes in New Orleans, and it's funny, we haven't heard from the people in Mississippi or Florida or some of the other places. This is specifically for the New Orleans housing. Seven thousand section 8 homes. Only 5,000 of them were occupied before the hurricane, and now we are wanting to put all 7,000 back. Yet in New Orleans today, there are 500 that is uninhabited that they can't get people to come back to. So somewhere there is a need to help people that don't seem to be taking that first step to helping themselves.

We have people from New Orleans in Atlanta and in a lot of places in Georgia. If they want to go back to New Orleans, I am sure that we want them to be back in their hometown, and that probably the Federal Government would give them some assistance to get back to New Orleans and to know that there are 500 vacant section 8 houses for them to go to.

I think the other interesting thing is that if you were in a section 8 house prior to Hurricane Katrina, and Hurricane Katrina destroyed your home that you were living in under the section 8 program, then you would now be entitled to section 8 for the rest of your life. Maybe for the gentleman from Texas that we would need to say that anybody, and I feel sorry for these people, but anybody that has an unfortunate situation happen to them in their life, that they could come to the government and just give us a list of things that they would need for the rest of their life.

I want to thank the gentleman from Texas for offering this amendment, and I hope that this House will see fit to support it.

□ 1140

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I want to speak on behalf of the people of New Orleans and of the gulf coast who are

having such a difficult time, who have not really gotten all of the assistance that I think we could have given them from the very beginning.

I think when the gentleman spoke, he said the people did not seem to be taking the first step to help themselves. That is an insult. I reject it. I speak on their behalf. We were there, and we know how hard they have been working, and they deserve to be seen in a better light than the gentleman just described them.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Well, I just want to reiterate what this bill does and what it does not. We have heard a lot of things about what people think it does, but I think we need to go back and review what the bill does. Reviewing what the bill does, it strictly strikes section 306. What the bill doesn't do is it doesn't take away benefits to elderly and benefits to the poor. In fact, we have a number of people who are on these emergency vouchers who actually don't qualify for section 8.

It doesn't say to people that we don't care. But what it does say is that this is not the appropriate form. As the gentleman from Louisiana stated, there is a waiting list. For all kinds of housing in many cities all across the country today, there are waiting lists for section 8 vouchers and there are waiting lists for housing for the elderly. All across this country there are those opportunities.

Our job here is not to fix preexisting conditions. Our job here is to help with disaster relief, bringing that community back to some semblance of what it was prior to the hurricane and not to try to fix problems that were existing in that community before.

There are opportunities within this relief to fix some of the issues that were going on. We had housing projects that were massive, that had a huge accumulation of poor people and a lot of crime and a lot of things going on in those that we don't find acceptable in our country.

With this disaster recovery money we have appropriated, we have an opportunity to go back and make those communities better. But we should not be trying to fix preexisting conditions with this legislation. And by making these vouchers permanent, we are trying to say we had a problem before and we want to fix that.

What we want to do, and I think what I heard from the testimony from the mayor and from the Governor and from the community leaders down there, we are trying to rebuild our community.

But when you make these disaster vouchers permanent, people can stay in Houston and they can stay other places, and they don't have to come back to this community. As we stated, there are housing units available here. There are vouchers available here. To the point we can, we need to focus our

money and our resources on bringing people back and giving them the ability to come back.

I urge Members to support a fiscally responsible bill that is compassionate in that it doesn't take away anything, but it just says this is not the appropriate forum to be adding vouchers to the section 8 program. It is not appropriate to use a disaster bill to have the dialogue about whether we should increase the amount of section 8 vouchers.

I know that the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Financial Services is going to have a hearing on that, and I welcome that discussion as we talk about it, and it shouldn't be just about section 8. When we sit down and talk about housing for our poor and our elderly, we ought to talk about a comprehensive look at it. Is section 8 the best way to do that, or are more permanent housing projects better?

But that is not the debate here on this bill, nor should we be trying to have that debate and to make that policy within this bill.

I urge Members to vote for my amendment.

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

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the chairman of the Committee on Financial Services, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), the balance of my time.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, the gentleman from Texas has given us a good example of the meaning of true conservatism.

He had a speech written on this amendment when the bill was first introduced. We have amended the section he is talking about, but he still likes that speech so much he won't get rid of it. He keeps talking about permanent section 8s. They were permanent when the bill was introduced, I agree. When the bill was introduced, they were not just disaster vouchers for the people who were displaced from their homes by a flood in New Orleans, but even after those people no longer used the vouchers, they would remain on the books. He objected to that and we agreed to that part of his objection.

We adopted an amendment that says they disappear when the people disappear. So let me put it this way: These vouchers are permanent only if 12,000 refugees from the New Orleans hurricane are permanent human beings. If they live forever, so does the voucher program. But I do not think that every recipient of elderly housing is going to be permanently with us. I will lament their passing, they are undoubtedly decent people, but they are not permanent. And so the gentleman's politics and theology are both incorrect in this case. They are by no means permanent.

He said anybody who had a voucher in New Orleans can go back and get it, but they were people who lived in public housing. They can't have a voucher. Public housing was physically destroyed. There were people who lived in

202 housing for the elderly, and housing for the disabled; that housing has been destroyed.

What we are doing here is providing a replacement not just for the vouchers in New Orleans but for physical housing that was destroyed in New Orleans.

Finally, the gentleman said they can go to Houston if they are eligible in Houston; but previously he said we don't want them competing. So either they compete with the people of Houston, who have already been very decent, or they get nothing. I hope the amendment is defeated.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. PRICE OF GEORGIA

The Acting CHAIRMAN. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 7 printed in part B of House Report 110-53.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 7 offered by Mr. PRICE of Georgia:

Strike section 103 (relating to elimination of prohibition of use for match requirement).

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 254, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, as I begin, I do want to set the record straight a little bit. I think it is important for us to appreciate and for America to appreciate that the comments by Members on the other side, who have stated over and over that there seems to be a resistance by Members on our side of the aisle to helping individuals out after Katrina, simply is not borne out by either the facts or history, and it is not an appropriate reflection of history.

The heart of the American people is immense, and we all poured out our hearts and we helped immensely when Katrina occurred. We opened our homes and our communities. In my district in the north side of Atlanta, we opened up shelters and provided great assistance, as I know men and women and boys and girls did all across this Nation. The heart of America is huge.

I offer my amendment today in an effort to try to prevent further waste and

fraud and abuse of Federal spending on Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts in Louisiana.

Mr. Chairman, as a condition of Federal assistance, Federal grants oftentimes require State and local governments to match Federal grants or to provide a portion of matching funds with State or local spending contributions, oftentimes in the range of 10 percent. This is in order to encourage the efficient administration of the assisted activities giving local recipients an incentive for good management.

Why do we do this? Mr. Chairman, I would suggest it is analogous to a copay when you go to your doctor. As a former physician, I am familiar with those, and most Americans are familiar with those. When you go to your doctor, you have a bit of a copay. And what that does is provide for you an opportunity to encourage appropriate and proper attention and oversight. It actually increases the responsibility of individuals and it increases the financial soundness of the entire system. This amendment would provide that same type of responsibility.

□ 1150

Striking section 103 would prevent the use of Federal CDBG funds, these are Federal funds, these are hard-earned taxpayer dollars, for the local match requirements and maintain much-needed local incentives to maximize Federal assistance.

I think it is also important for Americans to appreciate that Congress has already promised over \$100 billion, that is with a "B," since Katrina and Rita have occurred. To put that in some context, the Louisiana State budget prior to Katrina was \$16 billion.

Although we have held over 11 hearings and four briefings and questioned over 137 witnesses, what is needed is increased oversight of that Federal assistance. The underlying bill weakens that ability to provide that oversight. Why, I would ask, would we want to weaken that ability?

In fact, a report by Representatives WAXMAN and CARDOZA and OBEY and TANNER and HOLMES-NORTON and TIERNEY by the Democratic staff on the Committee on Government Reform in August of 2006 itself identified 19 contracts that were offered or that were given during Katrina collectively worth over \$8.75 billion that they themselves say have been plagued by waste and fraud and abuse, citing wasteful spending, lack of competition, mismanagement, et cetera.

Examples from a GAO audit provided to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs in testimony in December of last year stated just as an example nearly \$17 million in potentially improper and/or fraudulent rental assistance payments to individuals, nearly \$20 million in potentially improper or fraudulent payments went to individuals who are registered for both Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, using the same property. Mil-

lions of dollars of improper and potentially fraudulent payments went to nonqualified aliens, including foreign students and temporary workers.

Why is it, Mr. Chairman, that we would want to lower the threshold of due diligence that should be applied to spending Federal assistance when waste, fraud and abuse has already been so well documented?

It is obvious to everyone that better oversight of Federal spending is needed. This amendment would assist in providing that oversight and making certain that local and State individuals would have a greater responsibility, a greater incentive to make certain that the programs and the grants that they receive, those moneys are spent in a responsible way.

It is an effort to be better stewards of the American taxpayers' money, and I would urge my colleagues to adopt this amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIRMAN. For what purpose does the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) rise? Does the gentlewoman wish to claim the time of the opposition?

Ms. WATERS. I do.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentlewoman from California is recognized.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 3 minutes.

I am so overwhelmed with the gentleman's statement that would deny to the people of New Orleans basic assistance that would allow them to use their Community Development Block Grant money as match, no new money, but simply the money that has already been allocated to them to be used as a match to FEMA money in order to help the area move forward with reconstruction, redevelopment and getting people's lives together.

I do not think that most people in America would believe that there was something wrong with giving this basic kind of assistance. Here we have cities where the city halls have been destroyed, water systems have been destroyed, schools, hospitals, roads, sewer systems, police departments, and we would then deny them the opportunity to use money that has already been granted as matching money so they could make use of the FEMA money that they are eligible for? I cannot believe that the gentleman would want to do that.

I am adamantly opposed to this amendment. It is one of the most mean-spirited amendments that I have heard that has been attempted to be attached to the bill that I have introduced. I would ask my colleagues to reject it out of hand. It does not make good sense. We do not gain anything from it.

We have not heard anybody come to this floor from the opposite side of the aisle, and certainly this gentleman, talk about fraud and abuse by Halliburton or any of those companies that are known to be ripping off the government, and here we have a Member of

this floor who would come to the floor and a Member of this Congress who would come to the floor and suggest to us that they may misuse it, they may abuse it. I do not think we want to entertain that. I do not think we want to be a part of denying basic help to people who need it so desperately.

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentlewoman's comments. However, the hyperbole and the emotion brought with it is curious, again in light of the remarkable assistance that the American people have provided out of their own generosity privately and the generosity that this Congress has provided to the tune of greater than \$100 billion of assistance to individuals who have suffered from the greatest devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

The purpose of this amendment is an attempt to move in albeit a small direction, but a small direction of fiscal responsibility. We hear comments by the Members on the other side all the time about how they want to bring new fiscal responsibility to Congress. Well, Mr. Chairman, in fact, what we have had is a step in the opposite direction ever since they have taken charge.

So I would hope that Members would appreciate that this bill, again, is a small step in the direction of financial and fiscal responsibility. It does not preclude the use of previous moneys prior to this bill. If \$110 billion is not enough then to provide for allowing individuals to have some local assistance use, I am not certain how much will be.

So, Mr. Chairman, I again state that this is a small step for fiscal responsibility and encourage my colleagues to adopt this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT).

Mr. WATT. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I thank the gentleman from Georgia for the way he has framed this issue as a fiscal responsibility issue; although I think he frames it incorrectly in this case.

There really is no precedent in disaster situations if you go back throughout all the disaster situations for even requiring a local 10 percent match, and I think in another bill there will be language that would actually waive the 10 percent local match.

This component of it disallows the use of Federal money that has been granted to the local communities to provide that 10 percent match. I think the issue is going to go away in another context anyway, but it is counterintuitive to say to local communities whose complete tax base has been destroyed that they should somehow provide a 10 percent match for Federal funds that are given, and historically in disaster situations, there really has never been a 10 percent match at all because we have recog-

nized that the distress situation that is created by a disaster makes it highly unlikely, improbable, impossible in many circumstances, that the 10 percent match would be able to be met by the local community.

You take that and multiply it times five, because this is five times the worst natural disaster that our country has ever had. So we should reject this five times, not just once.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I reserve my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. MELANCON).

□ 1200

Mr. MELANCON. I thank the gentlelady.

Mr. Chairman, first let me talk about the fraud. The fraud was perpetrated by people throughout this country in Florida, in California, in Colorado, that used addresses in Louisiana. The money that was spent was spent by the Federal agencies, and not misspent by the State of Louisiana.

I am speaking today to urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the Gulf Coast Recovery Act and against the Price amendment, which would keep in place a major roadblock to Louisiana's recovery from Hurricanes Rita and Katrina. Rebuilding in the wake of these two hurricanes is the biggest challenge people on the gulf coast and, for that matter, in this country, have ever faced.

Katrina was the worst natural disaster ever in the United States history. Rita, which has been dubbed the forgotten storm, was the third worst catastrophic event in this country. Local governments are valiantly moving forward to try and rebuild, but without the ability to have the tax base that they need just to do day-to-day operations. If you have lived in a gulf coast community, you know the communities come back under normal circumstances. That is not happening.

This was devastating, totally devastating. Bureaucratic red tape is holding us back. Our local tax base in south Louisiana is gone. Local governments have no way of coming up with money for the 10 percent match. For some parishes, the cost of local match for projects is many millions of dollars and could go as high as \$1 billion across the devastated area. Ninety thousand miles, square miles, of devastation was caused by these two storms the size of Great Britain. We are sitting here and worrying about a 10 percent match that was harmful to these small communities and the City of New Orleans but has devastated this entire area.

One thing that I need to point out: The President has the authority to waive the local match requirements with the stroke of his pen. In fact, this authority has been exercised 32 times since 1985 for other major disasters.

In 1992, George H.W. Bush waived the requirement when the per capita recovery cost of Hurricane Andrew reached

\$139 per person. It was also waived for New York City following the attacks of September 11, \$390 a person.

But despite a \$6,700 per capita recovery cost following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the administration has refused to waive the local match, despite repeated requests. How is this fair to Louisiana? I am a fiscal conservative, but this policy is ridiculous. It is dooming the recovery to failure, and it's time we correct it.

I emphatically urge you to defeat the Price amendment, and pass the Gulf Coast Recovery Act, which will help thousands of people return home and begin rebuilding their lives.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. May I inquire of the Chair, do I have the right to close?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady has the right to close.

Ms. WATERS. I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR) for 2 minutes.

Mr. TAYLOR. First let me tell the gentleman from Georgia I appreciate him trying to save some money. I think his efforts, though, are a year late. If you want to look for Katrina fraud, look for Katrina fraud that was perpetrated by the Bush administration.

In south Mississippi we had 40,000 people at one point living in FEMA trailers. We are grateful for every one of them, but those trailers were delivered by a friend of the President, Riley Bechtel, a major contributor to the Bush administration. He got \$16,000 to haul a trailer the last 70 miles from Purvis, Mississippi down to the gulf coast, hook it up to a garden hose, hook it up to a sewer tap and plug it in; \$16,000.

So the gentleman never came to the floor once last year to talk about that fraud. But now little towns like Waveland, Bay Saint Louis, Pas Christian, that have no tax base because their stores were destroyed in the storm, a county like Hancock County where 90 percent of the residents lost everything, or at least substantial damage to their home, he wants to punish Bay Saint Louis, he wants to punish Waveland, he wants to punish Pas Christian.

Mr. PRICE. I wish you would have the decency, if you are going to do that to the people of south Mississippi, that maybe you ought to come visit south Mississippi before you hold them to a standard that you would never hold your own people to and that you failed to hold the Bush administration to.

With that, I yield back my time.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIRMAN

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Chair would ask Members to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I would inquire as to whether or not those words are eligible to be taken down.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Chair cannot render an advisory opinion on that point.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I demand that his words be taken down.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Would the gentleman specify the words?

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. The words accusing this Member of action unbecoming of the House as it relates to having Members of my district not be held to the same account.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Members will suspend, and the Clerk will report the words.

□ 1232

The Acting CHAIRMAN (Mr. HOLDEN). The Clerk will report the words.

The Clerk read as follows:

“Mr. PRICE, I wish you would have the decency, if you are going to do that to the people of south Mississippi, that maybe you ought to come visit south Mississippi before you hold them to a standard that you would never hold your own people to and that you failed to hold the Bush administration to. With that, I yield back my time.”

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Committee will rise.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PASTOR) having assumed the chair, Mr. HOLDEN, Acting Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1227) to assist in the provision of affordable housing to low-income families affected by Hurricane Katrina, when certain words used in debate were objected to and, on request, were taken down and read at the Clerk’s desk, and he herewith reported the same to the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union reports that during consideration of H.R. 1227 certain words used in debate were objected to and, on request, were taken down and read at the Clerk’s desk and now reports the words objected to to the House. The Clerk will report the words objected to in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

The Clerk read as follows:

“Mr. PRICE, I wish you would have the decency, if you are going to do that to the people of south Mississippi, that maybe you ought to come visit south Mississippi before you hold them to a standard that you would never hold your own people to and that you failed to hold the Bush administration to. With that, I yield back my time.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair holds that remarks in debate that question the decency of another Member improperly descend to personality. The words are not in order.

Without objection, the words are stricken from the RECORD.

There was no objection.

Without objection, the gentleman from Mississippi may proceed in order on this day.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, is it in order to move that the gentleman from Mississippi’s right to address the House be restored?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That motion may be offered.

MOTION TO PERMIT TO PROCEED IN ORDER ON THIS DAY

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I move that the rights of the gentleman from Mississippi to speak during the remainder of the day be restored.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) that the gentleman from Mississippi be permitted to proceed in order.

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

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. 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. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 265, nays 160, answered “present” 0, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 167]
YEAS—265

Abercrombie	Clyburn	Gonzalez
Ackerman	Cohen	Gordon
Aderholt	Conyers	Green, Al
Allen	Cooper	Green, Gene
Altmire	Costa	Grijalva
Andrews	Costello	Gutierrez
Arcuri	Courtney	Hall (NY)
Baca	Cramer	Hare
Baird	Crowley	Harman
Baldwin	Cuellar	Hastings (FL)
Barrow	Cummings	Herseth
Bartlett (MD)	Davis (AL)	Higgins
Bean	Davis (CA)	Hill
Becerra	Davis (IL)	Hinchee
Berkley	Davis, Lincoln	Hinojosa
Berman	DeFazio	Hirono
Berry	DeGette	Hobson
Bilbray	Delahunt	Hodes
Bishop (GA)	DeLauro	Holden
Bishop (NY)	Dent	Holt
Blumenauer	Dicks	Honda
Bonner	Dingell	Hooley
Boren	Doggett	Hoyer
Boswell	Donnelly	Hunter
Boucher	Doyle	Inslee
Boyd (FL)	Edwards	Israel
Boyd (KS)	Ehlers	Jackson (IL)
Brady (PA)	Ellison	Jackson-Lee
Braley (IA)	Ellsworth	(TX)
Brown, Corrine	Emanuel	Jefferson
Butterfield	Emerson	Johnson (GA)
Capito	Engel	Johnson (IL)
Capps	Eshoo	Johnson, Sam
Capuano	Etheridge	Jones (NC)
Cardoza	Farr	Jones (OH)
Carmahan	Filner	Kagen
Carney	Flake	Kaptur
Carson	Frank (MA)	Kennedy
Castor	Franks (AZ)	Kildee
Chandler	Gerlach	Kilpatrick
Clarke	Giffords	Kind
Clay	Gilchrest	Klein (FL)
Cleaver	Gillibrand	Kucinich

Lampson	Nadler	Shea-Porter
Langevin	Napolitano	Sherman
Lantos	Neal (MA)	Shuler
Larsen (WA)	Oberstar	Sires
Larson (CT)	Obey	Skelton
Lee	Olver	Slaughter
Levin	Ortiz	Smith (NJ)
Lewis (GA)	Pallone	Smith (WA)
Lipinski	Pascarell	Snyder
LoBiondo	Pastor	Solis
Loeb sack	Payne	Space
Lofgren, Zoe	Perlmutter	Spratt
Lowey	Peterson (MN)	Stark
Lungren, Daniel E.	Pickering	Stupak
Lynch	Platts	Sutton
Mahoney (FL)	Pomeroy	Tanner
Maloney (NY)	Porter	Tauscher
Markey	Price (NC)	Taylor
Marshall	Putnam	Thompson (CA)
Matheson	Rahall	Thompson (MS)
Matsui	Ramstad	Thornberry
McCarthy (NY)	Rangel	Tierney
McCollum (MN)	Renzi	Towns
McDermott	Reyes	Turner
McGovern	Rodriguez	Udall (CO)
McIntyre	Rogers (MI)	Udall (NM)
McNerney	Rohrabacher	Van Hollen
McNulty	Ross	Velázquez
Meehan	Rothman	Vislosky
Meek (FL)	Roybal-Allard	Walz (MN)
Meeks (NY)	Ruppersberger	Wamp
Melancon	Rush	Wasserman
Michaud	Ryan (OH)	Schultz
Millender-McDonald	Salazar	Waters
Miller (NC)	Sánchez, Linda T.	Watson
Miller, George	Sanchez, Loretta	Watt
Mitchell	Sarbanes	Waxman
Mollohan	Saxton	Weiner
Moore (KS)	Schakowsky	Welch (VT)
Moore (WI)	Schiff	Wexler
Moran (KS)	Schwartz	Wicker
Moran (VA)	Scott (GA)	Wilson (NM)
Murphy (CT)	Scott (VA)	Wilson (OH)
Murphy, Patrick	Serrano	Woolsey
Murtha	Sestak	Wu
	Shays	Wynn
		Yarmuth

NAYS—160

Akin	Feeney	McCotter
Alexander	Ferguson	McCrery
Bachmann	Forbes	McHenry
Bachus	Fortenberry	McHugh
Barrett (SC)	Fossella	McKeon
Barton (TX)	Fox	McMorris
Biggert	Frelinghuysen	Rodgers
Bilirakis	Gallely	Mica
Bishop (UT)	Garrett (NJ)	Miller (FL)
Blackburn	Gillmor	Miller (MI)
Blunt	Gingrey	Miller, Gary
Boehner	Gohmert	Murphy, Tim
Bono	Goode	Musgrave
Boozman	Goodlatte	Myrick
Boustany	Granger	Neugebauer
Brady (TX)	Graves	Nunes
Brown (SC)	Hall (TX)	Paul
Brown-Waite,	Hastert	Pearce
Ginny	Hastings (WA)	Peterson (PA)
Buchanan	Hayes	Petri
Burgess	Heller	Pitts
Burton (IN)	Hensarling	Poe
Buyer	Herger	Price (GA)
Calvert	Hoekstra	Pryce (OH)
Camp (MI)	Hulshof	Radanovich
Campbell (CA)	Inglis (SC)	Regula
Cannon	Issa	Rehberg
Cantor	Jindal	Reichert
Carter	Jordan	Reynolds
Castle	Keller	Rogers (AL)
Chabot	King (IA)	Rogers (KY)
Coble	King (NY)	Ros-Lehtinen
Cole (OK)	Kingston	Roskam
Conaway	Kirk	Royce
Crenshaw	Kline (MN)	Ryan (WI)
Cubin	Knollenberg	Sali
Culberson	Kuhl (NY)	Schmidt
Davis (KY)	LaHood	Sensenbrenner
Davis, David	Lamborn	Shadegg
Davis, Tom	Latham	Shimkus
Deal (GA)	LaTourrette	Shuster
Diaz-Balart, L.	Lewis (CA)	Simpson
Diaz-Balart, M.	Lewis (KY)	Smith (NE)
Doolittle	Linder	Smith (TX)
Drake	Lucas	Souder
Dreier	Mack	Stearns
Duncan	Manzullo	Sullivan
English (PA)	Marchant	Tancredo
Everett	McCarthy (CA)	Terry
Fallin	McCaul (TX)	Tiahrt

Tiberi	Walsh (NY)	Whitfield
Upton	Weldon (FL)	Wilson (SC)
Walberg	Weller	Wolf
Walden (OR)	Westmoreland	Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—8

Baker	Johnson, E. B.	Sessions
Davis, Jo Ann	Kanjorski	Young (FL)
Fattah	Pence	

□ 1301

Messrs. MILLER of Florida, SUL-LIVAN, WELDON of Florida and Ms. GRANGER changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Messrs. CARNEY, SAXTON, ROTHMAN, LOBIONDO, PORTER, OBERSTAR, SHAYS, JOHNSON of Illinois, FLAKE, PLATTS, ROHRBACHER, JONES of North Carolina, GILCHREST, DENT, DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, and MORAN of Kansas changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the motion was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LEADERSHIP FROM BOTH SIDES
MUST COME TOGETHER

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

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, first I appreciate your recognizing me.

Mr. Speaker, the process we have just gone through where we had a vote whereby a significant majority voted to overrule the ruling of the Chair would suggest to me it is very important at the highest level our leadership come together from both sides of the aisle and discuss how this kind of thing can happen in the House. It is not good for the body. It does not allow us to go forward with our work effectively.

I thank the Speaker.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, is it not the case that the vote did not overrule the Chair? Is it not the case that the Chair's ruling that the words were out of order was not challenged, and was it not the case that the motion was simply to restore the right of the gentleman from Mississippi to speak and in no way overruled the ruling of the Chair?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PAS-TOR). The gentleman is correct. The motion was to allow the gentleman from Mississippi to proceed in order on this day.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. We just had a vote to restore the floor privileges for a Member who had his words taken down. Is it not true that the Democratic leadership, Speaker PELOSI, made the comments that we were going

to have a more civil House and that we—

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Point of order, Mr. Speaker. The gentleman has not stated a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may state a parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Parliamentary inquiry: Is it true that we did not pass rules in this House that talked about civility?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The rules that have been adopted address order in the House.

The gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

I am not sure everyone heard you. I would appreciate it, so the vote we just voted is clarified, would you please restate the vote and also indicate whether or not that was an overruling of the Chair? Would you restate it for the full body, please?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. By motion, the gentleman from Mississippi was allowed to proceed in order on this day.

The gentleman from Mississippi.

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 1 minute.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

Mr. ISSA. I object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard.

Mr. STEARNS. Parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inquire of the Rules of the House, when the words of a Member is taken down and the Speaker rules that these words were incorrect and not within the decorum of the House and that these words would be stricken, is the normal procedure, notwithstanding the motion from Mr. FRANK, is the normal procedure that the Member is no longer allowed to debate for the full day in the House? Is that the procedure? I want to confirm that procedure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The answer is yes; the presumptive sanction is a disability from further recognition on that day; but in this case, by motion, the gentleman from Mississippi is allowed to proceed in order on this day.

Mr. STEARNS. I have a follow-up question, Mr. Speaker.

If that is the normal procedure, when is the last time we have allowed someone to speak on the floor after his words were taken down and stricken from the RECORD? Would the Parliamentarian please provide it to this Member? When was the last time we allowed someone to continue to debate on this floor after his words were stricken from the RECORD?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair cannot place today's proceedings in historical context. That is not the role of the Chair.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Mississippi be recognized for 1 minute out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. TAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Mr. BUYER.

In the course of the debate I encouraged, with words that were a little bit too strong, my colleague from Georgia to come visit south Mississippi and see the aftermath of Katrina. I used the word “decency” when I should have said “the courtesy.” If I have offended his decency, then I apologize for that.

But the offer stands. The gentleman was good enough to admit privately that he has not visited south Mississippi since the storm, has not seen that the town of Waveland is virtually gone, that Bay Saint Louis is virtually gone, that Pass Christian is virtually gone. To the point of his amendment: How does a town that is gone come up with matching funds to restore itself?

So I appreciate the gentleman yielding. I hope I have made my point to the membership, and I thank the body.

GULF COAST HURRICANE HOUSING
RECOVERY ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 254 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 1227.

□ 1308

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1227) to assist in the provision of affordable housing to low-income families affected by Hurricane Katrina, with Mr. HOLDEN (Acting Chairman) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, 5 minutes debate remained on amendment No. 7 printed in part B of House Report 110-53 by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE).

The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) has 3½ minutes remaining and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) has 1½ minutes remaining.

Who yields time?

□ 1310

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I appreciate the apology of the gentleman from Mississippi. It should be noted that it was an offer from this Member to forego what occurred over the past hour in this House to the gentleman from Mississippi during the process, and that offer was declined. But I appreciate his apology, and I accept his apology.

Mr. Chairman, it is indeed a remarkable privilege for each and every one of us to serve in this House of Representatives. This is the greatest deliberative body in the world, and it is the greatest deliberative body in the world because we treat one another with respect during our deliberations. Our deliberative process works because of a level of comity. It is not appropriate to impugn the motives of individuals, nor is it appropriate to call one's personal character into question.

My amendment to this bill simply would move us in the direction of financial responsibility, a small direction admittedly, but in the direction of financial responsibility.

To correct some historical inaccuracies that have been stated on this floor, during the 1998 floods in the Midwest, the local match that was required by our government was 25 percent. During the 2004 Florida hurricanes, the local match that was required for Federal grants was 10 percent.

This amendment would simply state that more resources provided for the local communities from this remarkably generous Nation who have already provided, authorized over \$100 billion for recuperation after the remarkable devastation of Hurricane Katrina, that further moneys would not be allowed to be utilized for the local match. That does not preclude this administration or the Secretary of HUD being able to waive that requirement.

This amendment is a very small step in the direction of fiscal responsibility, of respecting the hard-earned taxpayer money that is sent to Washington. I would encourage my colleagues to support this commonsense amendment that respects that hard work and moves us in the direction of accountability in an area that is desperately requiring that kind of accountability.

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

Ms. WATERS. May I inquire of the Chair if we have the right to close?

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from California has the right to close.

Ms. WATERS. Has the gentleman exhausted his time?

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman has 30 seconds remaining on his time.

Ms. WATERS. If the gentleman would like to use his 30 seconds, then we would proceed.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman reserves the balance of her time?

Ms. WATERS. Yes.
Mr. PRICE of Georgia. May I inquire if the gentlewoman has any other speakers?

Ms. WATERS. No, we will use our balance of the time for our close.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, then I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the remaining time.

First, I would like to congratulate Mr. TAYLOR not only for his passion,

but for all of the work that he has done to try and help restore the gulf coast and his town and his city, and to get the kind of development that is necessary for people to restore their lives. He has worked very hard, as other Members of the gulf coast have. They were on the floor today, Mr. MELANCON, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. TAYLOR, trying to make the case that this gulf coast catastrophe should not be penalized.

We do not know why and they do not know why they would be prohibited from using their CDBG, Community Development Block Grant, funds as a match. It is unheard of, it is unprecedented that any town, any city, any region that has been hit by this kind of disaster, and there is no other like it in the history of this country, would be prohibited from using as a match the Community Development Block Grant funds.

These communities have been virtually destroyed, their city halls, their water systems, their schools, their hospitals. They do not have any money. They are cash strapped. They do not have any money to use as a match, and we do not know why they would be singled out with this disaster and told that they could not use Community Development Block Grant funds. This is not new money. This would simply allow them to use that CDBG money as a match.

I would ask that this amendment be rejected, and I ask my colleagues to vote "no."

The Acting CHAIRMAN. All time has expired.

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIRMAN

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 6 printed in part B by Mr. NEUGEBAUER of Texas.

Amendment No. 7 printed in part B by Mr. PRICE of Georgia.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. NEUGEBAUER

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 185, noes 247, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 168]

AYES—185

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

NOES—247

Abercrombie	Boren	Clarke
Ackerman	Boswell	Clay
Allen	Boucher	Cleaver
Altmore	Boustany	Clyburn
Andrews	Boyd (FL)	Cohen
Arcuri	Boyd (KS)	Conyers
Baca	Brady (PA)	Cooper
Baird	Braley (IA)	Costa
Baldwin	Brown, Corrine	Costello
Barrow	Butterfield	Courtney
Bean	Capps	Cramer
Becerra	Capuano	Crowley
Berkley	Cardoza	Cuellar
Berman	Carnahan	Cummings
Berry	Carney	Davis (AL)
Bishop (GA)	Carson	Davis (CA)
Bishop (NY)	Castor	Davis (IL)
Blumenauer	Chandler	Davis, Lincoln
Bordallo	Christensen	DeFazio

DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Faleomavaega
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fortuño
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)
Jackson-Lee
(TX)
Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Kucinich

LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Millender-
McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (NC)
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Viscosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—6

Cannon
Davis, Jo Ann

Johnson, E. B.
Pence
Young (FL)

□ 1336

Messrs. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, BLUMENAUER, and MILLER of Florida changed their vote from “aye” to “no.”

Mr. DOOLITTLE and Mr. PICKERING changed their vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. PRICE OF GEORGIA

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 98, noes 333, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 169]

AYES—98

Akin
Bachmann
Barrett (SC)
Barton (TX)
Bilbray
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Boehner
Bono
Boozman
Brown (SC)
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Campbell (CA)
Hulshof
Hunter
Carney
Carter
Chabot
Coble
Conaway
Crenshaw
Cubin
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Deal (GA)
Dreier
Duncan
English (PA)
Fallin
Feeney
Flake
Forbes

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggart
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Blunt
Bonner
Bordallo
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyd (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite,
Drake
Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza

NOES—333

Fox
Franks (AZ)
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gingrey
Goode
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hensarling
Herger
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
Kingston
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Lamborn
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McHenry
McKeon

Carahan
Carson
Castle
Castor
Chandler
Christensen
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge

Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (NY)
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loeb sack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel
E.
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McMorris
Caster
Rogers
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Millender-
McDonald
Miller (FL)

Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Norton
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Pickering
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky

NOT VOTING—7

Davis, Jo Ann
Delahunt
Johnson, E. B.

Kanjorski
Pence
Shadegg

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIRMAN
The Acting CHAIRMAN (during the vote). Members are advised that there are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1345

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina changed his vote from “no” to “aye.”

Mr. DICKS changed his vote from “aye” to “no.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of House Resolution 1227, the Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act of 2007. This resolution will improve flexibility for previously appropriated funds for hurricane recovery efforts on the Gulf Coast. In addition, the bill would free up for use \$1.175 billion in funds previously made available to the State of Louisiana under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, but not being utilized by

FEMA. The legislation also includes a number of provisions designed to preserve the supply of affordable rental housing and would authorize 4,500 new housing vouchers for the purpose of project-based assistance for supportive housing units for seniors, disabled persons, and the homeless. In addition, this bill would require HUD to provide a replacement voucher for every public housing and assisted housing unit that is not brought back on line. The House also adopted the Green Amendment which extends FEMA housing assistance until December 31, 2007 and then transfers eligible households to HUD's tenant-based rental assistance program. This amendment is of vital importance, because it addresses the looming September deadline and gives more than 12,000 families the assurance that they will not be displaced for a second time as they await the rebuilding of their housing.

In effect, this bill provides an opportunity for our government to correct some of the injustices to the residents of the Gulf Coast for the slow and sometimes mismanaged response of the Bush Administration. This bill helps those displaced residents begin to regain stability in their lives.

A test of our government's commitment to these citizens occurred when the first flood waters and storm surges arrived. Unfortunately as the waters slowly receded, the government also moved slowly. It is in this aftermath, over 18 months later, that we finally begin to address the grave miscarriage of justice that occurred.

The current status has former residents caught in a perpetual, vicious circle in that the storm damaged areas do not have enough schools, hospitals and services to support their return home. However, these resources are not available because there are not enough people in their neighborhoods to support having hospitals, schools and services. The lack of housing fuels this crisis and prevents many from returning to the area.

Currently, fewer than 200,000 of the 454,000 pre-Katrina displaced residents have returned home. The survivors of Hurricane Katrina are not asking for a hand out, these survivors were not displaced through any fault of their own and we must immediately use our resources to help them return home. We must treat the survivors of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in the Gulf Coast region the same as we have treated survivors of other natural disasters.

Though we have much work ahead to make the residents of the Gulf Coast whole, this is a very important first step.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. There being no further amendments, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Florida) having assumed the chair, Mr. HOLDEN, Acting Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1227), to assist in the provision of affordable housing to low-income families affected by Hurricane Katrina, pursuant to House Resolution 254, he reported the bill, as amended by that resolution, back to the House with sundry further amendments adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any further amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I demand a re-vote on the Green amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is a separate vote demanded on any other amendment? If not, the Chair will then put them en gros.

The amendments were agreed to. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment on which a separate vote has been demanded.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment:
At the end of the bill, add the following new title:

TITLE IX—PROTECTION OF HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING FEMA HOUSING ASSISTANCE
SEC. 901. EXTENSION OF FEMA HOUSING ASSISTANCE.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to provide until December 31, 2007, temporary housing assistance, including financial and direct assistance, under section 408(c)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174(c)(1)) to individuals and households eligible to receive such assistance as a result of Hurricane Katrina, Rita, or Wilma, and to the extent that amounts for such purpose are made available, such assistance shall be so extended.

SEC. 902. VOUCHER ASSISTANCE FOR HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING FEMA RENTAL ASSISTANCE AND HOUSEHOLDS RESIDING IN FEMA TRAILERS.

(a) TRANSFER OF FEMA RENTAL ASSISTANCE TO SECTION 8 VOUCHER PROGRAM.—There are authorized to be appropriated, for tenant-based rental assistance under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), such sums as may be necessary to provide vouchers for such assistance for each individual and household that is eligible for such voucher assistance and received financial assistance for temporary housing under section 408(c)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174(c)(1)) as a result of Hurricane Katrina, Rita, or Wilma, for the period beginning upon termination of such temporary housing assistance and continuing through such period that such individual or household remains eligible for such voucher assistance. Such voucher assistance shall be administered by the public housing agency having jurisdiction of the area in which such assisted individual or household resides as of such termination date.

(b) VOUCHER ASSISTANCE FOR HOUSEHOLDS RESIDING IN FEMA TRAILERS.—

(1) OFFER.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall offer, to each individual and household who, as of the date of the enactment of this Act, receives direct assistance for temporary housing under section 408(c)(2) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174(c)(2)) as a result of Hurricane Katrina, Rita, or Wilma and is eligible for tenant-based rental assistance under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), a voucher for such rental assistance, subject to the availability of amounts for such assistance made available in advance in appropriation Acts.

(2) PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE.—There are authorized to be appropriated, for tenant-

based rental assistance under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), such sums as may be necessary to provide vouchers for such assistance for each individual and household that, pursuant to an offer of such assistance under paragraph (1) requests such assistance, for the period beginning upon occupancy of the individual or household in a dwelling unit acquired for rental with such assistance and continuing through such period that such individual or household remains eligible for such voucher assistance.

(c) TEMPORARY VOUCHERS.—If at any time an assisted family for whom a voucher for rental housing assistance is provided pursuant to this section becomes ineligible for further such rental assistance—

(1) the public housing agency administering such voucher pursuant to this section may not provide rental assistance under such voucher for any other household;

(2) the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall recapture from such agency any remaining amounts for assistance attributable to such voucher and may not reobligate such amounts to any public housing agency; and

(3) such voucher shall not be taken into consideration for purposes of determining any future allocation of amounts for such tenant-based rental assistance for any public housing agency.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the amendment.

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 242, nays 184, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 170]

YEAS—242

Abercrombie	Cooper	Gutierrez
Ackerman	Costa	Hall (NY)
Allen	Costello	Hare
Altmire	Courtney	Harman
Andrews	Cramer	Hastings (FL)
Arcuri	Crowley	Herseth
Baca	Cuellar	Higgins
Baird	Cummings	Hill
Baldwin	Davis (AL)	Hinchev
Barrow	Davis (CA)	Hinojosa
Bean	Davis (IL)	Hirono
Becerra	Davis, Lincoln	Hodes
Berkley	DeFazio	Holden
Berman	DeGette	Holt
Berry	Delahunt	Honda
Bilirakis	DeLauro	Hooley
Bishop (GA)	Dent	Hoyer
Bishop (NY)	Diaz-Balart, L.	Inslee
Blumenauer	Diaz-Balart, M.	Israel
Boren	Dicks	Jackson (IL)
Boswell	Dingell	Jackson-Lee
Boucher	Doggett	(TX)
Boyd (FL)	Donnelly	Jefferson
Boyda (KS)	Doyle	Jindal
Brady (PA)	Edwards	Johnson (GA)
Braley (IA)	Ellison	Jones (OH)
Brown, Corrine	Ellsworth	Kagen
Buchanan	Emanuel	Kaptur
Burgess	Emerson	Kennedy
Butterfield	Engel	Kildee
Capps	Eshoo	Kilpatrick
Capuano	Etheridge	Kind
Cardoza	Farr	Klein (FL)
Carnahan	Fattah	Kucinich
Carney	Filner	Lampson
Carson	Frank (MA)	Langevin
Castor	Giffords	Lantos
Chandler	Gilchrest	Larsen (WA)
Clarke	Gillibrand	Larson (CT)
Clay	Gonzalez	Lee
Cleaver	Gordon	Levin
Clyburn	Green, Al	Lewis (GA)
Cohen	Green, Gene	Lipinski
Conyers	Grijalva	Loeb sack

Lofgren, Zoe	Olver	Sires
Lowe	Ortiz	Skelton
Lynch	Pallone	Slaughter
Mahoney (FL)	Pascarell	Smith (WA)
Maloney (NY)	Pastor	Snyder
Markey	Payne	Solis
Matheson	Perlmutter	Space
Matsui	Peterson (MN)	Spratt
McCarthy (NY)	Pickering	Stark
McCollum (MN)	Pomeroy	Stupak
McDermott	Price (NC)	Sutton
McGovern	Rahall	Tanner
McIntyre	Rangel	Tauscher
McNerney	Reyes	Taylor
McNulty	Rodriguez	Thompson (CA)
Meehan	Ros-Lehtinen	Thompson (MS)
Meek (FL)	Ross	Tierney
MEEKS (NY)	Rothman	Towns
Melancon	Roybal-Allard	Udall (CO)
Michaud	Ruppersberger	Udall (NM)
Millender-	Rush	Van Hollen
McDonald	Ryan (OH)	Velázquez
Miller (NC)	Salazar	Visclosky
Miller, George	Sánchez, Linda	Walz (MN)
Mitchell	T.	Wasserman
Mollohan	Sanchez, Loretta	Schultz
Moore (KS)	Sarbanes	Waters
Moore (WI)	Schakowsky	Watson
Moran (VA)	Schiff	Watt
Murphy (CT)	Schwartz	Waxman
Murphy, Patrick	Scott (GA)	Weiner
Murphy, Tim	Scott (VA)	Welch (VT)
Murtha	Serrano	Wexler
Nadler	Sestak	Wilson (OH)
Napolitano	Shays	Woolsey
Neal (MA)	Shea-Porter	Wu
Oberstar	Sherman	Wynn
Obey	Shuler	Yarmuth

NAYS—184

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

Wamp	Whitfield	Wolf
Weldon (FL)	Wicker	Young (AK)
Weller	Wilson (NM)	
Westmoreland	Wilson (SC)	

NOT VOTING—7

Akin	Kanjorski	Young (FL)
Davis, Jo Ann	Marshall	
Johnson, E. B.	Pence	

□ 1404

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, according to rule IV, clause 4(a), the privileges of former Members on this floor, it states, "is a registered lobbyist or an agent of a foreign principal, as those terms are defined in clause 5 of rule XXV." Is it true that if a former Member was a registered lobbyist or an agent of a foreign principal, that they could not be on the floor?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct.

MOTION TO RECOMMEND OFFERED BY MR. JINDAL

Mr. JINDAL. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to recommend.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. JINDAL. In its current form, I am.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, having as the manager of the bill seen the motion to recommit about 8 seconds ago, I reserve a point of order until we get a chance to know what is in it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman reserves a point of order against the motion.

The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk says as follows:

Mr. Jindal moves to recommit the bill H.R. 1227 to the Committee on Financial Services with instructions that the Committee report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendments:

In section 202(c), strike "to the extent that" and insert "that such Housing Authority or other manager shall prevent a household from occupying such a dwelling unit, and shall provide priority for occupancy in such dwelling units, as follows:".

At the end of section 202(c), add the following new paragraphs:

(1) Notwithstanding any priority under paragraphs (4) through (6), a household shall be prevented from such occupancy to the extent that any other provision of Federal law prohibits occupancy or tenancy of such household, or any individual who is a member of such household, in the type of housing of the replacement dwelling unit provided for such household.

(2) Notwithstanding any priority under paragraphs (4) through (6), a household shall be prevented from such occupancy if it includes any individual who has been convicted of a drug dealing offense, sex offense, or crime of domestic violence.

(3) Notwithstanding any priority under paragraphs (4) through (6), a household shall be prevented from such occupancy on the basis of a determination that occupancy of any individual who is a member of the household may constitute a threat to public safety, including a threat caused by occupancy that would facilitate reunification of members of gangs involved in criminal activity.

(4) Priority in such occupancy shall be provided to individuals who are employed or households that include individuals who are employed.

(5) Priority in such occupancy in public housing dwelling units shall be provided to—

(A) individuals who agree to contribute toward community service, or to participate in an economic self-sufficiency program for, more hours per month than is required under section 12(c) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437j(c));

(B) individuals who, under paragraph (2) of section 12(c) of the United States Housing Act of 1937, are exempt from the requirement under paragraph (1) of such section; and

(C) households that include such individuals.

(6) A household that consists of a family or youth described in section 8(x)(2) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(x)(2); relating to family unification) shall be provided priority in such occupancy. The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall issue regulations to carry out the exceptions under paragraphs (1) through (6).

Mr. JINDAL (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the motion be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. No, we object to that, because we just got it, and it would be inappropriate in 10 seconds to be able to read it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The Clerk will continue to read.

The Clerk continued reading the motion to recommit.

□ 1410

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. JINDAL. I want to thank the chairman and I want to thank Ranking Member BACHUS for their contributions to this legislation in trying to ensure that we do the right thing in New Orleans, that things can actually be better, that we do not have to return to the way that things were even before the storms.

Prior to hurricanes, thousands of New Orleans residents living in public housing often had to deal with horrific living conditions, poorly maintained units, out-of-control crime, drugs, gangs and more. It was not the living conditions that any human being should have to endure. We must ensure that the residents of Louisiana returning home following the devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have access to safe, affordable and quality housing.

We now have the opportunity to rebuild a significant portion of our State,

and we must make certain that the mistakes of the past are not repeated. This includes ensuring that our public housing system does not force residents to live in unacceptable conditions, and replacing the old public housing units with safe, habitable and affordable housing for the future.

Mixed-income developments have proven to be successful when tried in other States and should be given a chance to succeed in New Orleans.

We must also ensure that the poor, elderly or disabled individuals coming back are given the tools that they need to ensure affordable housing opportunities. Our housing system must give individuals a range of affordable choices. We must ensure that our public housing system is not again overwhelmed with drugs and crime, but that it instead serves its intended purpose of aiding those in need of housing assistance with a safe place to live. That is why I am offering this motion to recommit.

Building upon the base bill, this motion to recommit gives priority in the awarding of housing units under the bill to individuals who are either employed or residents of households with people who are employed, exceed the number of legally required hours of community service that public housing residents may perform. Third, are individuals who are elderly or disabled. Fourth, who qualify for placement in housing to avoid having their families separated under existing Federal family unification housing rules.

The motion to recommit also seeks to ensure that public housing facilities in New Orleans foster a safer living environment for returning families by precluding availability of housing to individuals who have either been convicted of being drug dealers, have been convicted of a sex crime, have been convicted of a crime of domestic violence, or are a direct threat to public safety. This includes allowing a refusal to return if an applicant is a threat to a community through gang membership. Given the fact that New Orleans' murder rate on a per-capita basis now may be the highest in the Nation, I believe this motion to recommit should be supported.

Mr. Speaker, we must put the residents of public housing in a position to succeed. Allowing the old system to be put back in place is irresponsible and unacceptable; and especially when you consider the fact that we are in desperate need of workers to help us rebuild our community. We think this motion to recommit deserves every Member's support.

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

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I thank the gentleman.

Let me ask the gentleman from Louisiana, we have been reading it over, and I do regret the fact that we got this a couple of minutes ago. I am going to check with Valerie Plame, I don't think there was anything secret

in here. I don't know why it had to be withheld so we couldn't have a sensible analysis, but maybe there is one possibility. Could the gentleman tell me what in here changes existing law?

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. JINDAL. We are directing the housing authority that they have to do these things.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Does this change existing law? The housing authority, by the way, so people can understand, the housing authority that we are directing here is otherwise known as HUD, because HUD controls this housing authority and has for some time since before the hurricane. But does this change existing law affecting housing authorities?

Mr. JINDAL. Mr. Speaker, this changes current law by not giving the discretion, by directing the housing authority to keep these certain criminals—

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. In what areas does it direct them? My understanding is that, for instance, the work requirement they have already got, the housing authority, that the restrictions on people with criminal backgrounds are already there. In what way does this recommit? Which I am sure the gentleman has seriously studied and is very familiar with it. He wouldn't legislate unseriously. Could he tell me what in this changes existing law?

I will yield to the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. JINDAL. Mr. Speaker, under current law, they have the discretion; they are not required. We are requiring the housing authority to do this.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. The question is, in what area, since in the work requirement they don't have discretion. Check with whoever you have to check with. In what areas are you changing it from discretionary to mandatory?

I will yield to the gentleman from Louisiana again.

Mr. JINDAL. The underlying bill prevents the preferences that we have listed in this motion to recommit. This would direct the housing authority to give preference to those that meet the requirements.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Well, the point that we are directing the housing authority to give preference to people who follow existing law; Mr. Speaker, I wish we had had this before, we might have been able to understand it better. It appears to me to be simply a restatement of existing law.

And apparently Members on the other side are afraid that HUD, which is the housing authority, won't follow existing law. And I do have my own doubts about this administration's predilection for following existing law.

Mr. JINDAL. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. No. I tried five times. I give up.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Mr. CROWLEY. The audience in not in order, Mr. Speaker. The gallery is not in order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Persons in the gallery are reminded to refrain from manifestations of approval or disapproval of proceedings.

The gentleman from Massachusetts may continue.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I just have got to comment that some of my friends on the other side appear more concerned about enforcing the rules strictly than at other times. I asked several times to get an answer. I don't think the answer is over there. I don't think this is very well considered. It does not appear to me to change existing law.

And to say that we are going to tell them that they have to follow existing law, it seems rather odd. If it is so important, you know, if this had been offered as an amendment, we argued successfully all the subsequent amendments would be in order. To the extent that it changes anything, it changes only for New Orleans. So this is only for people whose houses were washed away.

Now, I don't know how it makes any change. I will take on faith the gentleman's assertion that it makes changes, even though he couldn't tell me what they were. But I would then say, why would we say only if your house had been washed away would you be subject to some restriction?

Mr. Speaker, I will now yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. MELANCON).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts must reclaim his time.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. The gentleman is probably trying to figure out what the amendment says, and that is a hard job.

I will then repeat what he said to me, which is, and read this, this I do know, "it is for New Orleans only." Now, we could not amend it for the whole area. What about Mississippi? I mean, was the gentleman afraid that if he included Mississippi, the gentleman, Mr. TAYLOR, would challenge him to come to Mississippi? I think the gentleman from Louisiana has already been to Mississippi. He wouldn't have to change his travel plans the way the gentleman from Georgia would have.

Why should only people who have suffered this enormous trauma, who live in New Orleans, be subjected to a special set of rules? By the way, we will send the Members long lists of rules already on the books, statutory and regulatory, that prevent public housing authorities from allowing people with criminal records to come in. You have the "one strike" situation where they can be easily evicted.

So this does not add, as nearly as we can tell, to the restriction on letting people in. To the extent that it imposes a greater work requirement, we are talking about people whose homes were

destroyed, whose jobs may have been washed away, who may be trying to find additional housing.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for so has my patience.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from Massachusetts withdraw his reservation?

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I withdraw my parliamentary reservation. I reinforce my substantive ones.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The point of order reservation is withdrawn.

All time has expired.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. JINDAL. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 249, noes 176, answered "present" 1, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 171]

AYES—249

Aderholt	Chabot	Gerlach
Akin	Chandler	Giffords
Alexander	Coble	Gilchrest
Altmire	Cole (OK)	Gillibrand
Bachmann	Conaway	Gillmor
Bachus	Courtney	Gingrey
Baker	Cramer	Gohmert
Barrett (SC)	Crenshaw	Goode
Barrow	Cubin	Goodlatte
Bartlett (MD)	Cuellar	Gordon
Barton (TX)	Davis (AL)	Granger
Bean	Davis (KY)	Graves
Biggert	Davis, David	Hall (NY)
Bilbray	Davis, Lincoln	Hare
Bilirakis	Davis, Tom	Harman
Bishop (UT)	DeFazio	Hastert
Blackburn	Dent	Hastings (WA)
Blunt	Diaz-Balart, L.	Hayes
Boehner	Diaz-Balart, M.	Heller
Bonner	Doggett	Hensarling
Bono	Donnelly	Hergert
Boozman	Doolittle	Herseth
Boren	Drake	Hill
Boswell	Dreier	Hobson
Boustany	Duncan	Hoekstra
Boyd (FL)	Edwards	Holden
Boya (KS)	Ehlers	Hulshof
Brady (TX)	Ellsworth	Hunter
Brown (SC)	Emerson	Inglis (SC)
Brown-Waite,	English (PA)	Issa
Ginny	Etheridge	Jindal
Buchanan	Everett	Johnson (IL)
Burgess	Fallin	Johnson, Sam
Burton (IN)	Feeney	Jones (NC)
Buyer	Ferguson	Jordan
Calvert	Flake	Keller
Camp (MI)	Forbes	Kildee
Campbell (CA)	Fortenberry	King (IA)
Cannon	Fossella	King (NY)
Cantor	Fox	Kingston
Capito	Franks (AZ)	Kirk
Carney	Frelinghuysen	Kline (MN)
Carter	Galleghy	Knollenberg
Castle	Garrett (NJ)	Kuhl (NY)

LaHood	Musgrave	Shimkus
Lamborn	Myrick	Shuler
Lampson	Neugebauer	Shuster
Latham	Nunes	Simpson
LaTourrette	Pearce	Skelton
Lewis (CA)	Peterson (PA)	Smith (NE)
Lewis (KY)	Petri	Smith (NJ)
Linder	Pickering	Smith (TX)
Lipinski	Pitts	Snyder
LoBiondo	Platts	Souder
Lucas	Poe	Space
Lungren, Daniel	Pomeroy	Spratt
E.	Porter	Stearns
Lynch	Price (GA)	Stupak
Mack	Pryce (OH)	Sullivan
Mahoney (FL)	Putnam	Tancredo
Manzullo	Radanovich	Tanner
Marchant	Rahall	Taylor
Marshall	Ramstad	Terry
Matheson	Regula	Thornberry
McCarthy (CA)	Rehberg	Tiahrt
McCaul (TX)	Reichert	Tiberi
McCotter	Renzi	Turner
McCrery	Reynolds	Upton
McHenry	Rogers (AL)	Walberg
McHugh	Rogers (KY)	Walden (OR)
McIntyre	Rogers (MI)	Walsh (NY)
McKeon	Rohrabacher	Wamp
McMorris	Ros-Lehtinen	Weiner
Rodgers	Roskam	Weldon (FL)
McNerney	Ross	Weller
Mica	Royce	Westmoreland
Miller (FL)	Ryan (WI)	Whitfield
Miller (MI)	Sali	Wicker
Miller, Gary	Saxton	Wilson (NM)
Mitchell	Schmidt	Wilson (OH)
Mollohan	Sensenbrenner	Wilson (SC)
Moore (KS)	Sessions	Wolf
Moran (KS)	Shadegg	Yarmuth
Murphy, Tim	Shays	Young (AK)

NOES—176

Abercrombie	Gutierrez	Murtha
Ackerman	Hastings (FL)	Nadler
Allen	Higgins	Napolitano
Andrews	Hinchee	Neal (MA)
Arcuri	Hinojosa	Oberstar
Baca	Hirono	Obey
Baird	Hodes	Olver
Baldwin	Holt	Ortiz
Becerra	Honda	Pallone
Berkley	Hooley	Pascrell
Berman	Hoyer	Pastor
Berry	Inslee	Paul
Bishop (GA)	Israel	Payne
Bishop (NY)	Jackson (IL)	Perlmutter
Blumenauer	Jackson-Lee	Peterson (MN)
Boucher	(TX)	Price (NC)
Brady (PA)	Jefferson	Rangel
Bralley (IA)	Johnson (GA)	Reyes
Brown, Corrine	Jones (OH)	Rodriguez
Butterfield	Kagen	Rothman
Capps	Kaptur	Roybal-Allard
Capuano	Kennedy	Ruppersberger
Cardoza	Kilpatrick	Rush
Carnahan	Kind	Ryan (OH)
Carson	Klein (FL)	Salazar
Castor	Kucinich	Sánchez, Linda
Clarke	Langevin	T.
Clay	Lantos	Sanchez, Loretta
Cleaver	Larsen (WA)	Sarbanes
Clyburn	Larson (CT)	Schakowsky
Cohen	Lee	Schiff
Conyers	Levin	Schwartz
Cooper	Lewis (GA)	Scott (GA)
Costa	Loeb sack	Scott (VA)
Costello	Lofgren, Zoe	Serrano
Crowley	Lowey	Sestak
Cummings	Maloney (NY)	Shea-Porter
Davis (CA)	Markey	Sherman
Davis (IL)	Matsui	Sires
DeGette	McCarthy (NY)	Slaughter
Delahunt	McCollum (MN)	Smith (WA)
DeLauro	McDermott	Solis
Dicks	McGovern	Stark
McNulty	McNulty	Sutton
Meehan	Meehan	Tauscher
Meek (FL)	Meek (FL)	Thompson (CA)
Meeke (NY)	Meeke (NY)	Thompson (MS)
Melancon	Melancon	Tierney
Michaud	Michaud	Towns
Millender-	Millender-	Udall (CO)
McDonald	McDonald	Udall (NM)
Miller (NC)	Miller (NC)	Van Hollen
Miller, George	Miller, George	Velázquez
Moore (WI)	Moore (WI)	Visclosky
Moran (VA)	Moran (VA)	Walz (MN)
Wasserman	Murphy (CT)	Wasserman
Schultz	Murphy, Patrick	Schultz

Waters	Waxman	Woolsey
Watson	Welch (VT)	Wu
Watt	Wexler	Wynn

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Culberson

NOT VOTING—7

Davis, Jo Ann	Johnson, E. B.	Young (FL)
Deal (GA)	Kanjorski	
Hall (TX)	Pence	

□ 1440

Messrs. CAPUANO, LANTOS and LARSON of Connecticut changed their vote from "aye" to "no."

Ms. BEAN, Messrs. HARE, YARMUTH, COURTNEY, ELLSWORTH, SPRATT and RAHALL changed their vote from "no" to "aye."

So the motion to recommit was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the instructions of the House in the motion to recommit, I report the bill, H.R. 1227, back to the House with an amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

In section 202(c), strike "to the extent that" and insert "that such Housing Authority or other manager shall prevent a household from occupying such a dwelling unit, and shall provide priority for occupancy in such dwelling units, as follows:".

At the end of section 202(c), add the following new paragraphs:

(1) Notwithstanding any priority under paragraphs (4) through (6), a household shall be prevented from such occupancy to the extent that any other provision of Federal law prohibits occupancy or tenancy of such household, or any individual who is a member of such household, in the type of housing of the replacement dwelling unit provided for such household.

(2) Notwithstanding any priority under paragraphs (4) through (6), a household shall be prevented from such occupancy if it includes any individual who has been convicted of a drug dealing offense, sex offense, or crime of domestic violence.

(3) Notwithstanding any priority under paragraphs (4) through (6), a household shall be prevented from such occupancy on the basis of a determination that occupancy of any individual who is a member of the household may constitute a threat to public safety, including a threat caused by occupancy that would facilitate reunification of members of gangs involved in criminal activity.

(4) Priority in such occupancy shall be provided to individuals who are employed or households that include individuals who are employed.

(5) Priority in such occupancy in public housing dwelling units shall be provided to—

(A) individuals who agree to contribute toward community service, or to participate in an economic self-sufficiency program for, more hours per month than is required under section 12(c) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437j(c));

(B) individuals who, under paragraph (2) of section 12(c) of the United States Housing Act of 1937, are exempt from the requirement under paragraph (1) of such section; and

(C) households that include such individuals.

(6) A household that consists of a family or youth described in section 8(x)(2) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(x)(2); relating to family unification) shall be provided priority in such occupancy.

The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall issue regulations to carry out the exceptions under paragraphs (1) through (6).

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the amendment.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 302, noes 125, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 172]

AYES—302

Abercrombie Cooper Grijalva
 Ackerman Costa Gutierrez
 Alexander Costello Hall (NY)
 Allen Courtney Hare
 Altmire Cramer Harman
 Andrews Crowley Hastings (FL)
 Arcuri Cuellar Hayes
 Baca Cummings Heller
 Baird Davis (AL) Herseth
 Baker Davis (CA) Higgins
 Baldwin Davis (IL) Hill
 Barrow Davis (KY) Hinchey
 Bean Davis, Lincoln Hinojosa
 Becerra Davis, Tom Hirono
 Berkley DeFazio Hobson
 Berman DeGette Hodes
 Berry Delahunt Holden
 Biggett DeLauro Holt
 Bilirakis Dent Honda
 Bishop (GA) Diaz-Balart, L. Hooley
 Bishop (NY) Diaz-Balart, M. Hoyer
 Blumenauer Dicks Inslee
 Boren Dingell Israel
 Boswell Jackson (IL) Jackson-Lee
 Boucher Donnelly (TX)
 Boustany Doyle Jefferson
 Boyd (FL) Edwards Jindal
 Boyd (KS) Ehlers Johnson (GA)
 Brady (PA) Ellison Johnson (IL)
 Brady (TX) Ellsworth Jones (NC)
 Braley (IA) Emanuel Jones (OH)
 Brown, Corrine Emerson Kagen
 Buchanan Engel Kaptur
 Burgess English (PA) Kennedy
 Butterfield Eshoo Kildee
 Buyer Etheridge Kilpatrick
 Capito Farr Kind
 Capps Fattah King (NY)
 Capuano Ferguson King (NY)
 Cardoza Filner Kirk
 Carnahan Fortenberry Klein (FL)
 Carney Frank (MA) Knollenberg
 Carson Frelinghuysen Kucinich
 Castle Gerlach Kuhl (NY)
 Castor Giffords LaHood
 Chandler Gilchrest Lampson
 Clarke Gillibrand Langevin
 Clay Gillmor Lantos
 Cleaver Gonzalez Larsen (WA)
 Clyburn Gordon Larson (CT)
 Cohen Green, Al Latham
 Conyers Green, Gene LaTourette

Lee
 Levin
 Lewis (CA)
 Lewis (GA)
 Lipinski
 LoBiondo
 Loeb sack
 Lofgren, Zoe
 Lowey
 Lynch
 Mahoney (FL)
 Maloney (NY)
 Markey
 Marshall
 Matheson
 Matsui
 McCarthy (NY)
 McCaul (TX)
 McCollum (MN)
 McCrery
 McDermott
 McGovern
 McHugh
 McIntyre
 McMorris
 Rodgers
 McNeerney
 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
 Murphy, Tim
 Murtha
 Nadler
 Napolitano
 Neal (MA)
 Nunes
 Oberstar

NOES—125

Aderholt
 Akin
 Bachmann
 Bachus
 Barrett (SC)
 Bartlett (MD)
 Barton (TX)
 Bilbray
 Bishop (UT)
 Blackburn
 Blunt
 Boehner
 Bonner
 Bono
 Boozman
 Brown (SC)
 Brown-Waite,
 Ginny
 Burton (IN)
 Calvert
 Camp (MI)
 Campbell (CA)
 Cannon
 Cantor
 Carter
 Chabot
 Coble
 Cole (OK)
 Conaway
 Crenshaw
 Cuban
 Culberson
 Davis, David
 Doolittle
 Marchant
 Dreier
 Duncan
 Everrett
 Fallin
 Feeney
 Flake
 Forbes
 Fossella

Shuler
 Simpson
 Sires
 Skelton
 Slaughter
 Smith (NJ)
 Smith (WA)
 Snyder
 Solis
 Space
 Spratt
 Stark
 Stupak
 Sutton
 Tanner
 Tauscher
 Taylor
 Thompson (CA)
 Thompson (MS)
 Tierney
 Towns
 Udall (CO)
 Udall (NM)
 Upton
 Van Hollen
 Velázquez
 Visclosky
 Walden (OR)
 Walsh (NY)
 Walz (MN)
 Wasserman
 Schultz
 Waters
 Watson
 Watt
 Waxman
 Weiner
 Welch (VT)
 Sarbanes
 Saxton
 Schakowsky
 Schiff
 Schwartz
 Scott (GA)
 Scott (VA)
 Serrano
 Sestak
 Sha ys
 Shea-Porter
 Sherman
 Shimkus

Foxx
 Franks (AZ)
 Gallegly
 Garrett (NJ)
 Gingrey
 Gohmert
 Goode
 Goodlatte
 Granger
 Graves
 Hall (TX)
 Hastert
 Hastings (WA)
 Hensarling
 Herger
 Hoekstra
 Hulshof
 Hunter
 Inglis (SC)
 Issa
 Johnson, Sam
 Jordan
 Cannon
 King (IA)
 Kingston
 Kline (MN)
 Lamborn
 Lewis (KY)
 Linder
 Lucas
 Lungren, Daniel
 E.
 Mack
 Manzullo
 Marchant
 McCarthy (CA)
 McCotter
 McHenry
 McKeon
 Mica
 Miller (FL)
 Miller (MI)
 Miller, Gary

NOT VOTING—6

Davis, Jo Ann Johnson, E. B. Pence
 Deal (GA) Kanjorski Young (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
 The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RA-HALL) (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1451

Mr. HALL of Texas changed his vote from “aye” to “no.”

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

HAWAIIAN HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2007

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 835) to reauthorize the programs of the Department of Housing and Urban Development for housing assistance for Native Hawaiians.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 835

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 “Hawaiian Homeownership Opportunity Act of 2007”.

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR HOUSING ASSISTANCE.

Section 824 of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4243), as added by section 513 of Public Law 106-569 (114 Stat. 2969), is amended by striking “fiscal years” and all that follows and inserting the following: “fiscal years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012.”.

SEC. 3. LOAN GUARANTEES FOR NATIVE HAWAIIAN HOUSING.

Section 184A of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992 (12 U.S.C. 1715z-13b), as added by section 514 of Public Law 106-569 (114 Stat. 2989), is amended as follows:

(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—In subsection (j)(7), by striking “fiscal years” and all that follows and inserting the following: “fiscal years 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012.”.

(2) AUTHORITY.—In subsection (b), by striking “or as a result of a lack of access to private financial markets”.

(3) ELIGIBLE HOUSING.—In subsection (c), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following new paragraph:

“(2) ELIGIBLE HOUSING.—The loan will be used to construct, acquire, refinance, or rehabilitate 1- to 4-family dwellings that are standard housing and are located on Hawaiian Home Lands.”.

SEC. 4. ELIGIBILITY OF DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS FOR TITLE VI LOAN GUARANTEES.

Title VI of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4191 et seq.) is amended as follows:

(1) **HEADING.**—In the heading for the title, by inserting “**AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN**” after “**TRIBAL**”.

(2) **AUTHORITY AND REQUIREMENTS.**—In section 601 (25 U.S.C. 4191)—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by inserting “or by the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands,” after “tribal approval,”; and

(ii) by inserting “or 810, as applicable,” after “section 202”; and

(B) in subsection (c), by inserting “or VIII, as applicable” before the period at the end.

(3) **SECURITY AND REPAYMENT.**—In section 602 (25 U.S.C. 4192)—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “or housing entity” and inserting “, housing entity, or Department of Hawaiian Home Lands”; and

(ii) in paragraph (3)—

(I) by inserting “or Department” after “tribe”; and

(II) by inserting “or VIII, as applicable,” after “title I”; and

(III) by inserting “or 811(b), as applicable” before the semicolon; and

(B) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “or housing entity” and inserting “, housing entity, or the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands”.

(4) **PAYMENT OF INTEREST.**—In the first sentence of section 603 (25 U.S.C. 4193), by striking “or housing entity” and inserting “, housing entity, or the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands”.

(5) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR CREDIT SUBSIDY.**—In section 605(b) (25 U.S.C. 4195(b)), by striking “1997 through 2007” and inserting “2008 through 2012”.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. **WATERS**) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. **RENZI**) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. **WATERS**. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous material thereon.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. **WATERS**. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute to introduce the real author of this legislation, a gentleman who has worked very, very hard on the Hawaiian Homeownership Opportunity Act of 2007, an extremely important bill that will provide housing for Native Hawaiians who have been without decent, safe and secure housing for far too long. I commend the gentleman for all of the work that he has put into this act.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. **ABERCROMBIE**) such time as he may consume.

Mr. **ABERCROMBIE**. Mr. Speaker, I am hoping that some of the misconceptions or misperceptions that might be

out there can be alleviated, because I don't believe that this should be considered a controversial bill in any way. There are some issues with respect to questions about favoritism or reverse discrimination, et cetera. Some of these issues have been raised in other contexts.

But in this particular instance, simply because the word or the phrase Native Hawaiian is attached, I hope that it doesn't confuse the issue. I have just had the opportunity to speak with Mr. **BOEHNER**, and I believe that we have an understanding about what is at stake here.

Let me make very, very clear what we are talking about. It reauthorizes a Native Hawaiian housing block grant through 2012. Now, these funds are used for infrastructure development and homeownership assistance under a program that is administered by the State of Hawaii as the result of Federal legislation in the last century. The bill that is on the floor today did not originate with Representative **HIRONO** or myself, but is as a result of the request of the Hawaiian Homes Commission and its chairman, under the leadership of Governor **Lingle**, Governor **Linda Lingle**, who is a Republican.

The reason I bring that up is not to cite that for special consideration, but rather that this is not a Democrat and Republican issue. This is an institutional issue that whoever is Governor, and whoever are the commissioners, in this instance happen to be Republican, appointed by a Republican Governor. Those folks are obligated institutionally to bring these issues to the Congress for final adjudication because of the unique status, the unique legal status of the Hawaiian Home Lands.

The Hawaiian Home Lands were created by the Congress as a result of legislation put forward by the original delegate from the Hawaiian Islands to the Congress, **Prince Kuhio**, **Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole**, for whom the Federal building is named where I have my offices in Honolulu, the **PJJK**. Mr. **RENZI** may refer to the **PJJK** Federal Building. He was a Republican at the time, and as a result of his presentation, the original Hawaiian Home Lands were created.

It enables Hawaiian families on Hawaiian Home Lands under this unique legal status to be able to acquire private financing they otherwise can't get because they are under this legal admonition to go through the Hawaiian Homes Commission. So it allows the Hawaiian Home Lands, the Department, to be eligible for loan guarantees to borrow, issue bonded debt, enabling servicing up to five times their annual allocation.

This allows the Department to service low-income families without a large increase in Federal appropriations. That's the whole idea of it. It allows low-income Hawaiians to get their refinancing in addition to construction. It reduces the cost of homeownership, and it reduced risk by lowering monthly

mortgage payments. That is what this is about. It's no special consideration. It is fulfilling the law as it exists.

Mr. **RENZI**. Thank you very much. I want to thank the gentleman from Hawaii and your colleagues for your leadership on this issue and your camaraderie in helping all Native Americans pushing forward in homeownership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 835, the Hawaiian Homeownership Opportunity Act of 2007. This bill is a reauthorization of title 8 of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act commonly known as the **NAHASDA**. It's administered by the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, and this provides native low-income families the opportunity for homeownership on Hawaiian Home Lands.

The Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act was passed in 1996. It reauthorized a system of housing assistance provided to tribes throughout the Department of Housing and Urban Development by creating the Indian Housing Block Grant program, which provides funds directly to tribes for housing services as determined by the tribes themselves.

In 2000, the **NAHASDA** was amended to include title 8 so that Native Hawaiians could receive block grant funding as well through a separate grant, the Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant, which funds vital housing programs only on Hawaiian Home Lands through the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, a Federal agency established by Congress in 1921 to administer trust land in Hawaii.

Title 8 funding has allowed the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to target assistance at families at or below 80 percent of the median income. This funding is used for such assistance as infrastructure development, as my colleague Mr. **ABERCROMBIE** talked about, **Habitat for Humanity** in Hawaii, down payment assistance programs, self-help home repair programs and financial literacy programs.

□ 1500

Title 8 of the **NAHASDA** was originally authorized for 5 years through 2005, and has not been formally reauthorized since. Although appropriation acts have continued to provide de facto 1-year authorizations for this program, this bill will reauthorize the program through fiscal year 2012.

In addition to reauthorization, the bill makes two changes to existing law. First, it makes the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands eligible for loan guarantees authorized under title 6 in the **NAHASDA**. Giving the Department title 6 assets would allow the Department to help more low-income families become homeowners, without a large increase in Federal appropriations, by partnering with private markets.

Second, this legislation allows Native Hawaiians the use of HUD section 184(a) guaranteed loans for refinancing in addition to construction. Adding the

refinancing authority reduces the cost of homeownership for low-income families and can also reduce risk by lowering monthly mortgage payments.

Congress must continue to embrace initiatives such as the one we are currently considering that encourages Americans to own a home.

Again, I would like to thank Mr. ABERCROMBIE and his colleagues from Hawaii, and I thank Chairman WATERS on our subcommittee.

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

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) 5 minutes.

Ms. HIRONO. I thank the gentlewoman from California for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 835, the Hawaiian Homeownership Opportunity Act, which reauthorizes the Hawaiian Home Lands Homeownership Act of 2000. The act assists the State of Hawaii's Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, or DHHL, to provide opportunities for homeownership for low-income Native Hawaiians.

In 1921, Congress passed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act with the purpose of establishing a homesteading program to place eligible Native Hawaiians on lands in Hawaii designated for such purpose. The law was passed at the urging of the Territory of Hawaii's Delegate to Congress, Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole. Some 200,000 acres were set aside for the purpose of providing Native Hawaiians with land.

With the passage of the Statehood Act of 1959, the control and administration of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act was transferred to the newly formed State of Hawaii. The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands was created in 1960 to administer the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. The mission of the Department is to "manage the Hawaiian Home Lands trust effectively and to develop and deliver land to Native Hawaiians."

Despite the good intentions of the Congress, progress of meeting the goal of delivering land to Native Hawaiians was slow. Most of the Hawaiian Home Lands were located in areas far from jobs, and infrastructure such as roads and utilities were nonexistent. Many individuals were on waiting lists for more than 30 years.

The Hawaiian Home Lands Homeownership Act of 2000 has provided the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands with much-needed resources to expand opportunities for home ownership among low-income Native Hawaiians. Especially critical has been the ability to use these funds to develop the infrastructure that makes placing homes on these properties possible.

I urge my colleagues to support reauthorization of this important program, and I thank the Chairs, Barney Frank and Maxine Waters, for their leadership in bringing this bill to a vote.

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

Ms. WATERS. I yield 5 minutes to Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from California and my good friend the gentleman from Arizona for their management of this important legislation, especially for the needs of our Native Hawaiian people.

This bill is simply to reauthorize this program to provide for the housing needs of our Native Hawaiian community in Hawaii, this bill, since its first authorization started in 1996. I do want to thank my good friend, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE), and my colleague Ms. HIRONO for their leadership in bringing this legislation forward.

Unbeknownst to many of our colleagues here in the House, and especially also in the Senate, I might say, there are approximately 400,000 Native Hawaiians living in our country today. They are the largest indigenous group among our fellow Americans who live in this country. And I want to say that, as someone who has lived with the Native Hawaiian people in the State of Hawaii in my youth, I can testify and say personally that this program definitely is of tremendous need to meet the housing needs of our Native Hawaiian people.

I can also share with my colleagues, despite all the advertisements and the beautiful islands that we see on television and the ads that we see, and the islands are beautiful, I must say, but there is also another part of the State that I would like to share with my colleagues that the tremendous needs of the Native Hawaiians is exactly the same as the situation with the Native American community. They are the worst when it comes to their health needs. All the social and economic problems that we are faced with for our Native American community is exactly the situation that we are faced with our Native Hawaiian people.

Unbeknownst to our colleagues again, if I might add, Mr. Speaker, the people of Hawaii indigenous to the State of Hawaii, many of the people of our country do not know that there was a sovereign and independent nation of Hawaii that was ruled by a series of kings which started from the great King Kamehameha. From 1800, for some 19 years, he ruled his people, and on to the legacy of the King Kamehameha and his dynasty, which he founded for about 100 years before U.S. Marines of our government illegally and unlawfully took over that sovereign government that was ruled by that time by Queen Lili'uokalani.

I want to share that bit of history with my colleagues, and especially and I sincerely hope that they will understand and appreciate the fact that the Native Hawaiian community does definitely need this program, and I urge my colleagues to please support this legislation.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE), the author of this legislation, 4 minutes.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, what remains for me is to express my gratitude to Mr. RENZI and also to Mr. KILDEE and the Native American Caucus for helping all of us to understand what the issues are here. And also, I want to reiterate my thanks to Mr. BOEHNER for his open-mindedness and his attitude of being willing to listen on issues that might otherwise have been easily misunderstood. I am grateful also to Mr. COLE of Oklahoma for his participation and for his leadership in again helping us to discern issues that are of distinct advantage, not just to our particular constituents in Hawaii, but on the whole issue of how we are able to help people achieve homeownership, achieve an opportunity not to be dependent on government, but rather to be able to participate in the American Dream, the overall American Dream in a way that has genuine meaning for them and their families.

I am very pleased to see that this has not become a partisan issue, and that it has not ended up dividing us when we should, in fact, be united in our opportunity to minimize the effect of government having bad consequences for people, and maximizing the opportunity for the ordinary individual and the ordinary individual's family to be able to advance the family's cause.

In this particular instance then, Mr. Speaker, I am very, very pleased that we are able to move forward on this, and I hope that the vote will be a solid one and that we can move forward to other issues not only where homeownership is concerned, but advancing the capacity of families to be able to succeed in the American Dream.

I would like to express my gratitude to the gentlelady from California, and express my thanks to her for the leadership of her and her committee in bringing this forward. Again, Mr. Speaker, before I close, my deep respect for and gratitude to Mr. RENZI and for all those who helped bring this forward on the Republican side of the aisle.

□ 1510

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how many minutes we have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlelady from California has 7½ minutes left.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Let me, first of all, thank the gentlelady for being so timely in her yielding, and to congratulate her as well for this initiative.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to be allowed as well, as I compliment her overall on her commitment to housing, just to reflect on the last 2 days. This was a challenge, but it was the leadership of this Subcommittee on Financial Services that managed to get their

hands around what is confronting the gulf region, and particularly cities like Houston that are impacted by a large number of Hurricane Katrina survivors. And I just want to cite that, though I heard a good number of responses on the floor about how much, how long, and too much, frankly I am going to encourage all of the Members of this body to visit the gulf region and to recognize that no matter how much, too much and how long, they will see that people are still not settled, not in houses, and still are receiving eviction notices.

Homeownership is a viable part of our dreams. But, at the same time, we have to be the "fix it" people. And unfortunately, there was much debate on this floor that didn't understand that hurricane recovery for Hurricanes Katrina and Wilma and Rita had not yet occurred. Therefore, I hope that as we go forward and more bills may come to the floor on dealing with Hurricane Katrina, we will be sensitive that this is one of the largest evacuations in the history of America, and that we must continue our work. And so for that reason, I support the underlying bill.

But, likewise, I hope that we will have a heart and recognize that we are, in fact, our brothers' and sisters' keeper, and that we will take some time to understand that we are still healing, we are still repairing, and we are still helping.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker and Members, I thank the gentlelady from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE). She had been very passionate about what we were doing on the last legislation, and she took this opportunity, not only in support of this legislation, but to add some remarks for the record on behalf of the people of Houston, and I appreciate that.

Let me just say that I want to thank the chairman, Mr. FRANK, for helping to focus our agenda in my subcommittee and in our overall committee, dealing with these very important housing issues, many of them that have been left unattended for far too long.

I want to thank Mr. RENZI for his attention to housing not only for Hawaiian Native Americans, but for Native Americans in Arizona where I had the opportunity to visit with him, where he is doing an awful lot for housing.

And so I am very pleased and proud about our Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, about the overall committee, and the way that we have been able to move so quickly and to have an agenda that we could bring to this floor on behalf of people who need us desperately, housing crises that exist not only in Hawaii but in other parts of the United States. And this is a representation of the work that we will be doing on this issue.

I know, again, that Mr. ABERCROMBIE has been working very hard. Ms. HIRONO came here with this on her agenda, and I just thank them all for

being here on the floor with us this afternoon, and helping people to understand how appreciative they are for our help.

I would like to say that in addition to the work that he has done, he has invited many of us on more than one occasion not only to visit, but to understand that it is not just simply a beautiful island where people come to vacation. There are people who live there. There are people who live there. There are people who work there. There are people who need our assistance, people who have been without housing that they can afford for a long time.

And so, again, the work not only of our chairman and the members of my subcommittee, but the cooperation that we have had on the opposite side of the aisle, led by Mr. RENZI, is what gets us to this point today.

And I would urge all of my colleagues to please support this legislation. It is so important.

Mr. FALCOMVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 835, the Hawaiian Homeownership Opportunity Act of 2007. I want to commend my good friend, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, for introducing this bill in the House of Representatives to reauthorize the Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant through 2012. I commend the gentleman for his hard work and his leadership in helping our Hawaiian community in both his district and in all the U.S. I also want to commend Ms. HIRONO of Hawaii as one of the original cosponsors of this bill and particularly Chairman FRANK of Massachusetts of the esteemed Committee on Financial Services for his diligence in moving this legislation. I would also be remiss if I did not recognize Chairwoman WATERS of California of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity of the Financial Services Committee for her contributions to this important bill and as a stalwart on national housing issues.

Mr. Speaker, this important piece of legislation will reauthorize important funding for the Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant until 2012. In 1996, Congress passed the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act without any specific provisions addressing Native Hawaiian communities. However, in 2000, Congress in a bipartisan effort amended the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act by including Title VIII, creating the Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant.

This program is vital for the Native Hawaiian families with low-incomes by providing grants to assist with affordable housing and it would also guarantee loans for those residing on Hawaiian Home Lands that were set aside by Congress in 1921 with the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. These Native Hawaiians are disqualified because of their unique status living on these Home Lands. Today, there are more than 495,000 Native Hawaiians in all of the U.S. making them the largest indigenous group in America. It is only fitting that we continue to support such programs to address such essential needs.

As a former resident of the state of Hawaii, I can bare witness of the benefits and the impact this program has achieved throughout the state. There is a national stereotype of Hawaii

as the islands with vast beautiful beaches and a remote vacation site but we fail to see the other side of Hawaii. With the growth in tourism and the rise in cost-of-living, Native Hawaiians have not been able to establish regular income to afford the high cost in housing within the state.

This legislation gives Native Hawaiians the opportunities for home ownership and will likely provide for more low-income families without making significant increases in federal appropriations. Mr. Speaker, with the support of the Native American Caucus, the Native American Indian Housing Council and Governor Linda Lingle of Hawaii, I am hopeful that we pass H.R. 835 today. I humbly request that my fellow colleagues support and pass H.R. 835 and again I thank my good friend from Hawaii for introducing this important legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 835.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

JOSHUA OMVIG VETERANS SUICIDE PREVENTION ACT

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 327) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to develop and implement a comprehensive program designed to reduce the incidence of suicide among veterans, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 327

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 "Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act".

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) suicide among veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (in this section referred to as "PTSD") is a serious problem; and

(2) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs should take into consideration the special needs of veterans suffering from PTSD and the special needs of elderly veterans who are at high risk for depression and experience high rates of suicide in developing and implementing the comprehensive program under this Act.

SEC. 3. COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION AMONG VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION AMONG VETERANS.—Chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 1720F. Comprehensive program for suicide prevention among veterans

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall develop and carry out a comprehensive program designed to reduce the incidence of suicide among veterans incorporating the components described in this section.

“(b) STAFF EDUCATION.—In carrying out the comprehensive program under this section, the Secretary shall provide for mandatory training for appropriate staff and contractors (including all medical personnel) of the Department who interact with veterans. This training shall cover information appropriate to the duties being performed by such staff and contractors. The training shall include information on—

- “(1) recognizing risk factors for suicide;
- “(2) proper protocols for responding to crisis situations involving veterans who may be at high risk for suicide; and
- “(3) best practices for suicide prevention.

“(c) SCREENING OF VETERANS RECEIVING MEDICAL CARE.—In carrying out the comprehensive program, the Secretary shall provide for screening of veterans who receive medical care at a Department medical facility (including a center established under section 1712A of this title) for risk factors for suicide.

“(d) TRACKING OF VETERANS.—In carrying out the comprehensive program, the Secretary shall provide for appropriate tracking of veterans.

“(e) COUNSELING AND TREATMENT OF VETERANS.—In carrying out the comprehensive program, the Secretary shall provide for referral of veterans at risk for suicide for appropriate counseling and treatment.

“(f) DESIGNATION OF SUICIDE PREVENTION COUNSELORS.—In carrying out the comprehensive program, the Secretary shall designate a suicide prevention counselor at each Department medical facility other than centers established under section 1712A of this title. Each counselor shall work with local emergency rooms, police departments, mental health organizations, and veterans service organizations to engage in outreach to veterans and improve the coordination of mental health care to veterans.

“(g) BEST PRACTICES RESEARCH.—In carrying out the comprehensive program, the Secretary shall provide for research on best practices for suicide prevention among veterans. Research shall be conducted under this subsection in consultation with the heads of the following entities:

- “(1) The Department of Health and Human Services.
- “(2) The National Institute of Mental Health.
- “(3) The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
- “(4) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“(h) SEXUAL TRAUMA RESEARCH.—In carrying out the comprehensive program, the Secretary shall provide for research on mental health care for veterans who have experienced sexual trauma while in military service. The research design shall include consideration of veterans of a reserve component.

“(i) 24-HOUR MENTAL HEALTH CARE.—In carrying out the comprehensive program, the Secretary shall provide for mental health care availability to veterans on a 24-hour basis.

“(j) HOTLINE.—In carrying out the comprehensive program, the Secretary may provide for a toll-free hotline for veterans to be staffed by appropriately trained mental health personnel and available at all times.

“(k) OUTREACH AND EDUCATION FOR VETERANS AND FAMILIES.—In carrying out the comprehensive program, the Secretary shall provide for outreach to and education for

veterans and the families of veterans, with special emphasis on providing information to veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom and the families of such veterans. Education to promote mental health shall include information designed to—

- “(1) remove the stigma associated with mental illness;
- “(2) encourage veterans to seek treatment and assistance for mental illness;
- “(3) promote skills for coping with mental illness; and
- “(4) help families of veterans with—
 - “(A) understanding issues arising from the readjustment of veterans to civilian life;
 - “(B) identifying signs and symptoms of mental illness; and
 - “(C) encouraging veterans to seek assistance for mental illness.

“(1) PEER SUPPORT COUNSELING PROGRAM.—(1) In carrying out the comprehensive program, the Secretary shall establish and carry out a peer support counseling program, under which veterans shall be permitted to volunteer as peer counselors—

- “(A) to assist other veterans with issues related to mental health and readjustment; and
- “(B) to conduct outreach to veterans and the families of veterans.

“(2) In carrying out the peer support counseling program under this subsection, the Secretary shall provide adequate training for peer counselors.

“(m) OTHER COMPONENTS.—In carrying out the comprehensive program, the Secretary may provide for other actions to reduce the incidence of suicide among veterans that the Secretary deems appropriate.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“1720F. Comprehensive program for suicide prevention among veterans.”.

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(1) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the comprehensive program under section 1720A of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(2) CONTENTS OF REPORT.—The report shall contain the following:

- (A) Information on the status of the implementation of such program.
- (B) Information on the time line and costs for complete implementation of the program within two years.
- (C) A plan for additional programs and activities designed to reduce the occurrence of suicide among veterans.
- (D) Recommendations for further legislation or administrative action that the Secretary considers appropriate to improve suicide prevention programs within the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 327, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, today we have the first bills that are coming out of the Veterans Committee this year. We are going to have an ambitious agenda for our committee, an agenda that in fact is demanded by the American people.

We have seen in the last few weeks enormous attention paid to the treatment, or lack thereof, that is given to our Nation's veterans, whether they are from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the first Persian Gulf War or now from Iraq and Afghanistan.

We have seen the Washington Post articles which detailed the problems at Walter Reed. We have seen news magazines have cover stories on how veterans are falling through the cracks of the system. We have seen on ABC News, Bob Woodruff, do a very moving piece on how brain injuries are treated, or perhaps not treated. We have seen stories in the press of homeless, already, from veterans of Iraq.

The American people understand that we are not treating our veterans the way we claim to be. The American people, I think, understand that the treatment of our warriors is a part of the cost of war, and we simply have to provide for those brave men and women who have fought for our Nation's freedom.

So we have an ambitious agenda in front of us, Mr. Speaker. These first items today address some specific areas that demand attention. I thank the Members from across the aisle for their support not only of these bills, but I think for the agenda that we are going to pursue in the future.

And it is time, Mr. Speaker, that we say as a Congress and as a Nation, no matter where we are on this war in Iraq, that when those brave young men and women come back we are going to treat them with all the love and respect and honor and care that American veterans should have. And we make that pledge on both sides of the aisle.

As I said, one of the top priorities of our committee is to address the needs of returning servicemembers from Iraq and Afghanistan, especially in the areas of mental health.

□ 1520

I believe that if we send our citizens off to war, we have to address their health care needs when they return. We cannot say, support our troops, support our troops, support our troops, and then forget them when they come home.

It turns out, I think unsurprisingly, that veterans suffer a higher risk of suicide than the general population. The stress of combat combined with the stigma that exists for servicemembers and veterans seeking mental health care can have disastrous consequences. It has already occurred for returning veterans, maybe a couple

hundred. We must do everything possible to improve the VA's mental health services and its ability to detect and help those veterans most at risk.

This bill, H.R. 327, is an important step in the right direction. It comes to us from our colleague from Iowa (Mr. BOSWELL), who has taken the tragedy from a family in Iowa and turned it into constructive measures so that tragedy will not be repeated in other parts of the Nation. And we thank Mr. BOSWELL and his colleague, Mr. BRALEY from Iowa, for bringing this to our attention.

This bill will provide important tools to the Veterans Administration to assist the Department in strengthening suicide prevention, education, and awareness programs within the VA by mandating a comprehensive program for suicide prevention among veterans.

Again, I thank Mr. BOSWELL for introducing this bill. I thank Mr. MILLER and his colleagues for supporting it.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity first to thank the chairman of the Subcommittee on Health, Mr. MICHAUD; as well as the chairman of the full committee, Mr. FILNER; and Ranking Member Mr. BUYER for their leadership in bringing this legislation timely to the floor.

The heavy burden of some of our servicemembers that they bear in coping with the aftermath of combat is tragically evident in the death of Army Specialist Joshua Lee Omvig. Specialist Omvig was a member of the U.S. Army Reserve 339th Military Police Company from Davenport, Iowa. He took his life in 2005 after returning from a deployment to Iraq. H.R. 327 is aptly named to remember this brave young man.

VA must be vigilant with a proactive mental health strategy to help our veterans and returning servicemembers readjust to stateside duty after their exposure to combat. H.R. 327 would require VA to implement a comprehensive program to reduce the incidence of suicide among our veterans. Specific steps included in this bill are: a campaign to reduce stigma surrounding seeking help or training for VA staff in suicide prevention and education; the creation of peer counselors to understand risk factors and to assist families during the readjustment process; and a 24-hour counseling line so that veterans, especially those in rural areas, could seek help whenever they need it.

VA is already fulfilling many of the requirements of H.R. 327. The Secretary of VA developed and has started to implement a similar suicide prevention strategy that is based on public health and clinical models with activities both in VA facilities and within local communities. For example, VA is fulfilling requirements of H.R. 327 by providing training for both clinical and

nonclinical staff on how to assess and respond to patients that they may come in contact with that are at risk for suicide. And by April 1, the Department plans to have in place a Suicide Prevention Coordinator within each VA medical center.

The VA's Serious Mental Illness Treatment Research and Evaluation Center will be designated to guide prevention strategies and maintain data on suicide rates and risk factors. VA is also currently working to create a suicide prevention hotline by the end of this calendar year.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 327. This legislation does put the full force of legal authority behind a comprehensive program to ensure that VA is taking all appropriate measures to prevent suicide among our Nation's veterans.

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

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the chairman of our Subcommittee on Health, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD).

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman very much for yielding, and I want to thank him for his leadership as we deal with Veterans' Affairs issues in this upcoming session. I also want to thank the ranking member, Mr. MILLER, for all his hard work on this legislation. I look forward to working with him over the next 2 years as we move forward with an aggressive Veterans' Affairs agenda.

I rise today in strong support of this important legislation.

One veteran taking their life is tragic. Joshua Omvig was one such veteran, and, sadly, he is not alone. There have been others such as Jonathan Schulze from Minnesota and many more, and that is unfortunate.

We must do everything we can to provide our veterans and their families with the support and care that they need to prevent more from going down the same tragic path to committing suicide.

H.R. 327, the Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act, would assist the Department of Veterans Affairs in furthering its effort to identify veterans at risk of suicide.

Our returning servicemembers are under great strain and stress. H.R. 327 would improve early detection and intervention, provide access to mental health services for veterans who are in crisis, and help prevent the unnecessary deaths of the men and women who have served our Nation so greatly.

A recent study indicated that nearly one-third of OEF/OIF veterans seen at the VA facilities receive mental health and/or psychosocial diagnoses and that one in five have PTSD.

These veterans are at risk. According to reports, one in five suicides in this country is a veteran, even though veterans make up only 10 percent of our general population.

Joshua Omvig was one such veteran. Sadly, this legislation cannot help him,

but this bill can help other returning servicemembers.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 327. And, in closing, I also want to thank Congressman BOSWELL for his leadership in this area. He has been pushing this bill for the last couple of years. He is a true leader, an individual who cares for our veterans, and I want to thank Mr. BOSWELL for bringing this legislation forward.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 3 minutes to a valiant supporter of our veterans, a retired Marine colonel and a member of the Armed Services Committee, Mr. KLINE.

Mr. KLINE of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 327, the Joshua Omvig Suicide Prevention Act.

I would like to thank my friend, the gentleman from Iowa, for bringing this important piece of legislation to the floor. This bill bears the name of a constituent of Mr. BOSWELL's, Joshua Omvig, who tragically took his life.

I wish that I could stand here today and say that Joshua was the last soldier, sailor, airman, or marine to fall through the cracks, the last young life to end prematurely because the system was unwilling or unable to assist them. But if that were true, the gentleman would not have had to introduce this bill, and we would not be here today discussing it.

In January of this year, this tragedy repeated itself when Jonathan Schulze, a young marine from my district who had served honorably in Iraq, took his life after seeking assistance from two VA medical facilities in Minnesota. The loss of such a promising young life has sparked both sadness and outrage throughout Minnesota and the Nation; outrage not only at the loss of a young life, but because the VA system in which he was enrolled had apparently and tragically failed him.

In the months since Jonathan's unnecessary death, the VA has launched two investigations to find out why this marine did not receive the care he so desperately needed. An initial medical inspector's investigation was inconclusive, but it is my sincere hope that the ongoing VA Inspector General's investigation will fully explain the circumstances that led to his death.

Along with the full accounting of the VA's action in Jonathan Schulze's case, I am hopeful the passage of this bill today will provide the professionals of the VA medical system with the tools necessary to prevent the tragic deaths of young veterans like Joshua and Jonathan.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Iowa for introducing this vital legislation. I urge my colleagues, all of them, to support H.R. 327.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HARE), who has picked up the

torch from the legendary defender of veterans' rights, Mr. Lane Evans, and is carrying that torch with distinction.

□ 1530

Mr. HARE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 327, the Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act. I want to thank Congressman BOSWELL for introducing this important piece of legislation and Chairman FILNER for moving it through the Veterans' Affairs Committee. I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to the family of Joshua, both for their tireless efforts to pass this legislation and for their son's service to our country.

Mr. Speaker, too many servicemembers return from war with invisible wounds. It is estimated that almost 1,000 veterans receiving care from the Department of Veterans Affairs commit suicide each year. This is a symptom of a larger problem.

A July 2004 Army study reported that one in six combat troops will suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder shortly after combat. Sadly, this is only a measure of the number of veterans who receive the help that they need. Many veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress and other mental problems don't seek assistance.

This bill strengthens cooperation between the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to provide better and more accessible mental health care for all of our veterans. This bill also creates a program to regularly screen and monitor all veterans for risk factors of suicide, and establishes a 24-hour counseling line so that veterans in rural and remote areas can receive the help whenever they need it.

Additionally, this legislation offers training in suicide prevention to medical personnel and support staff at our VA hospitals so they can identify veterans at risk. This bill also provides training and services to the families, helping them understand risk factors and working with them on the readjustment process.

Although our men and women come home safely, the war isn't over for many of them. Often the physical wounds of combat are repaired but the psychological scars can haunt a person for a lifetime.

I am proud to have had the opportunity to work on this legislation in the Veterans' Affairs Committee, and I will continue to do what I can to assure that we honor the sacrifices of our Nation's veterans.

I urge all my colleagues to join me in voting for the Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. RAMSTAD), a strong supporter of veterans issues.

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member, my friend from Florida, for yielding, and also thank the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs

Committee, Mr. FILNER, for his leadership, as well as the author of this important legislation, Mr. BOSWELL of Iowa, and all of those who have worked to bring this legislation to the floor.

I have talked, Mr. Speaker, to the mother and the stepmother of Marine Lance Corporal Jonathan Schulze of Minnesota. I have talked to the stepmother, who, along with Jonathan's father, took this young marine to the VA hospital seeking admission. Lance Corporal Schulze, back from the war in Iraq, was suffering from depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, alcoholism, and was suicidal.

I have talked to this mother and stepmother who, along with Jonathan's father, are absolutely heartbroken at the loss of their beloved son and this true American hero, Lance Corporal Schulze. He was told by the VA that he was number 26 on the waiting list and would have to wait several months to be admitted for treatment. Five days later, Lance Corporal Schulze hanged himself with an electrical cord.

This brave marine's tragic death demonstrates to all of us, to the Nation, the urgent need to provide greater access to mental health treatment for our returning troops and our veterans.

None of our brave troops, none of our brave troops, suffering from PTSD should ever be placed on a waiting list for treatment. It is absolutely, Mr. Speaker, outrageous, that mental health treatment is not readily available for our brave troops returning from war.

That is why I am proud and grateful to rise as a cosponsor of the Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act. This legislation will provide necessary screening to our returning veterans for risk factors of suicide. It will make sure that those found to be at risk will receive the care that they need and deserve.

It is too late, Mr. Speaker, for Lance Corporal Jonathan Schulze of Minnesota, but it is not too late for thousands and thousands of other returning troops and veterans. It is time to pass this critical bill.

But we must do more. We must pass mental health and chemical addiction parity. There are 56 million Americans suffering the ravages of mental illness, most of whom are going untreated. There are 24 million Americans suffering the ravages of alcoholism and drug addiction, many, many veterans who are going untreated.

We must also, in addition to this important legislation, pass the Mental Health Equity Act to provide equitable treatment for people suffering from mental illness and chemical addiction; that is, to put them on the same footing as people suffering from physical diseases.

We also, Mr. Speaker, must pass the Lane Evans VA Reform Act, which is more comprehensive, provides more resources to the VA and more access to treatment for our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, it is too late for Lance Corporal Schulze of Minnesota. It is too late for Staff Sergeant Omvig of Iowa. But it is not too late for our other veterans.

Let's do the right thing. Let's pass this legislation.

I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

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

Mr. Speaker, I say to Mr. RAMSTAD, we thank you for your passion. On the Veterans Committee, we intend to use the concern of America now for PTSD of returning veterans to argue that we need parity for all mental health issues in America.

So we thank you for your leadership on this. Thank you for reminding us of Corporal Schulze. We will use this as a reminder of what we have to do for our veterans.

Thank you again for your passion.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY), whose son now serves us in our Nation as a member of the Air Force Reserve.

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the chairman and the ranking member of the Veterans Committee and all members of the Veterans Committee for working together to provide our veterans with the services that they need.

The Veterans Administration health care system does, in most cases, provide outstanding health care to our Nation's veterans. Yet, as the brave men and women from our Armed Forces return home from Iraq and Afghanistan, we are seeing additional demands already being placed on the VA. Those demands include addressing the hallmark injuries of these conflicts, post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury.

These conditions are often the root causes behind the large numbers of soldiers who have attempted or contemplated suicide. The Defense Department estimates that 114 Iraqi and Afghanistan veterans have already committed suicide, and that one out of every 100 veterans has considered suicide. We must quickly address this problem by equipping the caregivers at our VA facilities nationwide with the ability to recognize and prevent these needless tragedies.

I strongly support H.R. 327, the Joshua Omvig Suicide Prevention Act. It directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to develop and implement a comprehensive program to reduce the incidence of suicides among veterans. It trains VA staff to recognize the symptoms of PTSD and suicidal thoughts. It monitors veterans who receive medical care in the VA system for suicide risk factors. It provides for suicide prevention counselors at each medical facility, so that when the veterans need help they can get it immediately. And it establishes a suicide hot line for veterans to call.

Our brave men and women in uniform have served this Nation with honor. We

owe them more than a debt of gratitude. We must also provide them with the support and care they need to return to a healthy and productive civilian life.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. TIM MURPHY).

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding, and Mr. BOSWELL for working on this important bill.

As a psychologist, I have treated more than my share of those who have suffered from significant depression and have had risk of suicide, many of those veterans of various conflicts. This bill is extremely important in what it does in providing access to care, but there are so many things that we must utilize here as part of this bill.

One is to make sure that it is used to provide proper screening for soldiers during basic training and also prior to deployment. Also to make sure that there is ongoing support and availability of that support in combat theaters. There must also be training for officers and leaders in the military to be aware of signs of problems and to be aware of treatment options. That training is vital.

There also must be access to trained personnel both while the person is in a combat theater and when they return home and after discharge and in the years to follow, because many times the signs of these problems may not actually show up for years.

It is important that all of us are aware, for our friends, our spouses, our loved ones who come back from combat, to recognize signs of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anger, and drug and alcohol abuse as all signs that there may be a deeper mental illness behind that.

But it is important, above all of this, that we eliminate the stigma of mental illness. It is indeed a problem which is associated with biological causes with very real symptoms and very real available treatments. But many times soldiers do not seek treatment because they have a fear of being looked down upon by their peers, they fear a loss of rank, they fear discharge or loss of a chance for promotion. They feel there is limited access for trained professionals, and many also think the cost is overwhelming.

We have to give hope to those with mental illness. For those who have seen significant problems in their life, some remain mired in those problems and remain victims and do not move forward. We can help them. There are some who are able to survive despite their problems and move forward and flourish and work. And there are others who thrive with their problems and turn these into a source of inner strength.

There is a great deal of hope and compassion that we can bring to our soldiers. This bill is a wonderful mechanism to bring that. I applaud all those

who helped on it, and I look forward to its passage.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ), another new Member, who happens to be the highest ranking enlisted man, as a command sergeant major, ever to serve in the Congress. We thank you for your service.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and a special thank you to my colleague, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BOSWELL) for introducing this important piece of legislation in honor of Joshua Omvig and his family and the heroics and sacrifice they made for our country, and for bringing it to the attention of this body and this Nation, this painful problem of suicide amongst our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, you have heard a lot of statistics today already. Ten percent of the population in America are veterans, yet one in five people who commit suicide is a veteran. Since May of 2003, 93 of our brave soldiers and warriors from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have taken their own lives. Beyond that, 35 percent of returning Iraqi veterans are seeking counseling within 1 year. Over 73,000 have been diagnosed as a risk factor, and 39,000 have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. Despite all of this, 100 local VA clinics offered no mental health care as recently as last year.

But these are far more than numbers. These affect individuals. These are our children. These are our soldiers. These are our marines. These are the patriots that answered the call of duty for this Nation. And when they return home, we need to provide them with everything this Nation can provide.

Suicide amongst veterans, and mental health issues as a whole, require our urgent and immediate attention. H.R. 327 will direct the Department of Veterans Affairs to start screening and monitoring for the exact problems, provide education to all staff, contractors, and medical personnel, and make available 24-hour mental health care for veterans found to be at risk.

Just last week, I saw a unique teleconferencing technology at the Rochester, Minnesota, VA clinic. It allowed veterans in remote rural locations to speak with mental health professionals any time of the day. This technology is innovative and unique. H.R. 327 is a crucial step to ensure that this type of technology is not unique but it is available at any time for our veterans.

I urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation. America's servicemembers make a profound sacrifice when they go to war. We owe them nothing less.

But, Mr. Speaker, we must not stop here. In Minnesota, 2,600 National Guard soldiers have had their deployment extended, probably until late 2007. They will come back facing these same issues. We must prepare for them.

□ 1545

Mr. MILLER of Florida. May I inquire as to the time left on both sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has 10 minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 6½ minutes remaining.

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

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to yield 3 minutes to the author of the legislation, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BOSWELL), who, as I said, worked with the family of Mr. Omvig, who took their tragic situation and turned it into something that could help our whole Nation. We thank you, Mr. BOSWELL.

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

Mr. BOSWELL. Thank you, Chairman FILNER, and all of you on the Veterans Committee that worked together on this, both sides of the aisle. We are doing the right thing, and we know that.

I would associate myself with all the comments that have been made from Chairman FILNER and Mr. MILLER and all the rest, so I will not try to repeat them. But I might just share a little bit to whoever might be watching about why this bill came to pass.

As we all know, a number of veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq, particularly Iraq, this phenomena is taking place, perhaps more so than ever before in our history. It is a concerning thing. All wounds are not visible. I think it has been a little hard for us to realize that we have to recognize this, and we are doing it.

I just want to share with you some many, many months ago, when I had the occasion to respond to the Omvig family in Grundy Center, Iowa, not too far from Waterloo, and you will be hearing from Mr. BRALEY shortly, I went and talked to them and realized the suffering they were feeling. This family, this father and this mother, Randy and Ellen, their son came home after 11 months, someone they loved very much, of course as all parents do, and they realized something was wrong, wasn't right. They wanted to do anything they could to help, but the frustration of not knowing what to do, trying to help, not knowing what to do, not having professional help, others reaching out in the community and so on, keeping Joshua as close as they possibly could, and knowing that things were not going well.

And then one tragic morning, as he left to go to work, and his mother was right there with him, and walked out to his pick-up truck, rolled up the window, with his mother standing just outside the window, and took his life. It should never have happened.

In this day of technology, we can test our young men and women going in and coming out of the services, and the technicians and the experts tell us that they can identify with a test they give that a person is suspect to this situation, the possibility of wanting to commit suicide. They say over 1 out of 100 give it consideration coming back from Iraq.

Now, if we have that ability to test, and we do, then it is appropriate that we take these steps that we are taking today to cause and affect our Veterans Administration to follow up and follow through and save every life we possibly can. We can't bring Joshua back, but we can do all we can possibly do to prevent it from happening to others.

So I am very appreciative today. I of course rise in strong support of this. And I do this in the name of Joshua, by the name of Randy and Ellen. I know the day I sat with them in a little restaurant in Grundy Center, we talked about what we were trying to shape into this bill. I wasn't sure I should, but then I asked them, I said would you mind if we named this after your son? They kind of looked at each other and talked about it, and they said they would be honored.

Now, they are continuing in their grieving, but they are reaching out to others. The calls they are getting to help others to get through this situation is a good thing. They are stepping forward and doing that, and I am very proud of them. So I hope we can get this message to them that we are responding, and the time is now.

Please support this bill. Thank you so very much.

With more and more veterans returning from tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, many new issues have arisen regarding veterans' mental health care that has not received attention in the past.

Some estimates have found that almost 1,000 veterans receiving care from the Department of Veterans Affairs commit suicide each year and one out of five suicides in the United States is a veteran. We must do better for our veterans and I believe this legislation is a step in the right direction.

This legislation grew out of a great tragedy. Almost a year ago I learned of a young man from Grundy Center, IA, Joshua Omgig, who experienced undiagnosed PTSD after returning from an 11-month tour in Iraq. His friends and family, mother and father Ellen and Randy, knew he was having a hard time adjusting to civilian life but did not know how to help him. Help was not available. Then, in December of 2005, Joshua tragically took his life. He was only 22 years old. Over the past year I have learned that Joshua was sadly not a unique case. After I heard Joshua's story I was shocked to find that one in 100 Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans have reported thinking about suicide.

We treat their physical wounds; now it is time to also treat their mental ones. All wounds are not visible.

I'd like to say a few words about Joshua's parents, Randy and Ellen Omgig. Out of their personal loss they have championed a cause to help all veterans and their family members. I have met with the Omgigs on numerous occasions; most recently I saw them this past Sunday, and I'm so impressed by their commitment to help others—the young men and women who have served our country. They are true heroes.

I am proud to stand here in support of this bill and I encourage the House to pass H.R. 327 today and ensure all veterans receive the care they need. Not all wounds inflicted in

combat are visible, now is the time to treat them.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FILNER. I would yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO), who has been a fighter to elevate mental health to the consciousness not only to California, but our whole Nation for her whole career.

Thank you, Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Thank you, Mr. FILNER and Mr. BOSWELL.

Mr. Speaker, I associate myself with the previous remarks of all my colleagues in regard to H.R. 327, of which I am in complete support. It is a bill designed to decrease suicide amongst our veterans. As you have heard, we have had the highest rate of suicide of any other war.

This is about soldiers like Michael, who returned from Iraq, went months on a waiting list from doctor to doctor without proper treatment, and when finally diagnosed, a week later he shot himself. This is about the two marines gathered at a muster in Long Beach just recently who were diagnosed on the spot with suicidal tendencies and were hospitalized immediately. This is about our local VFW seeing more and more young people seeking to get services for their mental well-being. This is also about our families becoming aware of signs to look for and where to find treatment. This is about providing the funding to help heal the mental wounds so that our warriors believe it is better to remain alive and not dead. What is more critical and more important?

I urge my colleagues to vote in support of 327.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FILNER. I would yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa, the neighboring district to the Omgigs, and a new Member, Mr. BRALEY.

Thank you for being here today.

(Mr. BRALEY of Iowa asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. I thought it was important to come today and put a human face on the tragic story of Joshua Omgig. This handsome young man you see in this photograph is Joshua Omgig, and standing next to his headstone are his parents, Randy and Ellen.

It was Christmas in 2005 when I opened up the Waterloo Courier, my hometown newspaper, and saw the name Omgig, which jumped out at me right away because I have known Randy and Ellen for a long time.

Even though Grundy Center is just south of my district, I immediately was drawn to this tragic story. Joshua Omgig is not going to be reflected in any of the casualty totals from Iraq, but he and the other tragic stories you have heard today deserve to be included no less in the toll that has been taken on the lives of young men and

women of this country. We owe them more. That is why I was so proud that my colleague from Iowa took the initiative to push this measure onto the House floor into committee so that it can finally receive the proper attention it deserved.

I came here with some prepared remarks, but I chose instead to speak from the heart today. Because when I was out at Walter Reed for the oversight hearings on the problems and the backlog of disability claims and the Surgeon General of the Army, Lieutenant General Kiley, tried to justify that backlog by saying that the science of post-traumatic stress disorder was still evolving in 2003 and that was preventing them from processing these claims, I had enough. Because I knew what people like Randy and Ellen Omgig have been going through, and I knew that this ability to prevent these tragedies from happening has been around for many years. And so I told General Kiley, with all due respect, that's hogwash.

It is important for this body to stand up and say that post-traumatic stress disorder is real, which is exactly what General Schoomaker said that day. That is why I urge you all to support this important bill and honor the memory of Joshua Omgig.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 327, the Joshua Omgig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act. This bill is named in honor of 22-year-old Joshua Omgig, a member of the U.S. Army Reserves 3398th MP Co. from Grundy Center, IA, who tragically took his own life in December of 2005 after serving an 11-month tour of duty in Iraq.

This legislation is an important step in ensuring adequate mental health care for our troops who return home from serving in combat zones and who, like Joshua, may be suffering from combat-related anxiety, depression, or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This bill is a necessary and overdue step in reaching out to veterans of all ages, and their families, in order to prevent the tragic deaths of heroes like Joshua Omgig.

Nearly 1,000 veterans receiving care from the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA, commit suicide each year, a number which is startling and unacceptable. Army studies show that around 25 percent of the soldiers who have served in Iraq display symptoms of serious mental health problems, including depression, substance abuse, and PTSD. These figures are expected to rise, as PTSD an other mental health problems often do not surface for months after soldiers have returned home. These mental health problems put our service personnel at higher risk for suicide.

When Joshua returned home from Iraq with PTSD, his family knew that he was suffering, but they didn't realize how completely his illness would devastate him. They didn't realize he had PTSD, or that he was at risk for suicide. And they did not know how to help him, because they did not have the appropriate resources available to them.

The Joshua Omgig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act will help prevent suicides like Joshua's by requiring the VA to develop and implement a comprehensive program to reduce the incidence of suicide among veterans.

This program includes educating VA staff about how to identify risk factors for suicide, and training staffers in the appropriate ways to respond to crisis situations and prevent suicide among veterans. The bill also requires the VA to provide mental health care to veterans 24 hours per day, and requires that a suicide prevention counselor be available at every VA facility. These counselors will provide direct assistance to veterans, and will also work with local emergency rooms, police departments, mental health organizations, and veterans' service organizations to provide outreach to veterans who may be at risk for suicide.

Additionally, the bill requires the VA to provide outreach and education for veterans and their families to give them the necessary skills to cope with mental illness, to reduce the stigma associated with seeking treatment for mental illness, and to know when and how to seek suicide prevention assistance.

It is my fervent hope that the passage of this bill in the House of Representatives today means that the tragic death of young Joshua Omvig will not be in vain. I would like to commend Joshua's parents for their advocacy on the behalf of their son and all veterans, and thank Congressman LEONARD BOSWELL for his leadership on this issue. I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in voting for the Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act, and I look forward to the passage of this critical legislation today.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would inquire of the chairman if he needs additional time.

Mr. FILNER. I would ask for the courtesy of yielding 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR).

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR).

Mr. SALAZAR. I thank the gentleman for yielding. And I thank the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee for bringing this important issue up to our attention.

I have been a proud cosponsor of this legislation for 2 years, and I want to thank Mr. BOSWELL for his leadership.

This brings up an important point. It brings up an important point because we are now seeing some underfunding of the VA committee and of VA health care initiatives. We have heard today statistics of how now, today, Vietnam veterans are still being affected by post-traumatic stress disorder. We haven't even been able to touch the beginning of the iceberg.

So today, Mr. Speaker, it is important to make it clear what the leadership of this House, the people's House, has said. The leadership of this House today has said that the most important issue for the veterans to be addressed are the issues of health care, both shortfall and VA funding, and it is also an important issue that today we push forward for full funding of VA health care.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I would urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 327.

I thank Mr. BOSWELL for bringing this legislation to the floor. He is a fine

man, a great sponsor of this piece of legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of it.

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

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank Mr. MILLER, the ranking member of the House subcommittee, for your courtesy today, for your leadership on these issues, and for bringing members of your caucus to the floor. I think it is very important that all of us have an understanding of these issues. And the more that we all understand it and communicate that to the American people, we are, I think, better as a Nation. So thank you for the cooperation and the support.

I think we all were moved by Mr. BOSWELL and Mr. BRALEY's presentations. In the name of Joshua Omvig, we ask for support from our colleagues.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 327, the Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this important bill.

Estimates indicate that nearly 1,000 veterans receiving care from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) take their own lives each year. This should be a clear sign that more must be done to address the very serious and troubling issue of veterans' suicide. Many veterans continue to return from Iraq and Afghanistan with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mental health concerns, and we must equip the VA with the information and resources they need in order to ensure that our veterans receive adequate care.

When this legislation was first brought to my attention earlier this year, I happened to come across an Associated Press news story about a young man from Minnesota who served as a U.S. Marine in Iraq. Upon returning home from Iraq, he experienced nightmares and paranoia, often re-living his combat experiences in his sleep. On January 11, 2007, he told staff at a VA hospital that he felt suicidal. He mentioned this again over the phone the next day to VA staff. Despite these direct pleas for help, no action was taken, and 4 days later, he killed himself in his Minnesota home. He was 25 years old.

H.R. 327 takes a number of important steps towards reducing the incidence of suicide among veterans. This legislation directs the Department of Veterans Affairs to develop a comprehensive program to regularly screen and monitor all veterans for risk factors of suicide, set up a tracking and counseling referral system to ensure all veterans found to be a suicide risk will receive the appropriate help, and provide education and training for all VA staff, contractors, and medical personnel who have interaction with veterans. The legislation would also provide 24-hour mental health care for veterans who are believed to be at risk for suicide, so that veterans could seek assistance whenever they need it.

Our Nation's veterans fight for us overseas, and deserve proper care when they return home. This includes educating VA staff, veterans and their families about PTSD and suicide prevention in order to encourage service members to seek mental health assistance when necessary. Now more than ever, as service members return home with PTSD and other mental health issues, it is essential that we provide adequate mental health care that

can help prevent suicide among our Nation's veterans.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 327.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 327, as amended.

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

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

IMPROVING COMPENSATION BENEFITS FOR VETERANS IN CERTAIN CASES OF IMPAIRMENT OF VISION INVOLVING BOTH EYES

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 797) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve compensation benefits for veterans in certain cases of impairment of vision involving both eyes, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 797

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. ENHANCED COMPENSATION BENEFITS FOR VETERANS IN CERTAIN CASES OF IMPAIRMENT OF VISION INVOLVING BOTH EYES.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the "Dr. James Allen Veteran Vision Equity Act".

(b) ENHANCED COMPENSATION.—Section 1160(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking "blindness" both places it appears and inserting "impairment of vision"; and

(2) by inserting before the semicolon at the end the following: " , where the impairment in each eye is to a visual acuity of 20/200 or less or of a peripheral field of 20 degrees or less".

SEC. 2. USE OF NATIONAL DIRECTORY OF NEW HIRES FOR INCOME VERIFICATION PURPOSES FOR CERTAIN VETERANS BENEFITS.

(a) USE OF INFORMATION IN NATIONAL DIRECTORY OF NEW HIRES.—Chapter 53 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§5320. Use of National Directory of New Hires for income verification purposes

"(a) INFORMATION FROM NATIONAL DIRECTORY OF NEW HIRES.—(1) The Secretary shall furnish to the Secretary of Health and Human Services, on a quarterly basis or at such intervals as may be determined by the Secretary, information in the custody of the Secretary for comparison with information in the National Directory of New Hires maintained by the Secretary of Health and Human Services pursuant to section 453 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 653), in

order to obtain the information in such directory with respect to individuals under the age of 65 who are applicants for or recipients of benefits or services specified in subsection (d).

“(2) The Secretary shall seek information pursuant to this subsection only to the extent essential to determining eligibility for benefits and services specified in subsection (d) and the amount of benefits specified in paragraphs (1) and (2) of that subsection for individuals under the age of 65.

“(3)(A) The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in cooperation with the Secretary, shall compare information in the National Directory of New Hires with information in the custody of the Secretary furnished pursuant to paragraph (1), and disclose information in that Directory to the Secretary, in accordance with this subsection, for the purposes specified in this subsection.

“(B) The Secretary of Health and Human Services may make a disclosure in accordance with subparagraph (A) only to the extent that the Secretary determines that such disclosure does not interfere with the effective operation of the program under part D of title IV of the Social Security Act.

“(4) The Secretary may use information resulting from a data match pursuant to this subsection only for the purpose of determining eligibility for benefits and services specified in subsection (d) and the amount of benefits specified in paragraphs (1) and (2) of that subsection.

“(5) The Secretary shall reimburse the Secretary of Health and Human Services for the additional costs incurred by that Secretary in furnishing information under this subsection. Such reimbursement shall be at rates that the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines to be reasonable (which rates shall include payment for the costs of obtaining, verifying, maintaining, and comparing the information).

“(b) NOTIFICATION TO BENEFICIARIES.—The Secretary shall notify each applicant for, or recipient of, a benefit or service specified in subsection (d) that income information furnished by the applicant to the Secretary may be compared with information obtained by the Secretary from the Secretary of Health and Human Services under subsection (a). The Secretary shall periodically transmit to recipients of such benefits additional notifications of such matters.

“(c) INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION REQUIRED.—The Secretary may not, by reason of information obtained from the Secretary of Health and Human Services under subsection (a), terminate, deny, suspend, or reduce any benefit or service described in subsection (d) until the Secretary takes appropriate steps to verify independently information relating to employment and employment income.

“(d) COVERED BENEFITS AND SERVICES.—The benefits and services specified in this subsection are the following:

“(1) Needs-based pension benefits provided under chapter 15 of this title or under any other law administered by the Secretary.

“(2) Parents’ dependency and indemnity compensation provided under section 1315 of this title.

“(3) Health-care services furnished under subsections (a)(2)(G), (a)(3), and (b) of section 1710 of this title.

“(4) Compensation paid under chapter 11 of this title at the 100 percent rate based solely on unemployability and without regard to the fact that the disability or disabilities are not rated as 100 percent disabling under the rating schedule.

“(e) LIMITATION WITH RESPECT TO INDIVIDUAL UNEMPLOYABILITY CASES.—In the case of compensation described in subsection

(d)(4), the Secretary may independently verify or otherwise act upon wage or self-employment information referred to in subsection (c) of this section only if the Secretary finds that the amount and duration of the earnings reported in that information clearly indicate that the individual is not qualified for a rating of total disability.

“(f) OPPORTUNITY TO CONTEST FINDINGS.—The Secretary shall inform the individual of the findings made by the Secretary on the basis of verified information under subsection (c), and shall give the individual an opportunity to contest such findings, in the same manner as applies to other information and findings relating to eligibility for the benefit or service involved.

“(g) SOURCE OF FUNDS FOR ADMINISTRATION OF SECTION.—The Secretary shall pay the expenses of carrying out this section from amounts available to the Department for the payment of compensation and pension.

“(h) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority of the Secretary to obtain information from the Secretary of Health and Human Services under subsection (a) expires on September 30, 2012.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“5320. Use of National Directory of New Hires for income verification purposes.”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 5320 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO PROVIDE AN EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE ALLOWANCE TO PERSONS PERFORMING QUALIFYING WORK-STUDY ACTIVITIES.

Section 3485(a)(4) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “June 30, 2007” each place it appears and inserting “June 30, 2012”.

SEC. 4. PROVISION OF BRONZE REPRESENTATIONS OF THE LETTER “V” FOR GRAVE OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL BURIED IN PRIVATE CEMETERY IN LIEU OF GOVERNMENT-PROVIDED HEADSTONE OR MARKER.

Section 2306(d) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) In lieu of furnishing a headstone or marker under this subsection, the Secretary may furnish, if requested, a bronze representation of the letter ‘V’ to be attached to a headstone or marker furnished at private expense. The Secretary shall make available two sizes of such representations for such purpose.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 797, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

As noted, this bill is “as amended.” And I want to thank the members on my committee on both sides of the aisle, particularly Mr. BOOZMAN of Arkansas and Mr. LAMBORN of Colorado, for their very constructive amendments. Mr. BOOZMAN will talk later on what he did, but we have extended the authorization for the work/study program at his request for 5 years, so thank you for your amendments to that. And we thank Ms. BALDWIN, who has brought this to our attention and is very committed to the health care of our veterans of this Nation.

So we are glad all to work together to get this to the House floor today. This has been introduced in previous Congresses, but we are glad it is on the floor now. It would allow veterans who receive veterans disability compensation for impairment of vision in one eye to be eligible to receive additional disability compensation for impairment of vision in the eye that is not service connected, where that impairment in each eye is to a visual acuity of 20/200 or less, or of a peripheral field of 20 degrees or less.

Suffice it to say that there was a great blind spot in the law that did not cover our veterans who would need the help.

It would direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Health and Human Services to match and compare VA needs-based pension benefits data, parents’ dependency and indemnity compensation data, health care services data, and unemployability compensation data with the National Directory of New Hires, maintained by the Department of Health and Human Services, for the purpose of determining eligibility for such benefits and services.

□ 1600

It would extend authorization of the veterans work/study program until 2012 at the suggestion of Mr. BOOZMAN, and allows for a bronze “V” marker in lieu of a government-provided headstone or marker for burials in a private cemetery, at the suggestion of Mr. LAMBORN.

It would affect an estimated 5 percent of the 13,000 veterans who have service-connected blindness or loss of vision in one eye. As of April 2006, the Walter Reed Medical Center alone has treated 140 returning OEF/OIF service-members for visual injuries.

I urge Members to support the bill. It is the least we can do for our veterans.

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

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

I rise in strong support of H.R. 797, as amended, the Dr. James Allen Veteran Vision Equity Act. I thank my colleagues, Mr. HALL of New York, the chairman of the Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee, and Mr. LAMBORN of Colorado, the ranking member of that subcommittee.

I also thank the chairman, Mr. FILNER, and the ranking member, Mr. BUYER, for bringing this important legislation to the floor; and the prime sponsor, Ms. BALDWIN.

This bill would, in fact, allow veterans who receive a disability compensation for impairment in the vision of one eye to be eligible to receive additional disability compensation for impairment of vision in the eye that is not service connected.

This eligibility includes situations where the impairment in each eye is to a visual acuity of 20/200 or less, or a peripheral field loss of 20 degrees or less. This is the same definition of "legal blindness" adopted by all 50 States and the Social Security Administration.

The New Hires Act would save the government money by allowing the Secretary of the VA to consult with the Secretary of Health and Human Services regarding unemployment compensation data in order to determine the eligibility for VA needs-based pension benefits.

Also, CBO estimates that this section of H.R. 797, as amended, would save the taxpayers \$15 million over 10 years. Also included in H.R. 797, as amended, is a provision that extends the types of work study jobs found in section 3485(a)(4) for 5 years through June 30 of 2012.

Current law allows work study recipients to perform a variety of duties throughout VA, as well as veteran-related paperwork at their schools.

We also extend the provision for 6 months in Public Law 109-461 to prevent canceling benefits in the middle of a school year. I am pleased we are able to extend this provision even further in this bill.

The last provision of this bill provides families with the option of choosing a bronze "V" denoting veteran status, in lieu of a VA headstone by graves already marked by a private marker. Many private cemeteries do not allow a second marker on a grave because it complicates routine maintenance. Therefore, that bronze "V" would identify a veteran's grave in a manner that is universally acceptable, and meet the family's desire to honor the deceased veteran.

The bronze "V" would also be readily identifiable to anybody visiting the cemetery, and a standard way to identify veterans who choose not to use a VA-provided headstone.

Once again, I express my strong support for H.R. 797, as amended.

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

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) who is an aggressive advocate for the veterans not only in Las Vegas but across the Nation.

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. FILNER and Mr. MILLER for their steadfast support for this legislation, and Ms. BALDWIN for bringing this to our attention for quite awhile now, waiting for us to act, and act we should.

As Mr. FILNER is well aware, having been to my congressional district, southern Nevada has one of the fastest growing veterans populations in the country, with nearly 218,000 veterans living in Clark County. And when I first started serving in Congress, I only had 160,000 veterans, so our veterans population has increased quite dramatically. It is even more important that former service men and women have the health care and benefits that they have earned.

I am a cosponsor of this legislation which would allow veterans who have complete loss of sight in one eye due to a service-connected injury to receive increased disability compensation if they lose sight in the other eye, regardless of whether that loss of sight is service connected.

For some reason, and I don't understand why, the VA has a higher threshold for determining blindness than any of the States and for the Social Security Administration. Because of this, veterans like my constituent, retired Army Major General Roy Kekahuna, are not covered for deteriorating vision in both eyes, even though they are considered legally blind.

Let us through this legislation demonstrate our true appreciation to our veterans for their sacrifice on behalf of this Nation by meeting our promise to provide them with proper health care and by passing this important piece of legislation.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the ranking member of the Economic Opportunity Subcommittee.

Mr. BOOZMAN. First of all, I would like to associate myself with the remarks that were said in the previous bill regarding the Suicide Prevention Act. Again, I just appreciate, being a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I appreciate the hard work on that. It really does make us all proud.

Mr. Speaker, for years the VA has awarded service-connected disability ratings, including increased ratings for the loss of use for paired organs, such as hearing, when only one organ was affected by military service. The exception is the body's visual sensory organs and it is time to remove that inequity. This brings the VA in line with eye disability as done by everyone else in figuring eye disability.

As an optometrist and as an eye doctor I am very, very familiar with this and used to help figure these things all of the time, the loss of visual acuity in one eye on the other eye and the long-term effects of that stress. To me, ignoring any loss of visual acuity due to nonservice-connected causes just isn't rational.

I would like to thank Congresswoman BALDWIN for her excellent work in bringing this forward to the full House, and for her advocacy. She has been a real bulldog, and I mean that in a very nice way, in just really staying after this. And due to her efforts, she

has been instrumental in highlighting this problem. I have very much enjoyed working with her to improve the law to better serve veterans with visual impairments.

I am also pleased that the bill contains an amendment which was offered during the full committee markup to extend the VA work/study allowance benefits for 5 years. This is a follow-on to a short-term, 6-month extension we passed late last year, and will enable student veterans the ability to continue in a wide variety of work/study positions that directly benefit veterans while easing the workload on the Federal staff at VA and DOD.

Current law allows work/study participants to work up to 20 hours per week. Participants perform a variety of duties such as veteran-related paperwork at schools or VA offices. Some participants perform outreach services under the supervision of a VA employee. Others perform services at VA medical facilities or the offices of the National Cemetery Administration.

The VA work/study allowance is available to Americans training under many programs, such as the Montgomery GI bill, as well as the program for Vocational Training and Rehabilitation for Veterans with Service Connected Disabilities, and several other programs.

The work/study portion of H.R. 797 allows us to extend the work/study program without violating the PAYGO rules by using the offsets found elsewhere in the bill.

I really want to thank Chairman FILNER and Chairman BUYER for working together. This was a difficult thing to get all of the needs crafted together so we could kill two birds with one stone and rectify the visual impairment part.

Mr. Speaker, this is an excellent bill. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 797.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. BOOZMAN, thank you again for having the initiative to extend the work/study program. You took the creativity of Ms. BALDWIN who was able to save money in this bill, not only meeting the needs of veterans, but by introducing a section to compare data which I hope you will explain, saved us money which can now be used to extend the work/study program for 5 years. Thank you for your amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the author of this bill, who not only solved a problem but found some money.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 797, the Dr. James Allen Veteran Vision Equity Act.

This bill fixes an inequity that has resulted in the denial of appropriate disability compensation to blinded veterans.

I wanted to share, first of all, the story of Dr. James Allen after whom

this legislation is named. Dr. Allen is a distinguished, caring professor of ophthalmology at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine. He has worked at our veterans hospital for nearly 33 years and treated countless eye patients, including many veterans who are blind.

One such patient is a Mr. Donald May. Don is a World War II veteran who lost his right eye in a hand grenade explosion. A few years ago, Mr. May began losing vision and ultimately became legally blind in his other non-service-connected eye. He applied to the Department of Veterans Affairs for help, but was denied further benefits. He was told that the current law in regard to paired organs did not apply to him even though he was legally blind in both his service-connected right eye and his nonservice-connected left eye.

After Dr. Allen brought the plight of Don May and many other patients to my attention, I began to research why these veterans were being denied the benefits that I felt they deserved, benefits that I believed Congress intended to grant them. Through my work with the Blinded Veterans Association, we discovered that while the current paired organ statute covers blindness in theory, in practice few if any veterans have been able to qualify for the additional disability compensation under its terms.

Congress has rightly recognized that some human organs and limbs are designed to work in pairs: our legs, our kidneys, our lungs, our ears, and of course our eyes. In the instance of eyes, blindness in one eye profoundly affects depth perception, even if sight is fully retained in the other eye.

The paired organ statute was written to assist those veterans who experience a service-connected loss of a paired organ or limb. This statute recognizes the interdependency of paired organs, and endeavors to treat the combined disability created by a nonservice-connected loss and injury or degeneration of the remaining paired organ or limb as though it, too, were the result of a service-connected disability. In general, the paired organ statute accomplishes this task except its treatment of loss of sight.

With regard to eyesight, the statute does not adequately define the term blindness, nor is any provision made for the impairment of vision in the nonservice-connected eye short of blindness.

Rather than using a visual acuity of 20/200 or a loss of field of vision 20 degrees, as is the definition of legal blindness that has been adopted by all 50 States and the Social Security Administration, the Department of Veterans Affairs uses a much more restrictive 5/200 rating for legal blindness. I was asked to describe exactly what that 5/200 means. Really, in layman's terms, it is the equivalent to having light perception only, but the specific definition is somebody with the ability to see at 5 feet what most of the rest of us could see at 200 feet.

As a result, few if any blinded veterans are able to qualify for additional compensation under the paired organ statute.

□ 1615

H.R. 797, the Dr. James Allen Veteran Vision Equity Act, fixes this problem. It defines blindness as impairment of vision where the impairment is to a visual acuity of 20/200 or less or a peripheral field loss of 20 degrees or less. This change in the law would only affect a small percentage, estimated to be roughly 5 percent, of the 13,000-plus veterans who are service-connected for loss of vision in one eye.

Yet, such a change would send a powerful signal to our Nation's blinded veterans that their hardships are not forgotten. Indeed, our Nation's blinded veterans face significant challenges in the labor market.

The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research found that for individuals with visual impairments, to the extent they are unable to read letters, that the employment rate is only 30.8 percent compared to 82.1 percent for people without disabilities. Given this employment trend, and the unique socioeconomic experiences of our veterans, it is even more urgent that Congress correct this one last inequity in the current paired organ statute and address the life-altering impact of blindness on our veterans.

I want to mention also that in compliance with our pay-as-you-go rules, section 2 of H.R. 797 fully offsets the cost of additional vision benefits. It directs the Veterans Secretary and the Secretary of Health and Human Services to match and compare VA needs-based pension benefits data, parents' dependency and indemnity compensation data, health care services data and unemployment data with the National Directory of New Hires maintained by HHS for the purpose of determining eligibility for such benefits and services. According to the GAO, the General Accountability Office, such data-matching project would help reduce fraud and waste within the VA system as it determines eligibility and benefits to those veterans thought to be unemployable, but who are indeed working.

I would like to thank Chairman FILNER, Subcommittee Chairman JOHN HALL, as well as Congressman BOOZMAN, Congressman SNYDER and Congressman MILLER for their unwavering support of this bill. I also want to thank the staff of the Veterans' Affairs Committee for helping advance this legislation.

H.R. 797 is a modest but very important step in restoring fair treatment to those blinded due to their service to our country and to further our commitment to them. Their sacrifices and service to this Nation should be matched by our desire to improve the quality of life for them and for their families.

I want to note that the Blinded Veterans Association has identified over

200 soldiers returning from Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom who are blinded in one eye due to service-related injuries and could perhaps in the future benefit from this legislation.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support H.R. 797.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the prime sponsor again of the piece of legislation she has. As my colleague Mr. BOOZMAN said earlier, she worked many long hours to bring this piece of legislation to the floor. I wish we could have done it sooner. I am glad to see it is moving forward at this time.

With that, I would like to recognize a new member to our committee. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN).

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

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise today in support of H.R. 797, the Dr. James Allen Veteran Vision Equity Act. I would like to thank Chairman FILNER, Ranking Member BUYER and my colleague Mr. HALL for their help in bringing this important legislation to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I offered an amendment to this bill which would provide families the option of choosing a bronze V in lieu of a VA headstone for graves already marked by a private marker. I am happy to say that this amendment was accepted with bipartisan support during committee markup.

Many private cemeteries do not allow a second marker on a grave, but a bronze V would be accepted by all cemeteries and would identify a veteran's grave in the same manner as a VA headstone.

While not the intent of the amendment, it may also lead to a decrease in costs for the Veterans Affairs Department. The average cost of a VA headstone is about \$100. Last year, the VA provided 6,534 second markers for a total cost of about \$650,000 plus shipping. The cost for the same number of bronze V markers would have only been between \$148,000 and \$184,000.

Mounting of these second markers is at the family's expense, usually several times the cost of the stone. The bronze V, however, will avoid the need for professional mounting, thus reducing significant expenses for the veterans' families.

This amendment not only distinguishes our Nation's veterans on their headstones, but it also allows families to demonstrate their loved one's selfless service to our Nation in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

It provides a great solution to an unfortunate problem with the added bonus of saving money for veterans' families and the VA.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will help our veterans, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 797.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, again, I would like to thank Mr. LAMBORN for

this very important addition. It will give families added consolation, of course, on the burial of a loved one. So we thank you.

I have no further requests for time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, we have no further requests for time, and we yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, we urge support for H.R. 797, as amended, and I yield back our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SALAZAR). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 797, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2007

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1284) to increase, effective as of December 1, 2007, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1284

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 "Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2007".

SEC. 2. INCREASE IN RATES OF DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION.

(a) RATE ADJUSTMENT.—Effective on December 1, 2007, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall increase, in accordance with subsection (c), the dollar amounts in effect on November 30, 2007, for the payment of disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation under the provisions specified in subsection (b).

(b) AMOUNTS TO BE INCREASED.—The dollar amounts to be increased pursuant to subsection (a) are the following:

(1) WARTIME DISABILITY COMPENSATION.—Each of the dollar amounts under section 1114 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR DEPENDENTS.—Each of the dollar amounts under sections 1115(1) of such title.

(3) CLOTHING ALLOWANCE.—The dollar amount under section 1162 of such title.

(4) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO SURVIVING SPOUSE.—Each of the dollar amounts under subsections (a) through (d) of section 1311 of such title.

(5) DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION TO CHILDREN.—Each of the dollar

amounts under sections 1313(a) and 1314 of such title.

(c) DETERMINATION OF INCREASE.—

(1) PERCENTAGE.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), each dollar amount described in subsection (b) shall be increased by the same percentage as the percentage by which benefit amounts payable under title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) are increased effective December 1, 2007, as a result of a determination under section 215(i) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)).

(2) ROUNDING.—Each dollar amount increased under paragraph (1), if not a whole dollar amount, shall be rounded to the next lower whole dollar amount.

(d) SPECIAL RULE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may adjust administratively, consistent with the increases made under subsection (a), the rates of disability compensation payable to persons under section 10 of Public Law 85-857 (72 Stat. 1263) who have not received compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 3. PUBLICATION OF ADJUSTED RATES.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register the amounts specified in section 2(b), as increased under that section, not later than the date on which the matters specified in section 215(i)(2)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 415(i)(2)(D)) are required to be published by reason of a determination made under section 215(i) of such Act during fiscal year 2008.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1284.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we all urge passage of H.R. 1284, the so-called Veterans' Compensation, COLA, Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act. It would direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to increase, effective December 1 of this year, the rates of veterans' compensation to keep pace with the rising cost of living in our Nation. The rate adjustment is equal to that provided on an annual basis to Social Security recipients and is based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index.

Regardless, Mr. Speaker, of where any of us are on the current war in Iraq, we all believe that our returning young men and women who have served this Nation so courageously get all the attention, care, respect and love that we can give as a Nation. Nothing bothers any of us more than to see returning troops, whether it be at Walter Reed or any of our VA hospitals, have to face the bureaucracy that seems indifferent, and does not provide the services they need.

The cost of serving these veterans, which includes this annual COLA, is a continuing cost of war. We will have from Iraq and Afghanistan an increase in injuries and disabilities that will yield an increase in claims for compensation. Over 1.5 million servicemembers have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan without any end, it looks like, in sight, and the President calls for more troops. Therefore, the Veterans Administration, as well as the military hospitals, can expect a significant increase in the number of new claims for compensation and new demands on the health care system. I think that recent events have shown that neither system is adequately prepared for that onslaught, and, in fact, the systems are stretched to the breaking point.

We as a Congress, we as a Nation, have got to give our veterans all the care that they need, all the resources they need, and we as Congress have to provide accountability for the spending of those resources.

Let me say that certainly we on the Democratic side, and I am sure supported on the Republican side, have made major increases in the resources to our veterans care that is now demanded from our Nation. I am told that the budget resolution will have an additional \$6.6 billion over what we appropriated last year for the Veterans Administration.

You know that we appropriated an additional \$3.6 billion for fiscal year 2007, the year that we are in now, in the so-called continuing resolution, the biggest increase of any department in that continuing resolution.

The supplemental that we will be considering at the end of this week has \$3.5 billion for military and veterans health care; we say if you are going to deal with the cost of war, deal with the costs of the warrior.

So just in 60 days, Mr. Speaker, the new majority in the Congress has provided an additional \$13.5 billion for the care of our Nation's veterans, and that is a bigger increase than was totaled in the last 5 years combined.

So I think we are responding to the Walter Reed scandal. We are responding to the tragic suicides that came from indifference from the bureaucracy. We are responding to the needs of traumatic brain injury that have so increased in this war. We are responding to the needs of those who have post-traumatic stress disorder. We are responding to the needs of a Veterans Administration that is backlogged 600,000 disability claims.

So we are going to respond with the dollars. We also need to make sure we have accountability, and we will have more to say on that in the future.

Congress regularly enacts an annual cost-of-living adjustment for veterans compensation to make sure that inflation does not erode the purchasing power of veterans and their families who depend upon this income to meet their daily needs. This bill before us, in

fact, will benefit all veterans from the World War I era through the current conflicts.

So I hope that we will have support for this. I would like to add my thanks for the increases that I talked about just a second ago in this budget for 2008 and the continuing resolution for 2007 and the supplemental that we will be considering to our Speaker, NANCY PELOSI, who insisted that we care for our Nation's veterans; also, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Mr. OBEY of Wisconsin; to his chairman of the subcommittee that looks at veterans affairs, Mr. EDWARDS from Texas; and the chairman of our Budget Committee, Mr. SPRATT, all of whom said we are not going to fail this test that America is faced with today, the test of whether we are going to make sure that our veterans get the care they need.

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

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

I would like to yield just a minute for a question to the chairman, if he might. By your comments, am I to take it that the majority does now have the votes necessary to pass the supplemental later this week?

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. FILNER. You are asking that of me? The lowest level of person in the House? No, I hope we will take up that supplemental at the end of the week.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I thank the chairman.

□ 1630

I do rise in strong support also of this piece of legislation, thanking my colleagues, the new chairman of the subcommittee which I chaired last year, Mr. HALL, and also Mr. LAMBORN, the new ranking member; also, again, thanking Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for helping move this important legislation to the floor as quickly as it has.

In this piece of legislation we increased, effective as of December 1 of this year, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities, the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans. Also, the COLA adjustment includes wartime disability compensation, additional compensation for dependents, clothing allowance, dependency and indemnity compensation to a surviving spouse, dependency and indemnity compensation for children.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important annual authorization bill which provides much-needed assistance to our Nation's veterans. I encourage and expect all of my colleagues to support this piece of legislation.

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

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the new chairman of the Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee of the Veterans Affairs Committee, Mr. HALL of New York.

Mr. HALL of New York. Thank you, Congressman, for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I introduced H.R. 1284 earlier this month with the Chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Congressman FILNER.

Chairman FILNER has been instrumental in moving this bill forward. I thank him for that. I also want to thank the ranking member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, STEVE BUYER, and our ranking member of the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, DOUG LAMBORN, who were both helpful in getting this bill moved expeditiously. The fact that we got this bill to the floor within the month shows the House leadership's commitment to our Nation's veterans.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, I believe that America must uphold its promise to care for our veterans and their families, and I strongly support efforts to alleviate unjust financial burdens imposed upon our Nation's veterans and their survivors. This is why I am so pleased that H.R. 1284 is on the floor today.

H.R. 1284 would provide a cost-of-living adjustment to the rates of disability compensation provided to our Nation's disabled veterans and to the compensation provided to the survivors of veterans and servicemembers who died or who will die as a result of military service.

Every year since 1976, Congress has enacted an annual COLA adjustment for veterans with disabilities and their survivors. The regularity of Congress' action on COLA legislation underscores its importance. Without it, inflation would diminish and erode the purchasing power of millions of beneficiaries. According to VA, as set forth in its fiscal year 2008 budget, the Department estimates that it will provide disability compensation to 3,220,031 veterans with service-related disabilities in fiscal year 2008.

In summary, this legislation is critical to the lives of over 3 million beneficiaries who have served our country well and faithfully. I ask for your continued support for our Nation's veterans, and I ask for your support of the bipartisan Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living-Adjustment Act of 2007.

I would just like to say a few words also about another bill that is on the floor today and falls under the jurisdiction of my subcommittee, H.R. 797, the Dr. James Allen Veteran Vision Equity Act. As with H.R. 1284, I am proud of the speed and fashion in which this bill has come to the floor.

H.R. 797, which has the backing of the Blind Veterans Association, would put the Veterans Administration on a par with the Social Security Administration, the World Health Organiza-

tion, and all 50 States in defining a visual impairment.

Furthermore, this bill allows certain veterans to receive a "V" on their gravestone and reauthorizes the VA's popular work/study program.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress faces a substantial task in dealing with the difficulties our veterans face. Currently there are more than 570,000 veterans claims pending before the VA, literally hundreds of thousands of veterans waiting on decisions that can substantially affect their financial situation.

On top of this, we have a new generation of veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. The subcommittee I chair, the Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee, recently held a hearing where we heard from experts and Iraq war veterans. They all agree that the VA is critically unprepared to deal with these new commitments and will be overwhelmed.

One witness privately compared the VA's current position to that of a person standing on a beach while a tsunami comes rushing towards the shore. These men and women deserve our support, and it is incumbent upon this Congress to act.

In the coming month, I plan to hold hearings on several pieces of legislation that will address this backlog. I have introduced one bill which would provide interim benefits to veterans who have waited over 6 months for a decision on their appeal.

While this will not fix the entire problem, it will help veterans pay their bills and buy their medicine while they wait for a decision from the VA. I look forward to working with colleagues on both sides of the aisle on these important issues, and I trust they share my sense of urgency on these matters.

It is my hope that H.R. 797 and H.R. 1284 are the first of many steps this Congress takes to ensure that those who have sacrificed so much for this country receive the benefits they have earned.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure now to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Washington, who although not on the VA Committee, is an active participant in much of the legislation that comes to that committee, and an Air Force veteran, Mr. REICHERT.

Mr. REICHERT. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, we are here to, and I am honored to be here to support H.R. 1284, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2007. It sounds awful cold and mechanical when you rattle it off in that way, but it means a lot to the people who serve this country.

I was, as my good friend Mr. MILLER said, I was in the Air Force. I served 33 years in the King County Sheriff's Office in Seattle, Washington, and I had friends who were wounded in the line of duty, partners who were wounded, partners who were killed and sacrificed

their lives to protect their communities. I, myself, was nearly mortally wounded in serving our community as a sheriff's deputy.

I know what it means to have a community come behind you. I know what it means to have a family stand with you. I know what it means to have your friends, your relatives, and your local government to be there with you.

Our veterans deserve to know what that feeling is. They need to know the United States Government and Members of Congress are standing with them. We are soldiers here fighting with them, providing them with the benefits they need, the tools they need, the things they need to do their job, the things they need to do to protect their families, the things they need to have to provide for their families.

Two weeks ago I stopped and visited a marine in a Seattle VA hospital. This marine was wounded in the neck with a .22 caliber bullet. I stood in awe at his courage as he lay paralyzed from the waist down, and I asked him what his plans were for the future, and that I was honored to meet him, and sorry that he was wounded in battle.

He looked at me and smiled and said, Why feel sorry for me? Don't. I volunteered for this work. I want to protect America. You know what he said his plans for the future was? To go back to Iraq. He said, I will walk again and fight next to my brothers and sisters on the front lines.

I met another soldier at Madigan Hospital, the Army hospital in Tacoma, Washington, a soldier who was standing near someone who blew themselves up, a suicide bomber. He is now suffering from a blood viral infection. He has been treated for over a year at Madigan Hospital. I said the same thing to him. I am honored to meet you. What are your plans for the future?

He said, I will heal. Don't feel sorry for me. I am going back to fight with my fellow soldiers.

This cost-of-living increase seems mechanical to us as we sit here in this House floor. It means a lot to the soldiers that are fighting and dying for this freedom of our citizens, of all of us here today.

I am so proud to be here to stand before you and support this legislation.

One of the other things that we must do, not only pass legislation that helps them provide for their families and for themselves and their future, you must reach out and make sure that those veterans who are out in our community, 624,000 veterans in the State of Washington, know what benefits are available to them.

On March 31, we would hold a veterans fair just across the water from Seattle, Washington, and invite every veteran in the State to be there so they can learn how we can help them and we can honor them.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY).

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I also would like to thank Chairman FILNER, Ranking Member BUYER, and subcommittee chairman, JOHN HALL, and ranking subcommittee chairman, Mr. MILLER, for their continued efforts to ensure the value of veterans benefits does not erode as the cost living increases.

H.R. 1284, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act, will help our service-disabled veterans and their survivors maintain the purchasing power of their benefits in 2008.

Now, everyone that has spoken before me has been quite eloquent, and you don't need for me to reinforce all of the statements that they have already made. But I would like to let you know how this affects the people that I represent.

Last year, over 31,000 veterans and survivors received disability compensation or pension payments from the VA in the State of Nevada. The action we are taking here today will help the Nevada veterans and families who depend on these VA benefits. No amount of money can adequately compensate our veterans for the loss of their health, or families for the loss of a loved one. It is important, though, that these benefits do not lose their value over time, and that we demonstrate our genuine appreciation for the sacrifices they have made on behalf of our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that everybody vote in favor of this measure.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT).

Mr. DENT. Thank you, Congressman MILLER, for your leadership, as well as Congresswoman BERKLEY. I appreciate all of your leadership on this very important issue.

Mr. Speaker, I too rise today to speak in favor of H.R. 1284, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2007.

I think we all are indeed grateful for the services of our Nation's veterans. They have answered this country's call time and time again. As a matter of fact, just last week I visited a VA outpatient clinic in my own district of Allentown, Pennsylvania. I continue to be amazed by the spirit of our veterans. Many of whom I met with there were in the Vietnam War, and some of whom were still struggling with the issues that affected them since their return. But I am nevertheless amazed by their spirit.

I also recently visited the Walter Reed Army Hospital in the wake of events. But as a Nation, we are indebted to these veterans. We are indebted to them for their contributions to our freedom. We need to take every opportunity to let those veterans know that they are appreciated and that their needs will be met by a grateful government and a grateful Nation.

H.R. 1284 is an opportunity for us to help meet those needs. This bill provides for an increase in the rate of compensation for disabled veterans and

in the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for their families effective December 1.

The percentage increase in these rates would be equal to the increase for Social Security benefits, which would be calculated later this year. Veterans benefits must keep up with inflation. Veterans should not have to worry about losing their standard of living just because they may be living on a fixed income.

This bill will help to accomplish that particular objective. I strongly urge the Members of this House to show their support for America's veterans by voting in favor of the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living and Adjustment Act of 2007.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, but I would like to thank Mr. MILLER for his commitment to our Nation's veterans, for leading his side with civility, cooperation and friendship.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, veterans with service-related disabilities deserve not only our admiration, but also our support. This is why today I rise in strong support of H.R. 327, H.R. 797 and H.R. 1284, a series of bills assisting our service men and women.

H.R. 327, The Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act will require the Veterans' Affairs Department to develop and implement a comprehensive program to reduce the incidence of suicide among veterans. Last year a survey study conducted among Army and Marine combat units returning from Iraq and Afghanistan found that one in eight troops reported symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Moreover, less than half of these soldiers experiencing symptoms sought professional help, primarily out of fear of being stigmatized by peers or hurting their military careers. With PTSD comes feelings of estrangement from others, loss of satisfaction in previously satisfying activities, and the feeling of hopelessness about the future. It is no wonder then, that veterans suffer a higher risk of suicide. This bill, H.R. 327, is an important step in the right direction to ending the soldiers' stigma for seeking help, and gives hope to thousands of veterans and their families coping with the costs of war.

Like H.R. 327, The Veterans Vision Equity Act (H.R. 797), is intended to providing our patriots with the care they deserve. H.R. 797 would change current law to provide veterans who receive disability compensation because of blindness in one eye, additional benefits if they are visually impaired in the second eye. This bill provides only a small change to the current code, yet it would aid an estimated 13,200 veterans in getting proper compensation for their disability. We blessed with vision often take our sight for granted, but the loss of one's sight no doubt requires an altering of lifestyle. Indeed, the sights that once filled eyes with beauty are regulated to memories and perceived only in the imagination. Many of our veterans are coping with such a change, and this bill is important in supporting their transition.

Finally there is H.R. 1284, The Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2007. This bill would provide an increase in the rate of compensation for disabled veterans, as well as provide an increase in rates

of dependency and indemnity compensation for these veterans' families. The baby-boom generation understands why this bill is necessary: costs are going up. When I was young five dollars could buy you dinner and take you to the movies—now it can buy you a can of soda and chips. Indeed, inflation is slowly but surely driving up costs for basic goods and services. It is important that we meet our obligations to our veterans by providing them with benefits commensurate to their service. H.R. 1284 would achieve just that.

We are a nation at war. As such, now more than ever, maintaining the well-being of our veterans is paramount. Already, we have agreed for so much from our service men and women, and now it is time that we return the favor. I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting our troops and vote "yes" on H.R. 327, H.R. 797 and H.R. 1284.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, we yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1284.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

□ 1645

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 835 by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 327 by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 797 by the yeas and nays.

The postponed vote on H.R. 1284 will be taken later.

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

HAWAIIAN HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion of the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 835, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 835.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 262, nays 162, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 173]

YEAS—262

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

NAYS—162

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

NOT VOTING—9

Cummings	Deal (GA)	Pence
Davis, Jo Ann	Johnson, E. B.	Snyder
Davis, Tom	Kanjorski	Young (FL)

□ 1711

Mrs. CUBIN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Messrs. RAMSTAD, EHLERS, CULBERSON and DENT changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Messrs. NEAL of Massachusetts, PICKERING, KINGSTON, ALEXANDER, GINGREY, CANNON and GILMOR changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So (two-thirds being in the negative) the bill was not passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

JOSHUA OMVIG VETERANS SUICIDE PREVENTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 327, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 327, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 423, nays 0, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 174]

YEAS—423

Abercrombie	Davis (AL)	Hunter
Ackerman	Davis (CA)	Inglis (SC)
Aderholt	Davis (IL)	Inslee
Akin	Davis (KY)	Israel
Alexander	Davis, David	Issa
Allen	Davis, Lincoln	Jackson (IL)
Altmire	DeFazio	Jackson-Lee
Andrews	DeGette	(TX)
Arcuri	Delahunt	Jefferson
Baca	DeLauro	Jindal
Bachmann	Dent	Johnson (GA)
Bachus	Diaz-Balart, L.	Johnson (IL)
Baird	Diaz-Balart, M.	Johnson, Sam
Baker	Dicks	Jones (NC)
Baldwin	Dingell	Jones (OH)
Barrett (SC)	Doggett	Jordan
Barrow	Donnelly	Kagen
Bartlett (MD)	Doolittle	Kaptur
Bean	Doyle	Keller
Becerra	Drake	Kennedy
Berkley	Dreier	Kildee
Berman	Duncan	Kilpatrick
Berry	Edwards	Kind
Biggert	Ehlers	King (IA)
Bilbray	Ellison	King (NY)
Bilirakis	Ellsworth	Kingston
Bishop (GA)	Emanuel	Kirk
Bishop (NY)	Emerson	Klein (FL)
Bishop (UT)	Engel	Kline (MN)
Blackburn	English (PA)	Knollenberg
Blumenauer	Eshoo	Kucinich
Blunt	Etheridge	Kuhl (NY)
Boehner	Everett	LaHood
Bonner	Fallin	Lamborn
Bono	Farr	Lampson
Boozman	Fattah	Langevin
Boren	Feeney	Lantos
Boswell	Ferguson	Larsen (WA)
Boucher	Filner	Larsen (CT)
Boustany	Flake	Latham
Boyd (FL)	Forbes	LaTourette
Boyd (KS)	Fortenberry	Lee
Brady (PA)	Fossella	Levin
Brady (TX)	Fox	Lewis (CA)
Bralley (IA)	Frank (MA)	Lewis (GA)
Brown (SC)	Frelinghuysen	Lewis (KY)
Brown, Corrine	Gallely	Linder
Brown-Waite,	Garrett (NJ)	Lipinski
Ginny	Gerlach	LoBiondo
Buchanan	Giffords	Loebsack
Burgess	Gilchrest	Lofgren, Zoe
Burton (IN)	Gillibrand	Lowe
Butterfield	Gillmor	Lucas
Buyer	Gingrey	Lungren, Daniel
Calvert	Gohmert	E.
Camp (MI)	Gonzalez	Lynch
Campbell (CA)	Goode	Mack
Cannon	Goodlatte	Mahoney (FL)
Cantor	Gordon	Maloney (NY)
Capito	Granger	Manzullo
Capps	Graves	Marchant
Capuano	Green, Al	Markey
Cardoza	Green, Gene	Marshall
Carnahan	Grijalva	Matheson
Carney	Gutierrez	Matsui
Carson	Hall (NY)	McCarthy (CA)
Carter	Hall (TX)	McCarthy (NY)
Castle	Hare	McCaul (TX)
Castor	Harman	McCollum (MN)
Chabot	Hastert	McCotter
Chandler	Hastings (FL)	McCreery
Clarke	Hastings (WA)	McDermott
Clay	Hayes	McGovern
Cleaver	Heller	McHenry
Clyburn	Hensarling	McHugh
Coble	Herger	McIntyre
Cohen	Herseth	McKeon
Cole (OK)	Higgins	McMorris
Conaway	Hill	Rodgers
Conyers	Hinche	McNerney
Cooper	Hinojosa	McNulty
Costa	Hirono	Meehan
Costello	Hobson	Meek (FL)
Courtney	Hodes	Meeks (NY)
Cramer	Hoekstra	Melancon
Crenshaw	Holden	Mica
Crowley	Holt	Michaud
Cubin	Honda	Millender-
Cuellar	Hoolley	McDonald
Culberson	Hoyer	Miller (FL)
Cummings	Hulshof	Miller (MI)

Miller (NC)	Reynolds	Stearns
Miller, Gary	Rodriguez	Stupak
Miller, George	Rogers (AL)	Sullivan
Mitchell	Rogers (KY)	Sutton
Mollohan	Rogers (MD)	Tancredo
Moore (KS)	Rohrabacher	Tanner
Moore (WI)	Ros-Lehtinen	Tauscher
Moran (KS)	Roskam	Taylor
Moran (VA)	Ross	Terry
Murphy (CT)	Rothman	Thompson (CA)
Murphy, Patrick	Royal-Allard	Thompson (MS)
Murphy, Tim	Royce	Thornberry
Murtha	Ruppersberger	Tiahrt
Musgrave	Rush	Tiberi
Myrick	Ryan (OH)	Tierney
Nadler	Ryan (WI)	Towns
Napolitano	Salazar	Turner
Neal (MA)	Sali	Udall (CO)
Neugebauer	Sánchez, Linda	Udall (NM)
Nunes	T.	Upton
Oberstar	Sanchez, Loretta	Van Hollen
Obey	Sarbanes	Velázquez
Olver	Saxton	Visclosky
Ortiz	Schakowsky	Walberg
Pallone	Schiff	Walden (OR)
Pascarell	Schmidt	Walsh (NY)
Pastor	Schwartz	Walz (MN)
Paul	Scott (GA)	Wamp
Payne	Scott (VA)	Wasserman
Pearce	Sensenbrenner	Schultz
Perlmutter	Serrano	Waters
Peterson (MN)	Sessions	Watson
Peterson (PA)	Sestak	Watt
Petri	Shadegg	Waxman
Pickering	Shays	Weiner
Pitts	Shea-Porter	Welch (VT)
Platts	Sherman	Weldon (FL)
Poe	Shimkus	Weller
Pomeroy	Shuler	Westmoreland
Porter	Shuster	Wexler
Price (GA)	Simpson	Whitfield
Price (NC)	Sires	Wicker
Pryce (OH)	Skelton	Wilson (NM)
Putnam	Slaughter	Wilson (OH)
Radanovich	Smith (NE)	Wilson (SC)
Rahall	Smith (NJ)	Wolf
Ramstad	Smith (TX)	Woolsey
Rangel	Smith (WA)	Wu
Regula	Solis	Wynn
Rehberg	Souder	Yarmuth
Reichert	Space	Young (AK)
Renzi	Spratt	
Reyes	Stark	

NOT VOTING—10

Barton (TX)	Franks (AZ)	Snyder
Davis, Jo Ann	Johnson, E. B.	Young (FL)
Davis, Tom	Kanjorski	
Deal (GA)	Pence	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1721

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to develop and implement a comprehensive program designed to reduce the incidence of suicide among veterans."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

IMPROVING COMPENSATION BENEFITS FOR VETERANS IN CERTAIN CASES OF IMPAIRMENT OF VISION INVOLVING BOTH EYES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 797, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 797, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 424, nays 0, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 175]

YEAS—424

Abercrombie	Costello	Heller
Ackerman	Courtney	Hensarling
Aderholt	Cramer	Herger
Akin	Crenshaw	Herseth
Alexander	Crowley	Higgins
Allen	Cubin	Hill
Altmire	Cuellar	Hinche
Andrews	Culberson	Hinojosa
Arcuri	Cummings	Hirono
Baca	Davis (AL)	Hobson
Bachmann	Davis (CA)	Hodes
Bachus	Davis (IL)	Hoekstra
Baird	Davis (KY)	Holden
Baker	Davis, David	Holt
Baldwin	Davis, Lincoln	Honda
Barrett (SC)	DeFazio	Hooley
Barrow	DeGette	Hoyer
Bartlett (MD)	Delahunt	Hulshof
Barton (TX)	DeLauro	Hunter
Bean	Dent	Inglis (SC)
Becerra	Diaz-Balart, L.	Inslee
Berkley	Diaz-Balart, M.	Israel
Berman	Dicks	Issa
Berry	Dingell	Jackson (IL)
Biggert	Doggett	Jackson-Lee
Bilbray	Donnelly	(TX)
Bilirakis	Doolittle	Jefferson
Bishop (GA)	Doyle	Jindal
Bishop (NY)	Drake	Johnson (GA)
Bishop (UT)	Dreier	Johnson (IL)
Blackburn	Duncan	Johnson, Sam
Blumenauer	Edwards	Jones (NC)
Blunt	Ehlers	Jones (OH)
Boehner	Ellison	Jordan
Bonner	Ellsworth	Kagen
Bono	Emanuel	Kaptur
Boozman	Emerson	Keller
Boren	Engel	Kennedy
Boswell	English (PA)	Kildee
Boucher	Eshoo	Kilpatrick
Boustany	Etheridge	Kind
Boyd (FL)	Everett	King (IA)
Boyd (KS)	Fallin	King (NY)
Brady (PA)	Farr	Kingston
Brady (TX)	Fattah	Kirk
Bralley (IA)	Feeney	Klein (FL)
Brown (SC)	Ferguson	Kline (MN)
Brown, Corrine	Filner	Knollenberg
Brown-Waite,	Flake	Kucinich
Ginny	Forbes	Kuhl (NY)
Buchanan	Fortenberry	LaHood
Burgess	Fossella	Lamborn
Burton (IN)	Fox	Lampson
Butterfield	Frank (MA)	Langevin
Buyer	Franks (AZ)	Lantos
Calvert	Frelinghuysen	Larsen (WA)
Camp (MI)	Gallely	Larsen (CT)
Campbell (CA)	Garrett (NJ)	Latham
Cannon	Gerlach	LaTourette
Capito	Giffords	Lee
Capps	Gilchrest	Levin
Capuano	Gillibrand	Lewis (CA)
Cardoza	Gillmor	Lewis (GA)
Carnahan	Gingrey	Lewis (KY)
Carney	Gohmert	Linder
Carson	Gonzalez	Lipinski
Carter	Goode	LoBiondo
Castle	Goodlatte	Loebsack
Castor	Gordon	Lofgren, Zoe
Chabot	Granger	Lowe
Chandler	Graves	Lucas
Clarke	Green, Al	Lungren, Daniel
Clay	Grijalva	E.
Cleaver	Gutierrez	Lynch
Clyburn	Hall (NY)	Mack
Coble	Hall (TX)	Mahoney (FL)
Cohen	Hare	Maloney (NY)
Conaway	Harman	Manzullo
Conyers	Hastert	Marchant
Cooper	Hastings (FL)	Markey
Costa	Hastings (WA)	Matheson
	Hayes	

Matsui	Pitts	Smith (NE)
McCarthy (CA)	Platts	Smith (NJ)
McCarthy (NY)	Poe	Smith (TX)
McCaul (TX)	Pomeroy	Smith (WA)
McCollum (MN)	Porter	Snyder
McCotter	Price (GA)	Solis
McCrery	Price (NC)	Souder
McDermott	Pryce (OH)	Space
McGovern	Putnam	Spratt
McHenry	Radanovich	Stark
McHugh	Rahall	Stearns
McIntyre	Ramstad	Stupak
McKeon	Rangel	Sullivan
McMorris	Regula	Sutton
Rodgers	Rehberg	Tancredo
McNerney	Reichert	Tanner
McNulty	Renzi	Tauscher
Meehan	Reyes	Taylor
Meek (FL)	Reynolds	Terry
Meeks (NY)	Rodriguez	Thompson (CA)
Melancon	Rogers (AL)	Thompson (MS)
Mica	Rogers (KY)	Thornberry
Michaud	Rogers (MI)	Tiahrt
Millender-	Rohrabacher	Tiberi
McDonald	Ros-Lehtinen	Tierney
Miller (FL)	Roskam	Towns
Miller (MI)	Ross	Turner
Miller (NC)	Rothman	Udall (CO)
Miller, Gary	Roybal-Allard	Udall (NM)
Miller, George	Royce	Upton
Mitchell	Ruppersberger	Van Hollen
Mollohan	Rush	Velázquez
Moore (KS)	Ryan (OH)	Visclosky
Moore (WI)	Ryan (WI)	Walberg
Moran (KS)	Salazar	Walden (OR)
Moran (VA)	Sali	Walsh (NY)
Murphy (CT)	Sánchez, Linda	Walz (MN)
Murphy, Patrick	T.	Wamp
Murphy, Tim	Sánchez, Loretta	Wasserman
Murtha	Sarbanes	Schultz
Musgrave	Saxton	Waters
Myrick	Schakowsky	Watson
Nadler	Schiff	Watt
Napolitano	Schmidt	Waxman
Neal (MA)	Schwartz	Weiner
Neugebauer	Scott (GA)	Welch (VT)
Nunes	Scott (VA)	Weldon (FL)
Oberstar	Sensenbrenner	Weller
Obey	Serrano	Westmoreland
Olver	Sessions	Wexler
Ortiz	Sestak	Whitefield
Pallone	Shadegg	Wicker
Pascarell	Shays	Wilson (NM)
Pastor	Shea-Porter	Wilson (OH)
Paul	Sherman	Wilson (SC)
Payne	Shimkus	Wolf
Pearce	Shuler	Woolsey
Perlmutter	Shuster	Wu
Peterson (MN)	Simpson	Wynn
Peterson (PA)	Sires	Yarmuth
Petri	Skelton	Young (AK)
Pickering	Slaughter	

NOT VOTING—9

Cantor	Deal (GA)	Kanjorski
Davis, Jo Ann	Green, Gene	Pence
Davis, Tom	Johnson, E. B.	Young (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE.

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

□ 1730

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve compensation benefits for veterans in certain cases of impairment of vision involving both eyes, to provide for the use of the National Directory of New Hires for income verification purposes, to extend the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide an educational assistance allowance for qualifying work study activities, and to authorize the provision of bronze representations of the letter 'V' for the

graves of eligible individuals buried in private cemeteries in lieu of Government-provided headstones or markers."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

JUDICIAL DISCLOSURE RESPONSIBILITY ACT

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1130) to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to extend the authority to withhold from public availability a financial disclosure report filed by an individual who is a judicial officer or judicial employee, to the extent necessary to protect the safety of that individual or a family member of that individual, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1130

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 "Judicial Disclosure Responsibility Act".

SEC. 2. PROTECTION OF FAMILY MEMBERS.

Section 105(b)(3) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by inserting "or a family member of that individual" after "that individual"; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)(i), by inserting "or a family member of that individual" after "the report".

SEC. 3. FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE REPORTS.

(a) EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY.—Section 105(b)(3) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by striking "2005" each place that term appears and inserting "2009".

(b) REPORT CONTENTS.—Section 105(b)(3)(C) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended—

(1) in clause (ii), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in clause (iii), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(iv) the nature or type of information redacted;

"(v) what steps or procedures are in place to ensure that sufficient information is available to litigants to determine if there is a conflict of interest;

"(vi) principles used to guide implementation of redaction authority; and

"(vii) any public complaints received relating to redaction."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ) and

the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of H.R. 1130, the Judicial Disclosure Responsibility Act. This legislation would amend the Ethics in Government Act by extending for an additional 4 years the Judicial Conference's authority to redact information, as necessary, to protect judicial employees and their families.

In 1998, Congress recognized the potential threats against individual judges and authorized the judicial branch to redact, as circumstances may require, information from financial disclosure reports before they are released to the public. This bill will allow the courts to continue taking necessary steps to protect judges, their staffs and their families.

Past incidences of violence against judges and their families demonstrate the need for this legislation. Most notable was the matter involving Judge Joan Lefkow. On April 6, 2003, a defendant was sentenced to 4 years imprisonment for soliciting the murder of Judge Lefkow. Two years later, that same judge returned to her home one day and found her husband and mother murdered by a former litigant whose case Judge Lefkow had dismissed.

We need to restore the judiciary's authority in appropriate circumstances to protect their personal information about residences and other frequented locations so as to better ensure their security and peace of mind.

The redaction authority has been used sparingly. In a report to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, the Judicial Conference reported that of the 3,942 Federal judiciary employees required to file financial disclosure reports in 2004, only 177 reports were redacted before release, and those only partially. It is with the greatest care that these documents are redacted to maintain an appropriate balance between protection of judiciary employees and the public's right to know about potential conflicts of interest.

This legislation was favorably reported out of the House Committee on the Judiciary. It would ensure the protection of personal information of the judicial branch while ensuring that the public retains its right to access annual disclosure reports.

We cannot expect judges to effectively carry out their duties if they are

forced to expose themselves and their loved ones to danger. The effectiveness of our court system depends on ensuring they can take reasonable steps to protect their safety.

I strongly support this important legislation, and urge its adoption by the House.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I am an original cosponsor of this legislation and believe it is necessary to protect judges, their family members and the other courthouse personnel by preventing disclosure of personal information that can be used to target and retaliate against them.

This legislation extends the authority of Federal judges and court personnel to redact sensitive and personal information from financial disclosure reports for security reasons. The current authority to redact personal and sensitive information from financial disclosure reports expired at the end of 2005.

Recent assaults and threats against Federal judges and their family members demonstrate the need for this redaction authority to continue. I believe this is an important safeguard to prevent vindictive offenders and litigants from seeking their revenge by harming or intimidating judges, probation officers and others.

H.R. 1130 extends the authority for 4 years, expands the coverage to include immediate family members, and improves the annual reporting requirements on the use of this authority. Although I favor a permanent extension of redaction authority, I support a 4-year extension to ensure the bill's timely passage by the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE), the ranking member of the Courts, Internet and Intellectual Property Subcommittee.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Texas for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1130, the Judicial Disclosure Act. The distinguished gentleman from Michigan and the distinguished gentleman from Texas, Chairman CONYERS and Ranking Member SMITH, should be recognized for their leadership and efforts to shepherd this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this is commonsense legislation that was unanimously approved by the House Judiciary Committee. It reauthorizes the Judicial Conference to redact certain personal and financial information that judges and judicial officers are required by the Ethics in Government Act to publicly disclose each year.

The authority was originally granted in 1998 and was subsequently renewed,

but expired on December 31, 2005. This legislation extends the authority until 2009.

Under H.R. 1130, Mr. Speaker, Federal judges and judicial officers are still required to submit information required by the Ethics in Government Act. The Judicial Conference would be permitted to redact personal and sensitive information from public disclosure to protect the safety of our judges, judicial officers and their families. Examples of the information that may be redacted include where they reside, where their spouses work or where their children attend school.

The Judicial Conference reported in 2005 that 3,942 Federal judiciary employees filed financial disclosure reports. Only 177 reports were partially redacted prior to release. Four redacted reports were based on specific threats, and another 137 reports were redacted based on general threats. We know these threats are real, and it only makes common sense to ensure that we do not needlessly expose personal and sensitive information of the judiciary's top officers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the House to support H.R. 1130, and hope that the other body will provide for its expeditious consideration.

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

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I think this bill strikes the proper balance between protecting judges, their staffs and their families, and balancing that with the public's right to know. With that, I urge its adoption by this House.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation, which will help protect our Nation's judges against those who may want to harm them, or who may threaten to harm them in efforts to influence outcomes of cases.

Until recently, when a judge or court official needed to submit a financial disclosure report, personal information about that individual could be redacted to prevent those who may intend harm from obtaining such information as the individual's home address.

Unfortunately, this redaction authority expired at the end of 2005. A recent incident in which a convicted felon requested the financial disclosure records of a judicial officer and those records contained such items as the work address of the officer's wife—highlights the need to reauthorize the authority to redact this type of personal information.

H.R. 1130, the judicial disclosure responsibility act, would amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to extend through 2009 the authority of the judicial conference to redact certain personal information from financial disclosure reports filed by judges. In addition, the bill would restrict disclosure of personal information about family members of judges when that disclosure might endanger them, in order to protect such information as the school location of a judge's children, the address of the workplace of a judge's spouse, and the like.

This narrowly tailored legislation will protect those that protect us—and I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1130.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

NATIVE AMERICAN METHAMPHETAMINE ENFORCEMENT AND TREATMENT ACT OF 2007

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 545) to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to clarify that territories and Indian Tribes are eligible to receive grants for confronting the use of methamphetamine, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 545

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 "Native American Methamphetamine Enforcement and Treatment Act of 2007".

SEC. 2. NATIVE AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN METHAMPHETAMINE GRANTS.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 2996(a) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc(a)) is amended—

(1) *in paragraph (1)—*

(A) *in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting ", territories, and Indian tribes (as defined in section 2704)" after "to assist States"; and*

(B) *in subparagraph (B), by striking "and local" and inserting ", territorial, Tribal, and local";*

(2) *in paragraph (2), by inserting ", territories, and Indian tribes" after "make grants to States"; and*

(3) *in paragraph (3)(C), by inserting ", Tribal," after "support State".*

(b) *GRANT PROGRAMS FOR DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN.*—Section 755(a) of the USA PATRIOT Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc-2(a)) is amended by inserting ", territories, and Indian tribes (as defined in section 2704 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797d))" after "make grants to States".

(c) *GRANT PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS METHAMPHETAMINE USE BY PREGNANT AND PARENTING WOMEN OFFENDERS.*—Section 756 of the USA PATRIOT Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 3797cc-3) is amended—

(1) *in subsection (a)(2), by inserting ", territorial, or Tribal" after "State";*

(2) *in subsection (b)—*

(A) *in paragraph (1)—*

(i) *by inserting ", territorial, or Tribal" after "State"; and*

(ii) by striking “and/or” and inserting “or”;
 (B) in paragraph (2)—
 (i) by inserting “, territory, Indian tribe,”
 after “agency of the State”; and
 (ii) by inserting “, territory, Indian tribe,”
 after “criminal laws of that State”; and
 (C) by adding at the end the following:
 “(3) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ‘Indian tribe’
 has the meaning given the term in section 2704
 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets
 Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3797d).”; and
 (3) in subsection (c)—
 (A) in paragraph (3), by striking “Indian
 Tribes” and inserting “Indian tribes”; and
 (B) in paragraph (4)—
 (i) in the matter preceding subparagraph
 (A)—
 (I) by striking “State’s”; and
 (II) by striking “and/or” and inserting “or”;
 (ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking “State”;
 (iii) in subparagraph (C), by inserting “, In-
 dian tribes,” after “involved counties”; and
 (iv) in subparagraph (D), by inserting “, Trib-
 al” after “Federal, State”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of H.R. 545, the Native American Methamphetamine Enforcement and Treatment Act of 2007. This legislation establishes the clear intent of Members of Congress to assist Native Americans in combating the threat of methamphetamine.

This threat looms great in our country, and nowhere greater than in Native American communities. Studies have shown that Native American communities have more than double the methamphetamine use rates of other communities. According to surveys performed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, over 70 percent of Indian tribes identified methamphetamine as the drug that poses the greatest threat to their reservation, and also estimated that at least 40 percent of violent crime cases investigated in Indian country involved methamphetamine in some capacity.

From hearings in the House and from other reports, we learn that current Federal laws and programs designed to prevent the spread of methamphetamine use have proven to be reasonably effective, but we identified serious gaps with respect to protecting our Native American communities from this dangerous drug. Unfortunately, the attempt to fix these gaps in the Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act of 2005, passed in the last Congress as part of the USA PATRIOT Improvement

and Reauthorization Act of 2005, inadvertently left out tribal organizations, as well as territories, as eligible applicants for certain grants.

□ 1745

H.R. 545, the Native American Methamphetamine Enforcement and Treatment Act of 2007, corrects that oversight.

Included in the Combat Meth Act were provisions that authorized funding for three important grant programs within the Department of Justice: first, the COPS Hot Spots program; second, the Drug-Endangered Children program; and third, the Pregnant and Parenting Women Offenders program.

Although Native American tribes and territories were included as eligible grant recipients under the Pregnant and Parenting Women Offenders program, they were unintentionally left out as possible grant recipients under the COPS Hot Spots program and the Drug-Endangered Children program.

To correct this oversight, H.R. 545 ensures that territories and Indian tribes are included as eligible grant recipients under programs to, one, address the manufacture, sale and use of methamphetamine; two, aid children in homes in which methamphetamine or other drugs are unlawfully manufactured, distributed, dispensed or used; and three, address methamphetamine use by pregnant and parenting women offenders.

I strongly support this important legislation and urge its adoption by the House.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 545, the Native American Methamphetamine Enforcement and Treatment Act of 2007, which provides urgently needed funds to Native American communities for the enforcement and treatment of methamphetamine addiction.

The Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act of 2005 was enacted last year as part of the U.S. PATRIOT Act Improvement and Reauthorization Act. It included three critical grant programs to assist States with America’s escalating methamphetamine problem: the COPS Meth Hot Spots program, the Drug-Endangered Children program and the Pregnant and Parenting Women Offenders program. However, the act inadvertently omitted Native American communities from participation in two of these grant programs.

At a hearing before the Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security Subcommittee in February, Mr. Ben Shelly, vice president of the Navajo Nation, stated that methamphetamine is the drug of choice in Indian country.

In 2005, 40 percent of all calls seeking police assistance on the Navajo Nation were meth-related. Even more troubling is that 40 percent of all violent crimes committed on the Navajo Nation are directly related to methamphetamine use trafficking.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the sponsor of H.R. 545, testified at the hearing that 74 percent of Native Americans surveyed in a recent study say that meth is the single biggest threat to Native American communities today. The Native American Meth Enforcement and Treatment Act corrects this oversight and gives Native Americans full access to all three meth grants. This legislation is critical to our continuing fight to eliminate the meth epidemic in America.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bipartisan legislation and urge my colleagues to do so as well.

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

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL).

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. I thank the gentlelady from California for her leadership and hard work on this important issue, and also the ranking member.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to take a minute to thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) who is the lead cosponsor of this legislation, not only for his support, but for his work on this issue during the last Congress. This is only one of many critically important issues he has championed as cochair of the Congressional Native American Caucus. I am also honored to be a co-vice chair on the caucus, and I am honored to work with him on this legislation.

I would also like to thank my colleagues who supported this bill by joining me as cosponsors.

The important legislation before us today, H.R. 545, allows tribal governments to apply for three programs vital to the fight against methamphetamine: the COPS Meth Hot Spots program, the Drug-Endangered Children program, and the Pregnant and Parenting Women Offenders program. These programs were authorized last year as part of the Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act, which was included in the U.S. PATRIOT Act reauthorization. Unfortunately, tribal governments were unintentionally left out as possible applicants for the Hot Spots and Drug-Endangered Children programs. And while tribes are included as eligible applicants for the Pregnant and Parenting Women Offenders grant program, clarifying language was needed to ensure there is ample coordination with tribal service providers.

This legislation simply insures that consistent with tribal sovereignty, tribes can apply for the Hot Spots and Drug-Endangered Children grant programs. It also ensures greater coordination with tribal service providers in the Pregnant and Parenting Women Offenders grant program.

The manufacture and use of methamphetamine is one of the fastest

growing drug problems in the Nation. Thousands of labs continue to be found across the country. And while the number is slowing and slowly decreasing, drug traffickers have supplanted this decline with meth produced in other countries.

Unfortunately, the meth situation has been disproportionately much worse in Native American communities. The 2005 National Drug Survey on Drug Use and Health reported a past-year methamphetamine use rate of 1.7 percent for American Indians, and 2.2 percent for Native Hawaiians. These rates are dramatically higher than Anglos and other ethnic groups.

Mr. Speaker, this situation is absolutely unacceptable. The persistent use of methamphetamine on tribal lands and across America may come to an end. And I believe that passing H.R. 545 is an important step towards achieving this goal.

I urge my colleagues to support passage of this legislation.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I want to just thank Mr. UDALL on his excellent work in helping to correct this oversight. I urge this bill's adoption.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a cosponsor and strong supporter of H.R. 545—the Native American Methamphetamine Enforcement and Treatment Act of 2007.

As a cofounder and co-chair of the bipartisan Congressional Caucus to Fight and Control Methamphetamine, I am keenly aware of the threat that is our Nation's meth epidemic.

Methamphetamine has devastating societal costs. It is the source of violent crimes against people and property; increased suicide rates; heightened risks of hepatitis C and HIV/AIDS; increased need for more foster care placements for children of users; and environmental impacts from manufacturing facilities.

This highly addictive drug is a killer that shows no deference to region, race or ethnicity—it preys on all mankind.

Unfortunately, meth use thrives in some communities more than others. Native Americans suffer from higher than average rates of drug use as found in a recent NIH study. The Department of Health and Human Services estimates that 1.7 percent of Native Americans used meth in 2004—a per capita rate more than double that of Whites—the largest user population.

It is imperative that we assist our Native American communities and that is exactly what this bill does.

A year ago the President signed into law the Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act of 2005 as part of the PATRIOT Act Reauthorization bill. The bill was a true bipartisan, bicameral effort that has provided comprehensive measures to address our Nation's methamphetamine problem. However, the bill did not specify that Native Americans would be eligible for funding within the three grant programs authorized and mentioned by my colleagues. H.R. 545 ensures that Native Americans will have access to the grant funds.

I urge unanimous support for this commonsense legislation.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 545, the Native American Methamphetamine Enforcement Treatment Act

of 2007. I am pleased to join my colleague, Congressman TOM UDALL, in championing this bill through the House. This bill allows Indian tribes to apply for three new grant programs—the cops hot spots program, the drug endangered children program, and the pregnant and parenting women offenders program.

Methamphetamine use in Indian country has reached epidemic proportions, which has led to an increase in crime in Indian communities. This bill will give Indian tribes the opportunity to apply for Federal funds to assist them in the fight against meth use.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 545, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PREVENTING HARASSMENT THROUGH OUTBOUND NUMBER ENFORCEMENT (PHONE) ACT OF 2007

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 740) to amend title 18, United States Code, to prevent caller ID spoofing, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 740

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 “Preventing Harassment through Outbound Number Enforcement (PHONE) Act of 2007”.

SEC. 2. CALLER ID SPOOFING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 47 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 1040. Caller ID spoofing

“(a) OFFENSE.—Whoever, in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce, knowingly uses or provides to another—

“(1) false caller ID information with intent to defraud; or

“(2) caller ID information pertaining to an actual person without that person's consent and with intent to deceive the recipient of a call about the identity of the caller;

or attempts or conspires to do so, shall be punished as provided in subsection (b).

“(b) PUNISHMENT.—Whoever violates subsection (a) shall—

“(1) if the offense is committed for commercial gain, be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both; and

“(2) be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than one year, or both, in any other case.

“(c) LAW ENFORCEMENT EXCEPTION.—It is a defense to a prosecution for an offense under this section that the conduct involved was lawfully authorized investigative, protective, or intelligence activity of a law enforcement agency of the United States, a State, or a political subdivision of a State, or of an intelligence agency of the United States, or any activity authorized under chapter 224 of this title.

“(d) FORFEITURE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The court, in imposing sentence on a person who is convicted of an offense under this section, shall order that the defendant forfeit to the United States—

“(A) any property, real or personal, constituting or traceable to gross proceeds obtained from such offense; and

“(B) any equipment, software or other technology used or intended to be used to commit or to facilitate the commission of such offense.

“(2) PROCEDURES.—The procedures set forth in section 413 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 853), other than subsection (d) of that section, and in Rule 32.2 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, shall apply to all stages of a criminal forfeiture proceeding under this section.

“(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

“(1) the term ‘caller ID information’ means information regarding the origination of the telephone call, such as the name or the telephone number of the caller;

“(2) the term ‘telephone call’ means a call made using or received on a telecommunications service or VOIP service;

“(3) the term ‘VOIP service’ means a service that—

“(A) provides real-time 2-way voice communications transmitted using Internet Protocol, or a successor protocol;

“(B) is offered to the public, or such classes of users as to be effectively available to the public (whether part of a bundle of services or separately); and

“(C) has the capability to originate traffic to, or terminate traffic from, the public switched telephone network or a successor network;

“(4) the term ‘State’ includes a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, and any commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States; and

“(5) a term used in a definition in this subsection has the meaning given that term in section 3 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 153).”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 47 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“1040. Caller ID spoofing.”.

SEC. 3. OTHER SPECIFIED UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES FOR MONEY LAUNDERING.

(a) FRAUD AND RELATED ACTIVITY IN CONNECTION WITH ELECTRONIC MAIL.—Section 1956(c)(7)(D) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting “section 1037 (Fraud and related activity in connection with electronic mail),” after “1032”.

(b) CALLER ID SPOOFING.—Section 1956(c)(7)(D) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting “section 1040 (Caller ID spoofing),” before “section 1111”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 740, the Preventing Harassment Through Outbound Number Enforcement (PHONE) Act of 2007.

I would like to thank Chairman CONYERS for his leadership in moving this bill through the committee process and to the floor on a bipartisan basis, and also commend Mr. SCOTT and the leadership and assistance of the full committee Ranking Member SMITH and subcommittee Ranking Member FORBES, along with that of the chief sponsor of spoofing legislation in the last Congress, TIM MURPHY, in developing and moving this bill to the floor.

H.R. 740 is aimed at the practice that has come to be known as spoofing. To some, that name might conjure up harmless pranks, but spoofing is very serious. Spoofing occurs when a caller uses caller ID information to hide the caller's true identity in order to commit fraud or some other abusive act.

One of the witnesses at the hearing on the predecessor bill last Congress was Phil Kiko, the Judiciary Committee's chief counsel at the time. He had been a victim of caller ID spoofing when his home phone number was left falsely as the caller ID on numerous calls. Phil and his family were understandably irritated at the numerous calls from people mistakenly calling him back, and it could have been much worse.

Spoofing is also often used to commit identity theft. Call recipients sometimes are tricked into divulging personal and private information under the mistaken belief that the call is legitimate. For example, the AARP has reported cases in which people received calls claiming falsely that they had missed jury duty. They were told that to avoid prosecution they needed to provide their Social Security number and other personal information. The caller ID information that appeared on their phones was from the local courthouse, so they assumed that the caller was telling the truth.

H.R. 740 is intended to help protect consumers from harassment, identity theft and other privacy intrusions.

Recently, the technology needed to spoof has become readily available either through the purchase of Internet telephone equipment or through Web sites specifically set up to spoof. For example, Voice over Internet Protocol equipment can easily be configured to populate the caller ID field with information of the user's choosing. Some of

the technology can block any back technology, such as Star 69. In addition, the bill contains a forfeiture provision allowing for the forfeiture of equipment used and proceeds gained by criminals in call spoofing.

Finally, section 3 of the bill has a provision which adds call spoofing to the list of unlawful activities associated with money laundering. Existing law provides that comparable crimes, such as violations of the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, constitutes specified unlawful activities for the purpose of the money laundering statute.

Not all use of fake caller ID information is considered spoofing. When you receive a call from a U.S. House of Representatives number on an outside line, for example, the number that appears on your caller ID is a fictitious number to protect the security of House Members and staff. False caller ID information is also used legitimately for certain law enforcement purposes and by some businesses as well, and these non-malicious users are not prohibited by the bill.

The bill we were considering last Congress would have made even this nonabusive fake caller ID use illegal. That bill also failed to make a distinction in penalties for spoofing that does not involve fraud or gain, such as the Phil Kiko case.

Further, comments from the Department of Justice were not available when last year's bill was being developed. This is why I opposed the bill last year, though I was in support of the concept of the bill.

We have constructed a bill that makes fraudulent commercial use of caller ID information a felony, with fines and imprisonment of up to 5 years. This commercial motive would require the use of false caller ID information; that is, caller ID information that is not your own. The bill also makes abusive use of caller ID information without fraudulent commercial motives a misdemeanor, such as the Phil Kiko situation. Finally, the bill exempts use of nonabusive fake ID information.

The Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security held a hearing and markup on the bill in February and reported it favorably to the full committee. At the subcommittee hearing, the DOJ provided testimony and recommendations which we did not have a chance to fully consider by the time of full committee markup. Ranking Member FORBES and Mr. SCOTT agreed to work together on considering those recommendations in a continuation of the fully bipartisan effort under which this bill had been developed.

After meeting with representatives of DOJ, they have revised the bill as reported out of committee to clarify the offense and punishment language in the bill. The change makes clear that felony penalties are reserved for egregious violations committed with intent to wrongfully obtain anything of value.

They also made other technical changes to the bill for its introduction on the floor.

H.R. 740 is important and helpful legislation for preventing identity theft and other abuses of phone technologies. Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

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

□ 1800

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 740, the Preventing Harassment Through Outbound Number Enforcement Act, or PHONE Act, and I thank Chairman CONYERS and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle for their support of this bill which unanimously passed the House at the end of the 109th Congress.

Mr. Speaker, a new type of fraud known as "spoofing" is becoming more prevalent. Spoofing involves masking one's caller ID information to facilitate a fraudulent telephone call to the recipient. Those who engage in spoofing use incorrect, fake or fraudulent caller identification to hide their identity, and then obtain personal information from the victim.

Call recipients unwittingly divulge their names, addresses, or Social Security numbers under the mistaken belief that the caller represents a bank, a credit card company, or even a court of law.

Spoofing is not simply annoying; it is the latest tactic for committing identity theft and other types of fraud that costs victims thousands and sometimes hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Spoofing not only victimizes the phone call recipient, but also invades the privacy of those individuals whose caller ID is used to mask the fraudulent calls. To address this, H.R. 740 specifically prohibits the use of an actual person's caller ID information for spoofing.

Although the technology needed to spoof has been available for some time, it previously required special equipment and knowledge to use the masking technology.

Recently, this technology has become more accessible either through the purchase of Internet telephone equipment or through Web sites specifically set up for spoofing.

These Web sites claim to protect one's privacy. However, the use of this technology has been linked to fraud, prank phone calls, political attacks, and telemarketers' attempts to avoid "do not call" restrictions.

Additionally, calling cards can be purchased or accounts set up to facilitate multiple telephone calls. One of the greatest concerns related to spoofing is the use of the technology by criminals to mislead law enforcement officials and evade prosecution.

H.R. 740 addresses these concerns by creating a new Federal crime to prohibit the modification of caller ID with

the intent to deceive the recipient of a telephone call as to the identity of the caller.

The bill imposes a fine and/or a prison term of up to 5 years for violations. However, the legislation does not affect legally available blocking of caller ID technology, or lawfully authorized activities of law enforcement or intelligence agencies.

This legislation will help deter telephone fraud, protect consumers from harassment, and protect consumers and their personally identifiable information from identity thieves. I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation.

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

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the author of the bill, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the PHONE Act is a strong bill that has gained bipartisan support. Members on both sides of the aisle have agreed that we need urgent reforms to protect privacy rights and to crack down on identity theft. With over 10 million Americans affected by some form of identity theft each year, we need to tackle this issue at every possible level.

Spoofing is one form of identity theft in which criminals coax victims into giving up their most sensitive personal information by making it appear that a call is coming from a legitimate institution such as a bank. Misleading caller ID information also allows a spoofer to cause a victim to accept a call they otherwise might have avoided, leading to harassment and further privacy intrusions. Advances in technology such as Voice-Over-Internet-Protocol have made caller ID spoofing easy and readily available.

H.R. 740 includes a number of important provisions to fight spoofing. The legislation creates a new Federal crime to prohibit using or providing false caller ID information with the intent to wrongfully obtain something of value. The section also prohibits using or providing the caller ID for information of an actual person without his or her consent and with the intent to deceive the recipient. It correctly targets spoofing done to perpetuate financial fraud, and reserves harsh punishment for such crimes, including felony penalties of up to 5 years in prison.

In addition, the bill significantly improves the tools available to law enforcement to fight noncommercial spoofing while preserving the legitimate uses of the technology. For example, women's shelters may use misleading caller ID numbers, and many businesses do if they are calling from one of many lines. They may want the caller ID information to just reflect the main line. The bill does not infringe on these instances because the caller would not possess the requisite intent to defraud or deceive.

Finally, the bill is narrowly tailored to permit caller ID blocking in which one prevents one's number from being known at all. Caller ID blocking is not used to mislead because a person knows he is not getting any number and it has been a standard telephone device for many years.

In sum, the PHONE Act will deter telephone fraud, protect consumers from harassment, and will enhance protection of sensitive personal information.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude by saying this started as bipartisan legislation and has continued. The information was brought to us when the chief Republican counsel on the committee, Phil Kiko, received such harassment because his number had been used by somebody else making annoying calls. He got called back because his number was appearing as the caller ID.

Mr. MURPHY introduced the bill last year and we have worked to improve the bill and have made significant improvements since last year. Chairman CONYERS, Ranking Member SMITH, and Ranking Member FORBES, we all worked very closely together to make sure that we could have the best product possible. I urge my colleagues to join together and pass the legislation.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) who is a member of the Intellectual Property Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee and who is chairman of the House Republican High-Tech Working Group, and who is also the ranking member of the House Agriculture Committee.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership on the Judiciary Committee and on this legislation, and I also thank Chairman CONYERS and Subcommittee Chairman SCOTT, my colleague from Virginia, for their work on this legislation, as well as Congressman MURPHY and Congressman FORBES, and I rise in strong support of H.R. 740, the Preventing Harassment Through Outbound Number Enforcement, or PHONE, Act.

Consumer fraud and identity theft are serious problems facing our citizens today. While technology has provided access to vast amounts of information about products and services that were not even imaginable a few years ago, technology is also being used by criminals to commit new types of fraud and to steal personal information from unknowing consumers.

Like other technologies, caller ID devices have empowered consumers. These devices allow them to screen out calls they would prefer not to take. However, they also perform the important function of acting as an additional check to ensure that the individuals placing incoming calls are who they say they are.

Unfortunately, criminals have found a way to fake caller ID information in order to trick consumers about who is actually calling. Increasingly, thieves

are using this tactic to extract personal information from unsuspecting consumers. For example, by faking the caller ID of a consumer's bank, a thief can lure a consumer into divulging bank account numbers, Social Security numbers, and other types of sensitive personal information which can then be used to commit identity theft and other criminal acts.

The PHONE Act will help stop this abusive practice. Specifically, this bill imposes criminal penalties on those that provide false caller ID information with the intent to defraud, as well as those that provide the caller ID information of an actual person without that person's consent, with the intent to defraud the recipient of the call.

The PHONE Act is an important tool in the fight against identity theft, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California and I rise to support this bill as I support all legislation dealing with the problem of spoofing.

I too have an anti-spoofing bill which passed the House last Congress. It was the first bill passed this year in the Telecommunications Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and passed the House Energy and Commerce Committee as well.

It is very important that we deal with this problem. My colleagues have highlighted so many incidents where people have looked down at caller ID, and fraud has been committed on them.

People should have confidence that when they look at the caller ID, that that caller ID is accurate. And crooks and other people that want to steal people's identity should not have carte blanche.

The problem with this is we are always catching up with the crooks. As technology develops, crooks can think of ways to subvert it. When we realize there is a problem, Congress catches up and works to close the loophole. This is a loophole that must be closed.

Again, my colleagues have highlighted many of different instances where elderly people have been defrauded, where people think that they have the confidence of their bank or Social Security, they look at the number of the Social Security office, and they have confidence and they give out their Social Security numbers or other kinds of personal information which can be used to steal their identity.

I want to commend my colleagues on the Judiciary Committee and assure them that we on the Energy and Commerce Committee will work with them. This whole Congress needs to be working together on this. This is obviously a bipartisan working together. This is not an issue where it is a partisan issue. All Americans need to have this loophole closed. The sooner we do it, the better.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to my colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. TIM MURPHY) who, as Mr. SCOTT said awhile ago, is the original author of similar legislation. Were it not for Mr. MURPHY's efforts in the last Congress to pass his bill unanimously, we would not be here tonight. We thank him for his leadership and for his initiative last year.

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and my good friend, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), for his work on this important bill. We worked together on it. On behalf of H.R. 740, I would like to urge all of my colleagues to vote for this.

The previous version, which I introduced last session and was passed unanimously in the 109th Congress as H.R. 5304, was the Preventing Harassment Through Outbound Number Enforcement Act, or the PHONE Act, or the PHONE bill at that time.

Chairman SCOTT and Ranking Member FORBES and others from the Judiciary Committee have taken a good bill and made it better.

Identity theft has become an increasingly critical problem for consumers. The Federal Trade Commission revealed that last year about 10 million individuals were victims of identity theft in all 50 States. The disastrous implications for identity theft includes damaged credit, financial ruin, and the effects can tear apart families and ruin businesses.

Congress has repeatedly acted to try and prevent identity theft. But, unfortunately, with new technologies, as soon as we outlaw one version, somebody comes up with a way around that, and once again harasses and harms citizens of this Nation.

One of these technologies used by thieves is the practice of call spoofing or caller ID fraud presented on Web sites as just an innocent game one can use, or perhaps use it to make sales calls, but they mask their identity and alter their outbound caller ID in order to mislead the call recipient. Some may call it a way to maintain caller privacy, but it is nothing less than fraud.

I believe Congress must enact a law to penalize caller ID fraud perpetrators. This bill is particularly necessary to protect American families, the elderly, and businesses because illegally using another person's phone number could have limitless, unlawful applications. It doesn't take much in the imagination to understand how dangerous this practice is and how it is being used now.

For example, a criminal could try to obtain personal financial information from individuals by using a bank's phone number. A person could harass a former wife or husband who has otherwise tried to block the calls from the ex-spouse's phone line. A pedophile could stalk children by stealing his school's phone number or the phone

number of a friend of the child. A sexual predator could use a doctor's office phone number to gather records about someone. A terrorist could make threats from a government phone number, and the list goes on.

The criminal use of caller identity theft, however, is not just a possibility. Here are some real-world examples of how caller ID fraud is occurring.

In 2005, a SWAT team surrounded an empty building in New Brunswick, New Jersey, after police received a call from a woman who said she was being held hostage in an apartment.

□ 1815

She was not in an apartment. The woman had intentionally used a false caller ID. Imagine what might have happened if that was a site where people might have been coming out of the building and police might have thought that that person was a potential threat.

I might add that one of the things that these caller ID fraud sites use is they also will allow you to disguise your voice and switch it from a male voice or female voice or vice versa to further fool the person on the other end.

There also have been incidents where people have used stolen credit card numbers and posed as a person who owned the credit card to illegally wire money to someone else. Another case occurred where people claim they were the county courthouse, calling people, claiming that they had missed jury duty, and tried to use that situation then to have the people give them credit card numbers to pay a fine for something that had not even occurred.

For these reasons, I introduced this bill in the 109th Congress as the PHONE Act, to punish those who engage in the intentional practice of misleading others through caller ID fraud. Violators of this bill will be subject to penalties up to 5 years in prison and fines of \$250,000 for these crimes. However, it also allows up to 1 year in prison for those who use this as a mechanism of harassing.

All those folks who are still using this system, be aware that this will be made illegal. We expect the Senate to pass this, and all the elderly and small businesses and families across the Nation who find themselves as victims of this, be aware that when the call you have today shows up on your caller ID, it may not be who they say they are.

Please, we need to make sure that until this bill is passed, people are still vigilant of that, protect their identity and never release a credit card number or other personal information, no matter what that caller ID number says, unless you are absolutely sure the person who you are talking to is who they are.

Again, I am pleased to work with the Judiciary Committee Subcommittee chairman on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security, Chairman Bobby Scott, who has reintroduced this bill.

This bill, H.R. 740, adds the important criminal and financial penalties to those who prey on the identity of others.

This legislation will not stop crime, it will not prevent identity theft, but it will protect lives and protect others and close this loophole for identity theft once and for all. I urge my colleagues to vote for this important bill.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire of the gentleman from Texas if he is prepared to yield back the balance of his time?

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to yield back as soon as the gentlewoman from California is ready to close.

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

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, it is clear that this anti-phone-spoofing bill is a thoughtful, well-crafted, bipartisan piece of legislation. I urge its adoption, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KIND). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 740.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PERMITTING USE OF ROTUNDA FOR A CEREMONY COMMEMORATING THE DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE OF VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 66) permitting the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 66

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

SECTION 1. USE OF ROTUNDA FOR HOLOCAUST DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY.

The rotunda of the Capitol is authorized to be used on April 19, 2007, for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust. Physical preparations for the ceremony shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as the Architect of the Capitol may prescribe.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks in the RECORD on this concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 66, which authorizes the use of the Capitol rotunda for a ceremony on April 19, 2007, commemorating the victims of the Holocaust.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Council is entrusted with observing the Days of Remembrance. These Days of Remembrance and the solemn ceremony at the Capitol set the manner in which similar events across our country pay homage to the 6 million people who lost their lives during one of mankind's darkest periods in history.

When World War II ended in 1945, 6 million European Jews were dead, including more than 1 million Jewish children. While all Jews were marked for death, children were among the most defenseless.

This year, the Holocaust Memorial Council, which oversees the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and organizes the annual Days of Remembrance, has selected "Children in Crisis: Voices from the Holocaust" as its theme.

In any day and age, among the most vulnerable targets are children, not most often they are the first victims of senseless deeds. The children of the Holocaust endured lives filled with fear and suffering. The emotional and physical cruelty forced upon them is unimaginable. It is estimated that over 1 million, and as many as 1.5 million, Jewish boys and girls were murdered under Nazi rule in Germany and occupied Europe. These children were murdered because they were Jewish, not because of any action they had taken; not because of any crime they had committed, but simply because of their religion and their ethnicity.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that a number of the Members have been to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem, and I have an enduring image there of the children, the stars which represent them, the luminaries which hang from the ceiling, those tens of thousands of luminaries which remind us all of this overwhelming reason for us to remember these children.

Many children of the Holocaust were confronted by overpowering and destructive forces, separated from their

parents and coerced into hiding. Children who found themselves hiding in the shadows were faced with unyielding hardships, and some were subjected to dark, cramped conditions for weeks, for months and even years, while others wandered from place to place seeking refuge, never knowing who to trust.

For those who survived, the end of the war was rarely the end of the struggle. Many children found themselves alone, with no family to be reunited with. The devastating and heart-wrenching reality was that there were no surviving family members, and they would now face the future without parents, grandparents or siblings.

So, as we stop to reflect on this heinous event, let it serve as a reminder that there is no room for prejudice, oppression and hatred. As American and world citizens, it is important that succeeding generations are called upon to remember the atrocities of the Holocaust and the similarities in the hate crimes we see today.

The will of the human spirit indeed is unwavering in the face of adversity, and history has shown us that in times of despair, humanity prevails and always looks towards a brighter future.

There is no better place than the United States Capitol rotunda to embody the reverence and dignity so deserving and honoring the victims of the Holocaust, especially the children. The United States Capitol has stood as a symbol of freedom and liberty and a symbol of hopes and dreams.

It is important, Mr. Speaker, that we use the rotunda, the scene of so many historic events, to draw attention again to one of the immense tragedies in human history and to take this time also to honor our colleagues who were personally victimized by the Holocaust or whose families suffered and died, and to pledge anew that such atrocities must not be permitted to occur. We recall the words, "never again, never again."

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

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

I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 66. The purpose of this resolution is to authorize the use of the Capitol rotunda on April 19 for this year's national ceremony to commemorate Holocaust Remembrance Day. I am pleased that with the passage of this resolution, the Congress will be able to, once again, provide a venue for those who wish to mark this solemn occasion in the peaceful setting that the rotunda provides.

The annual Days of Remembrance provide all Americans with an opportunity to reflect together upon the Holocaust, to remember its victims and to renew our commitment to democracy and human rights.

In order to help focus our reflections on the Holocaust, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum selects a yearly theme. This year we reflect on

Children in Crisis: Voices from the Holocaust.

Mr. Speaker, an estimated 1 million Jewish children died at the hands of the Nazi regime during the Holocaust. Being the most vulnerable, children were often the first of the victims to be targeted for death. Many times they were sent to the gas chambers immediately following their arrivals in the concentration camps because most were not old or strong enough to work under the forced labor conditions. But at the same time, this year's theme also recognizes the importance of remembering those children who were able to survive through their own courage and determination and the aid of dedicated individuals risking their own lives to help thwart the horrible intentions of the Nazi Party.

I think it is imperative that we never forget either the horrors of the Holocaust or the incredible courage and humanity that enabled some children to survive such awful conditions.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge the support of this resolution.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be the sponsor of this resolution to authorize the use of the Capitol rotunda on April 19, 2007 for the annual congressional ceremony to commemorate the Holocaust.

The United States was one of the first countries to adopt a national day for Holocaust commemoration. It is one of the only nations in the world to observe Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Heroes and Remembrance Day, on the same day chosen by the State of Israel—the Hebrew anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

Each year, on Yom Hashoah communities around the United States come together to memorialize the millions who perished. We remember the heroism of those who fought back and pay tribute to the survivors and the tremendous courage and strength it took for them to rebuild their lives. We stand against the anti-Semitism and intolerance that fed the Nazi machine and sadly continues to resurface today.

While this resolution may be routine by nature, it is a testament to the commitment of Congress to make sure that the history of the Holocaust is never forgotten or repeated.

I would like to thank the House administration for its work on this legislation. I encourage all of my colleagues to participate in the ceremony in the rotunda.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 66.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the

Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 1284, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 1130, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 740, by the yeas and nays.

Votes on H.R. 545 and H. Con. Res. 66 will be taken tomorrow.

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

VETERANS COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1284, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1284.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 418, nays 0, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 176]

YEAS—418

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

Flake	LoBiondo
Forbes	Loeb
Fortenberry	Loftgren, Zoe
Fossella	Lowey
Fox	Lucas
Frank (MA)	Lungren, Daniel
Franks (AZ)	E.
Frelinghuysen	Lynch
Gallely	Mack
Garrett (NJ)	Mahoney (FL)
Gerlach	Maloney (NY)
Giffords	Manzullo
Gilchrest	Marchant
Gillibrand	Markey
Gillmor	Marshall
Gingrey	Matheson
Gohmert	Matsui
Gonzalez	McCarthy (CA)
Goode	McCarthy (NY)
Goodlatte	McCaul (TX)
Granger	McCollum (MN)
Graves	McCotter
Green, Al	McCrery
Green, Gene	McDermott
Grijalva	McGovern
Gutierrez	McHenry
Hall (NY)	McHugh
Hall (TX)	McIntyre
Hare	McKeon
Harman	McMorris
Hastert	Rodgers
Hastings (FL)	McNerney
Hastings (WA)	McNulty
Hayes	Meehan
Heller	Meek (FL)
Hensarling	Meeke (NY)
Hergert	Melancon
Herseth	Mica
Higgins	Michaud
Hill	Millender-
Hinchey	McDonald
Hirono	Miller (FL)
Hobson	Miller (MI)
Hodes	Miller (NC)
Hoekstra	Miller, Gary
Holden	Miller, George
Holt	Mitchell
Honda	Mollohan
Hooley	Moore (KS)
Hoyer	Moore (WI)
Hulshof	Moran (KS)
Hunter	Murphy (CT)
Inglis (SC)	Murphy, Patrick
Inslee	Murphy, Tim
Israel	Murtha
Issa	Musgrave
Jackson (IL)	Nadler
Jackson-Lee	Napolitano
(TX)	Neal (MA)
Jefferson	Neugebauer
Jindal	Nunes
Johnson (GA)	Oberstar
Johnson (IL)	Obey
Johnson, Sam	Oliver
Jones (NC)	Ortiz
Jones (OH)	Pallone
Jordan	Pascarella
Kagen	Pastor
Kaptur	Paul
Keller	Payne
Kennedy	Pearce
Kildee	Perlmutter
Kilpatrick	Peterson (MN)
Kind	Peterson (PA)
King (IA)	Petri
King (NY)	Pickering
Kingston	Pitts
Kirk	Platts
Klein (FL)	Poe
Kline (MN)	Pomeroy
Knollenberg	Porter
Kucinich	Price (GA)
Kuhl (NY)	Price (NC)
LaHood	Pryce (OH)
Lamborn	Putnam
Lampson	Radanovich
Langevin	Rahall
Lantos	Ramstad
Larsen (WA)	Rangel
Larson (CT)	Regula
Latham	Rehberg
LaTourette	Reichert
Lee	Renzi
Levin	Reyes
Lewis (CA)	Reynolds
Lewis (GA)	Rodriguez
Lewis (KY)	Rogers (AL)
Linder	Rogers (KY)
Lipinski	Rogers (MI)

Rohrabacher	Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam	Roskam
Ross	Rothman
Roybal-Allard	Royce
Ruppersberger	Rush
Ryan (OH)	Ryan (WI)
Salazar	Sali
Sanchez, Linda	T.
T.	Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes	Saxton
Saxton	Schakowsky
Schiff	Schiff
Schmidt	Schwartz
Scott (GA)	Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner	Serrano
Sessions	Sessions
Sestak	Shadegg
Shays	Shays
Shea-Porter	Sherman
Shimkus	Shuler
Shuster	Sires
Skelton	Slaughter
Smith (NE)	Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)	Smith (WA)
Snyder	Solis
Souder	Space
Spratt	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	Walsh (OR)
Walsh (NY)	Walz (MN)
Wamp	Wasserman
Waters	Schultz
Watson	Watt
Waxman	Weiner
Welch (VT)	Weldon (FL)
Weller	Westmoreland
Wexler	Whitfield
Wicker	Wicker
Wilson (NM)	Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)	Wolf
Woolsey	Wu
Wynn	Yarmuth
Young (AK)	Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—15

Brady (PA)	Gordon	Myrick
Castor	Hinojosa	Pence
Davis, Jo Ann	Johnson, E. B.	Simpson
Davis, Tom	Kanjorski	Stark
Deal (GA)	Moran (VA)	Young (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised that 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1854

Mr. MURTHA changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

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.

JUDICIAL DISCLOSURE RESPONSIBILITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1130, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1130.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 415, nays 0, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 177]

YEAS—415

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

Fossella
 Fox
 Frank (MA)
 Franks (AZ)
 Frelinghuysen
 Gallegly
 Garrett (NJ)
 Gerlach
 Giffords
 Gilchrest
 Gillibrand
 Gillmor
 Gingrey
 Gohmert
 Gonzalez
 Goode
 Goodlatte
 Granger
 Graves
 Green, Al
 Green, Gene
 Grijalva
 Gutierrez
 Hall (NY)
 Hall (TX)
 Hare
 Harman
 Hastert
 Hastings (FL)
 Hastings (WA)
 Hayes
 Heller
 Hensarling
 Herger
 Herseth
 Higgins
 Hill
 Hinchey
 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 (IL)
 Johnson, Sam
 Jones (NC)
 Jones (OH)
 Jordan
 Kagen
 Kaptur
 Keller
 Kennedy
 Kildee
 Kilpatrick
 Kind
 King (IA)
 King (NY)
 Kingston
 Kirk
 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
 Loeb sack

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
 McDermott
 McGovern
 McHenry
 McHugh
 McIntyre
 McKeon
 McMorris
 Rodgers
 McNeerney
 McNulty
 Meehan
 Meek (FL)
 Meeks (NY)
 Melancon
 Michaud
 Millender-
 McDonald
 Miller (FL)
 Miller (MI)
 Miller (NC)
 Miller, Gary
 Miller, George
 Mitchell
 Mollohan
 Moore (KS)
 Moore (WI)
 Moran (KS)
 Murphy (CT)
 Murphy, Patrick
 Murphy, Tim
 Murtha
 Musgrave
 Nadler
 Napolitano
 Neal (MA)
 Neugebauer
 Nunes
 Oberstar
 Obey
 Oliver
 Ortiz
 Pallone
 Pascrell
 Pastor
 Paul
 Payne
 Pearce
 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

NOT VOTING—18
 Brady (PA)
 Buchanan
 Davis, Jo Ann
 Davis, Tom
 Deal (GA)
 Gordon
 Hinojosa
 Johnson, E. B.
 Kanjorski
 Klein (FL)
 McCreery
 Moran (VA)
 Myrick
 Pence
 Simpson
 Stark
 Waters
 Young (FL)

□ 1903

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.

PREVENTING HARASSMENT THROUGH OUTBOUND NUMBER ENFORCEMENT (PHONE) ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 740, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 740.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 413, nays 1, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 178]

YEAS—413

Abercrombie
 Ackerman
 Aderholt
 Akin
 Alexander
 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 (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
 Coble
 Cohen
 Cole (OK)
 Conaway
 Conyers
 Cooper
 Costa
 Costello
 Courtney
 Cramer
 Crenshaw
 Crowley
 Cubin
 Cuellar
 Culberson
 Cummings
 Davis (AL)
 Davis (CA)
 Davis (IL)
 Davis (KY)
 Davis, David
 Davis, Lincoln
 DeFazio
 DeGette
 Delahunt
 DeLauro
 Dent
 Diaz-Balart, L.
 Diaz-Balart, M.
 Dicks
 Dingell
 Doggett
 Donnelly
 Kingston
 Kirk
 Doyle
 Drake
 Dreier
 Duncan
 Edwards
 Ehlers
 Ellison
 Ellsworth
 Emanuel
 Emerson
 Engel
 English (PA)
 Eshoo
 Etheridge
 Everett
 Fallin
 Farr
 Fattah
 Feeney
 Ferguson
 Flake
 Forbes
 Fortenberry
 Fossella
 Foxx
 Frank (MA)
 Franks (AZ)
 Frelinghuysen
 Gallegly
 Garrett (NJ)
 Gerlach
 Giffords
 Gilchrest
 Gillibrand
 Gillmor

Gingrey
 Gohmert
 Gonzalez
 Goode
 Goodlatte
 Granger
 Graves
 Green, Al
 Green, Gene
 Grijalva
 Gutierrez
 Hall (NY)
 Hall (TX)
 Hare
 Harman
 Hastert
 Hastings (FL)
 Hastings (WA)
 Hayes
 Heller
 Hensarling
 Herger
 Herseth
 Higgins
 Hill
 Hinchey
 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 (IL)
 Johnson, Sam
 Jones (NC)
 Jones (OH)
 Jordan
 Kagen
 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
 Loeb sack
 Mahoney (FL)
 Maloney (NY)
 Manzullo
 Marchant
 Markey
 Marshall
 Matheson
 Matsui
 McCarthy (CA)
 McCarthy (NY)
 McCaul (TX)
 McCollum (MN)
 McCotter
 McDermott
 McGovern
 McHenry
 McHugh
 McIntyre
 McKeon
 McMorris
 Rodgers
 McNeerney
 McNulty
 Meehan
 Meek (FL)
 Meeks (NY)
 Melancon
 Michaud
 Millender-
 McDonald
 Miller (FL)
 Miller (MI)
 Miller (NC)
 Miller, Gary
 Miller, George
 Mitchell
 Mollohan
 Moore (KS)
 Moore (WI)
 Moran (KS)
 Murphy (CT)
 Murphy, Patrick
 Murphy, Tim
 Murtha
 Musgrave
 Nadler
 Napolitano
 Neal (MA)
 Neugebauer
 Nunes
 Oberstar
 Obey
 Oliver
 Ortiz
 Pallone
 Pascrell
 Pastor
 Payne
 Pearce
 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
 Ross
 Rothman
 Roybal-Allard
 Royce
 Ruppertsberger
 Rush
 Ryan (OH)
 Ryan (WI)
 Salazar
 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
 Sires
 Skelton
 Slaughter
 Smith (NE)
 Smith (NJ)
 Smith (TX)
 Smith (WA)
 Snyder
 Solis
 Souder
 Space
 Spratt
 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
 Vislosky
 Walberg
 Walden (OR)
 Walsh (NY)
 Walz (MN)
 Wamp
 Wasserman
 Schultz
 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)

NAYS—1

Paul

NOT VOTING—19

Brady (PA)	Hinojosa	Simpson
Clyburn	Johnson, E. B.	Stark
Davis, Jo Ann	Kanjorski	Westmoreland
Davis, Tom	McCrery	Wilson (NM)
Deal (GA)	Moran (VA)	Young (FL)
Filner	Myrick	
Gordon	Pence	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE.

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

□ 1910

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.

Stated for:

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 178, I was inadvertently detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

COMMUNICATION FROM DEPUTY DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF HON. LEONARD L. BOSWELL, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Marc Beltrame, Deputy District Director of the Honorable LEONARD L. BOSWELL, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 15, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued by the District Court for Polk County, Iowa, for testimony in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

MARC BELTRAME,
Deputy District Director.

COMMUNICATION FROM DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE OF HON. LEONARD L. BOSWELL, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Ted Tran, District Representative of the Honorable LEONARD L. BOSWELL, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 15, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued by the District Court for Polk County, Iowa, for testimony in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compli-

ance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

TED TRAN,
District Representative.

COMMUNICATION FROM STATE DIRECTOR OF HON. DENNY REHBERG, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Randy Vogel, State Director of the Honorable DENNY REHBERG, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 19, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have received a grand jury subpoena for documents issued by the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana, Billings Division.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

RANDY VOGEL,
State Director.

COMMENDING CONCORD HIGH IN CONCORD, NORTH CAROLINA FOR A DUAL CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON IN MEN'S 3A FOOTBALL AND BASKETBALL

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

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and pay tribute to the Concord High School Spiders men's athletic team for making history by being the first 3A school in North Carolina to win State titles in both men's basketball and football in the same year.

The Spiders basketball team, who finished as the runners-up in 2006, defeated Kinston High School 85-79 for the 2007 championship title on March 10. The Spiders football team defeated Western Alamance last December, taking the State championship for the second time in 3 years.

Star players on both of Concord's teams include senior guard, Dee Bost, who scored 27 points in the championship game and earned the honor of Most Valuable Player for both basketball and football. Lance Lewis, a starter on the 2004 and 2006 football championship teams, scored 16 points and four rebounds, and was named Concord's Most Outstanding Player in the final.

The athletic program at Concord High is one of great tradition that dates back even further than my years of playing there. The nickname Spiders came from the athletic field at the old Concord High School, which was named after Principal and School Superintendent A.S. Webb. Concord's first State title was one in 1929.

I am extremely proud of the hard work and dedication of these young men from my hometown of Concord. Congratulations to Coach E.Z. Smith, Coach Andy Poplin and the Concord High men's football and basketball teams on your successful seasons, great teamwork and dual State championship victory.

OFFICER ANGEL CRUZ, NYPD

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, peace officers are the first line of defense between the law and the lawless. Those who wear the badge sometimes go to unbelievable efforts to capture the bad guys.

New York City peace officer Angel Cruz is one of those remarkable peace officers. Officer Cruz was trying to arrest Hugo Hernandez for a minor offense on a subway platform in Queens, New York when, without warning, Hernandez slashed the officer across the face with a knife, then stabbed him in the head, cracking his skull.

Even after being stabbed, Cruz, a 15-month rookie with NYPD, was able to shoot and wound the outlaw.

When backup arrived, Cruz, with blood spouting from his head, had chased Hernandez down the subway stairs, and was trying to handcuff him.

The criminal, Hernandez, was an illegal from Guatemala who had already been deported for assaulting six New Jersey police officers.

Our Nation appreciates the relentless work of Officer Cruz and NYPD.

And as for the illegal, he should go to jail, be deported back to Guatemala, and Guatemala should pay restitution to Officer Cruz.

And that's just the way it is.

□ 1915

DEMOCRAT IRAQ SUPPLEMENTAL

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in outrage over reports that Speaker PELOSI is threatening to revoke committee assignments and earmarks for Democrats who don't support the Iraq supplemental bill on the floor this week.

Talk about a culture of corruption. This is the lowest form of politics. But, sadly, while their strong-arming is audacious and unethical, it is not surprising. We know the Democratic leadership will go to extreme measures to garner votes for this bill, not only by tying troop funding to arbitrary deadlines for withdrawal, but by peppering it with so much pork, you would think our troops needed shrimp and avocados to beat the terrorists.

Mr. Speaker, it is little wonder Democratic leaders are scared to let Members vote their conscience on this bill. After all, even the Los Angeles

Times calls this “the worst kind of congressional meddling in military strategy.”

But arm-twisting and threats have no place in this people’s House, and Americans have every right to be outraged with the current leadership.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PERLMUTTER). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

TRIBUTE TO THE HON. JACK METCALF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight, along with my colleagues from Washington State, to pay homage to our friend and colleague who passed away last Thursday, Jack Metcalf.

Jack Metcalf represented the Second District of Washington from 1995 to 2001, and I have known Jack personally since 1968. I first met Jack when he first ran for the U.S. Senate. I was contacted by some people, and they said that he was coming into town and asked if I would meet with him, which I did, he ended up spending the night at my house and slept on the couch.

I only say that from background because that was typical of Jack. He was totally unpretentious. In fact, his history, electoral history, as a representative of northwest Washington goes back for many years. He first ran for office in 1958, unsuccessfully, I might add. Two years later he ran and was elected to the State legislature and served there for two terms and left. Then he got elected as State senator and served for 8 more years as a State senator, and left to run for the U.S. Senate again, and got beat and then came back and served as a State senator for 12 more years. He left that time to run again unsuccessfully for the U.S. House. But he was successful when he ran in 1994.

I point that out because that was four times that he ran for office in an endeavor to serve his constituents of northwest Washington. And it never bothered him, at least he never said it to me, that he was unsuccessful in the past. In fact, after he had lost in 1992 and was contemplating running in 1994, he was approached by the then Republican Central Committee chairman and suggested that maybe Jack ought not run because he was 68. And Jack replied to him, “Well, I think I can win.” And I can just hear Jack say that because that was so typical of him. He was totally unpretentious.

So I am here simply to say that he was a friend for many, many years. He was somebody that served his constitu-

ents well, and he was somebody, I think, that was really very, very true to his beliefs. And I think that is an asset that a lot of people probably don’t have, but certainly Jack did. And I am very, very proud to have called him a friend for all these years.

And I can say that our thoughts and prayers are with Norma and his family, and he will be greatly missed.

With that I would like to yield to the individual that succeeded him in the Second District, my friend from Washington (Mr. LARSEN).

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from eastern Washington for yielding.

I rise today to pay tribute to the Honorable Jack Metcalf, who was my predecessor in Washington State’s Second Congressional District.

Before Jack was a Congressman, and we have heard about his running for office, but he was a teacher for 30 years. Public service was more than a profession for Jack. It was very much a passion. He placed a premium on honesty and hard work, and he was admired for being a person of his word. He built relationships not only with traditional allies, but with anyone concerned with improving the quality of life for his constituents.

Jack forged a bipartisan alliance with Senator PATTY MURRAY to protect our marine habitat in Washington State. The work done by the Murray-Metcalf Commission continues today to benefit the people of Washington State. Jack’s dedication to protecting our marine resources stands as a challenge to his successors and as a legacy to our State.

I personally had the pleasure of working with Jack on flood issues when I was a local elected official. Flooding had created terrible problems for Snohomish County, and Jack brought people together and harnessed Federal, State, and local resources to find solutions.

We will miss “Gentleman Jack” Metcalf. He had no need for partnership or grandstanding, and he stood out for his commitment to the people that he represented. And certainly tonight our hearts go out to Jack’s wife Norma and to their children.

ON THE PASSING OF FORMER CONGRESSMAN JACK METCALF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I want to join the other members of the Washington congressional delegation today in expressing my sadness at the passing of our former colleague Jack Metcalf, who represented the Second Congressional District of Washington from 1995 to 2001.

Jack came to Congress later in his career, having served for 4 years in the State house of representatives and 20 years in the Washington State Senate.

And throughout his career in Olympia, he continued to teach in the Everett area at the high school, as he campaigned twice for the United States Senate against a very popular Warren Magnuson and as he built a cabin retreat that became a bed-and-breakfast business that he and his family operated, which was a special place for Norma and him.

He campaigned in 1994 for an open seat in Congress and promised to be an independent voice for constituents in the Second District. Having served with Jack during his 6 years in the House, I am able to confirm that he was every bit as independent as he said he would be. He came here as a well-established politician with well-established views, and he freely expressed those views with vigor and conviction. But along the way he also did two things that distinguished him, at least from my viewpoint as a colleague of his in the Washington delegation. First he established a high priority for constituent service, which I believe was critical to his job as Representative. He fought hard to help individuals who couldn’t get responses from a Federal agency.

□ 1930

He supported veterans’ causes. And even when it came to voting against party positions in his own caucus, he was for the veterans. Jack also cared deeply about natural resource issues, particularly salmon issues. He worked with Senator MURRAY on the Northwest Straits Commission.

Second, he valued friendship, and he always sought to keep the often-heated debate from becoming personal. When he spoke against a position another Member espoused, he would often cross the aisle and speak with that person personally, so you never took any of his comments directly as a personal affront.

Consequently, he was well regarded within our delegation, and I appreciated his friendship and his willingness to help on major State issues whenever he was asked. He will surely be remembered for the independence he demonstrated as a Member of Congress, but I can assure my colleagues in the House today that I will remember him as a real gentleman and a good friend.

He will be missed, and our hearts go out to Norma and his family.

I would like to yield to my colleague Mr. McDERMOTT, who served with Jack in the Washington State Legislature before he came to Congress.

REMEMBERING JACK METCALF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, probably I knew Jack better than most in our delegation, because I did serve with him for a long time in the Washington State Legislature. And although

most Members would know me as somewhat liberal and Jack as being somewhat conservative, we were really good friends, because Jack was the kind of person you could sit down and talk to, and no matter what your political views were, he would sit and talk about whatever it was on your mind.

He told me a lot about his decisions to run for both the legislature and for the U.S. Senate, and he told me about how his first campaign worked.

Jack went out and planted a whole field full of pumpkins, and he took an instrument that was like a cookie cutter and had it made in his name, Jack Metcalf. He took all these pumpkins when they were small and scored them on the outside, and as the pumpkins grew, the name "Metcalf" appeared on the pumpkins. So by the time of the election, Jack went around and gave a pumpkin to every house in his district.

That is Jack Metcalf. That is the guy that was here, very unassuming, no airs about him whatsoever. He was a solid conservative, don't have any doubt about that, and he stuck to his principles. He was the kind of conservative you could talk to and find out what he thought. He would tell you exactly where he was, and that is where he was. You could try to convince him, and maybe it would work.

I had one experience with Jack which I have to tell about. I was the ways and means chairman of the State senate when Jack was there in the minority, and I had a bill that I needed an extra vote on. I needed somebody in the Republican Party. So I went over and I talked to Jack about it.

He listened to me and acknowledged that maybe that wasn't such a bad idea. But he was really concerned about the economic situation of the United States, and he really thought that we ought to be on the gold standard. So Jack and I had this long discussion about the gold standard, and I said, "You know, Jack, we ought to have a hearing in the State senate on the gold standard."

Well, as you might guess, this would have been about 1983, the gold standard wasn't exactly very high on most people's agenda, but we had a hearing, and we listened and we talked and we asked the questions and had a great long discussion about this issue, and a few days later, when I needed a vote, Jack was there.

That is the kind of person he was. He was somebody who would listen to you, he would tell you what he was concerned about; and if you listened to him, you made a friend, and you were able to work with him.

His wife and kids, I know, perhaps tonight are watching. You should have nothing but pride for your father and your husband.

They list all the bills that he got involved in. Jack was a very, very dedicated environmentalist and did many things here. But what will always remain will be he was a guy who came here and said, I believe in term limits;

he served 6 years, and he left. No fuss, no muss. He didn't ask anybody. He had made a commitment to his people in 1994 that he would leave, and he did surely as soon as the time came.

So we will miss Jack. He is the kind of person that makes this place a really humane place. Jack I don't think had an enemy in this place, because, as Norm says, even if he was going to say something against you, he would either before or after come and talk to you about it and say, "I didn't mean that personally, but I just think you are wrong on that matter." He had that way, and we would do well to have that spirit come back to this House.

We will miss you, Jack.

64TH DAY OF INCARCERATION FOR BORDER PATROL AGENTS RAMOS AND COMPEAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today is the 64th day of incarceration for two U.S. Border Patrol agents. Agents Ramos and Compean were convicted last spring for shooting a Mexican drug smuggler who brought 743 pounds of marijuana across our border into Texas.

These agents never should have been sent to prison. There are legitimate legal questions about how this prosecution was initiated and how the prosecutor's office proceeded in this case. To prosecute the agents, the U.S. Attorney's Office granted immunity to a known drug smuggler. While the Mexican drug smuggler waited to testify against our agents, DEA reports confirmed that he brought a second load of marijuana, 752 pounds, into the United States. But this information was kept from the jury and the public.

Over the past 8 months, dozens of Members of Congress and thousands of American citizens have asked President Bush to pardon these agents. In December of 2006, the President granted pardons to 16 criminals, including 6 who were convicted of drug crimes, but he would not pardon Agents Ramos and Compean.

The difference, Mr. President, is that these people you pardoned were criminals, and these two Border Patrol agents are Hispanic Americans who are heroes, heroes who were doing their job to protect our borders. Mr. President, it is not too late for you to use your authority to pardon these two men.

Not only are there concerns about the U.S. attorney's prosecution of these two border agents, but the same prosecutor's office in western Texas has just persecuted another law enforcement officer.

Deputy Sheriff Gilmer Hernandez was sentenced this week to a year in jail for shooting at a vehicle that was transporting illegal aliens. Hernandez stopped the car for running a red light and asked the driver to step out of the

car, but the driver pulled forward to flee and turned the car toward the deputy. The deputy fired shots at the car's tires to protect himself.

Hernandez was charged for violating the civil rights of one of the passengers, an illegal Mexican national who was struck in the lip by fragments of a bullet or other metal. None of the vehicle's occupants were charged.

Mr. Speaker, there are many questions and concerns about the prosecutor's office that need to be answered. I want to thank Chairman JOHN CONYERS for considering my request and those of other Members of Congress for a hearing on the overzealous prosecution of these law enforcement officers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DREIER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. INSLEE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

REASONS FOR SUPPORT OF EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this evening to voice my support for an emergency supplemental bill that will produce a significant change in the way the war in Iraq is being waged. This is not an easy decision on my part. Back in 2002, I opposed giving President Bush the authority to wage the Iraq war, and ever since, I have opposed every supplemental bill that has come to this floor to pay for the war in Iraq.

During each supplemental debate, I voiced concern that Congress was essentially giving President Bush a blank check to wage the war as he saw fit. I voiced frustration that the Bush administration was unwilling to face the realities on the ground in Iraq and that Republican Congresses refused to provide proper oversight of billions of dollars that were handed out to contractors like Halliburton.

Last November, the American people sent a clear message that the status quo in Iraq was no longer acceptable.

They entrusted Congress to Democrats in the hopes that we would help take our Iraq policy in a new direction so that we could bring our troops home soon.

Mr. Speaker, the emergency supplemental addresses the concerns of the American people. It is a serious piece of legislation that brings together into one bill the recommendations of the nonpartisan Iraq Study Group, military generals, the Pentagon, and even the President himself. It provides us the first real opportunity to change course, and therefore it deserves the support of anyone who believes the status quo is no longer acceptable.

The supplemental takes into consideration the views of military generals and military experts who have said for months now that there is no longer a military solution possible in Iraq. Instead, they say the only way to end the civil war that is raging in Iraq is through political and diplomatic means.

Tomorrow this House will have the opportunity to send the President a strong message that the war in Iraq will not continue indefinitely. The legislation states that American troops will be out of Iraq no later than August 31, 2008, and if the Iraqi Government does not meet certain benchmarks in the coming months, our troops will be home by the end of this year.

With this legislation, the fate of Iraq now truly belongs to the Iraqis themselves. It is time the Iraqi Government stepped forward and takes some responsibility. The Maliki government must realize that it has to meet political, economic and diplomatic benchmarks that the President himself set, and that if serious improvements are not seen in the coming months, then we will begin the process of redeploying our troops out of Iraq.

This only makes sense, Mr. Speaker. If the Iraqi Government continues to believe that U.S. involvement there is indefinite, what kind of pressure are they going to have to make the necessary political reforms? They are not, and that is why both this pressure and a date certain for responsible redeployment are so important.

This legislation also begins the process of redirecting the Bush administration's attention to the forgotten war in Afghanistan by adding \$1 billion to the Defense Department's request for military activities there. This increase supports our efforts to suppress a likely spring offensive by the Taliban. In addition, it will reinforce our humanitarian efforts in that war-torn country. We must work to give poor farmers an alternative to the illicit opium trade that is rampant throughout Afghanistan.

Finally, the legislation provides more money than the Pentagon requested for critical health care needs for veterans and wounded soldiers. Specifically, the legislation provides \$1.7 billion more for defense health care and \$1.7 billion more for veterans'

health care in the hope that we can eliminate the horrific conditions and the treatment our wounded soldiers receive at Walter Reed. The brave men and women who fought on behalf of this country should not now have to endure bureaucratic delays in order to receive the health care services that they were promised.

Mr. Speaker, this week we entered the fifth year of this unfortunate war. Tomorrow we must step forward and support a bill that brings our troops home within the next 18 months, exerts pressure on the Iraqi Government, prioritizes the forgotten war in Afghanistan and provides additional funds for veterans and military health care.

Tomorrow we have the opportunity to change the direction of the war in Iraq, and we should certainly take it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MEXICAN GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO STAY OUT OF AMERICA'S BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the Mexican Government needs to stay out of America's business. Let me explain.

Deputy Sheriff Gilmer Hernandez of the town of Rocksprings, Texas, Edwards County, the size of Delaware, one of three deputy sheriffs on patrol at any given time in this massive area of west Texas, is on patrol in the middle of the night, and he sees a van with the lights off running a red light. He does what he is supposed to. He attempts to pull the van over. He notices as he approaches the van that numerous people are laying down on the floorboards.

As he gets closer, the driver speeds off, turns around and tries to run over Deputy Gilmer Hernandez. Deputy Hernandez pulls out his pistol, blows out two of those tires, and the vehicle finally stops. One passenger in the van was slightly injured, but the people in the van jump out and take off running because they are all illegally in the United States, seven or eight of them.

□ 1945

Deputy Hernandez immediately calls the sheriff of the county to show up. The sheriff shows up; he calls the Texas Rangers to make an independent investigation of this shooting. The Texas Rangers—there is probably no finer law enforcement group in the United States, or in the world for that matter—make an independent investiga-

tion and determine that Deputy Hernandez acted lawfully and within the law when he fired his weapon. But then the Mexican government gets involved, and in their arrogance, demand in writing from their consulate general to our Federal Government that Deputy Hernandez be prosecuted. And our Federal Government, like the cavalry, shows up later and reinvestigates the case; basically uses the same facts, talks to all of the illegals, and prosecutes Deputy Hernandez for shooting his weapon in self-defense.

It is ironic that the consulate general wouldn't even allow our government to talk to the illegals until the consulate general got them all together in a room and apparently got their story straight. And once that happened, they talked to Federal prosecutors, and the Federal prosecutors prosecuted Deputy Hernandez, where they were saying he should have stopped firing his weapon after the van went on by. How ridiculous a statement that is.

Deputy Hernandez was convicted, and this week he was sentenced to 1 year and 1 month in the Federal penitentiary. The Federal judge apparently did everything he could to get the lowest possible sentence under the Federal guidelines, even though Deputy Hernandez should not have been prosecuted. The illegals in the van should have been prosecuted. The human smuggler driving the van, he should have been prosecuted. But no, they got a deal; they got green cards to stay in the United States. It seems like our government is prosecuting the wrong people.

It is interesting that Deputy Hernandez was also ordered to pay \$5,000 to the illegal who was slightly injured. That is nonsense. It is like someone who breaks into your home, you try to stop that person, they are injured in the scuffle, and the next thing you know you have to pay for their injuries when they illegally broke into your home. That is the same thing that Deputy Hernandez is supposed to do under this court order.

It sounds to me like the Mexican government ought to be paying restitution. They ought to pay restitution to the American taxpayers for the cost of the illegals that come into the United States and get all the social programs that the rest of us pay for. The Mexican government ought to pay restitution for their drug smugglers that come into the United States, bringing that cancer that has spread across our land.

Our Federal Government obviously needs to get on the right side of the border war, and that is the American side of the border war. It is interesting how our Federal Government is so relentless in prosecuting border protectors who are protecting the dignity of this country, doing everything they can to keep people from illegally coming into this country, while our Federal Government gives lip service to border control. Of course that is the

news that the drug smugglers and the illegals like, that our Federal Government prosecutes the border protectors rather than prosecute them.

And why does our Federal Government jump when the Mexican government arrogantly demands that our border protectors be prosecuted? Hopefully we are going to find out the answer to that. Who is driving the process, the Mexican government or our own government? And anyway, who cares what the Mexican government thinks, they are irrelevant to border security and what our border protectors do.

Mr. Speaker, the border war continues, and the Federal Government needs to get on the right side of the border war because right now they are missing in action.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PERLMUTTER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. KING of Iowa addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SMITH of Washington addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BISHOP of Utah addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. BLACKBURN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DUNCAN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

WAR SUPPLEMENTAL IS BAD POLITICS, BAD POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be here tonight.

I wanted to talk on the eve of what may be the most controversial bill that we have voted on since I have been a Member of Congress, and I have been a Member of Congress now for 16 years. In fact, sometimes I don't like to admit that in public because everybody gets so concerned about term limits, I don't want to be the poster child for my enemies on that subject. But I have been in Congress for the NAFTA vote, for the renewal of GATT, the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs. I have been here for the impeachment vote. I was here for welfare reform, some very significant pieces of legislation, the Contract With America, and recently with the Democrats' 6 for 06 plan. Yet in all my years of Congress, I can say that this week, perhaps tomorrow, perhaps Friday, we will have what is the most controversial bill that I ever voted on and the largest supplemental appropriation bill in the history of the United States Congress, a bill which the President requested for our troops in Afghanistan and Iraq and the war on terrorism in general. His request level was \$101 billion, but it is actually going to be about a \$124 billion bill, because there are many things that aren't even related to the war that have now got stuck in the bill.

There are a lot of different views on this that I wanted to talk about. I have my friend, Mr. CARTER from Texas, who is a fellow appropriator on this Special Order. The thing that is interesting, though, is that a lot of the traditional allies of the Democrat Party, the Los Angeles Times, the Washington Post, and sometimes in fact those two newspapers are inseparable from the Demo-

crat talking points, but they are squarely against this bill. The editorial pages have gone out of their way to say what a bad bill this is, to say do we really need a General PELOSI, which is what the Los Angeles Times said. And to quote the Los Angeles Times, "After weeks of internal strife, House Democrats have brought forth their proposal forcing President Bush to withdraw the troops from Iraq, 2008. This plan is unruly, bad public policy, bad precedent and bad politics. If the legislation passes, Bush says he will veto it, as well he should." That is the Los Angeles Times.

Here is the Washington Post. The Pelosi plan for Iraq. "The only constituency House Speaker NANCY PELOSI ignored in her plan for amending Bush's supplemental war funding bill are the people of the country that the U.S. troops are fighting to stabilize." That is real important.

"The Democratic proposal doesn't attempt to answer the question of why August 2008 is the right moment for the Iraqi Government to lose all support from U.S. combat units. It doesn't hint as to what might happen if American forces were to leave at the end of this year, a development that would be triggered by the Iraqi Government's weakness. It doesn't explain how continued U.S. interest in Iraq, which holds the world's second largest oil reserve and a substantial cadre of al Qaeda militants, would be protected after 2008. In fact, it may prohibit U.S. forces from returning once they leave." That is the Washington Post.

These are not what I would call mainstream moderate newspapers. The Los Angeles Times and the Washington Post are out there drumming the drums for the liberal causes, time and time again, and they are both squarely against this plan.

You know, I think one thing Americans have to ask themselves is, is there U.S. interest in Iraq? Rhetorical question. Is there U.S. interest in Iraq? Now, if there isn't, and the war is in fact in the tank as Speaker PELOSI and many of her followers believe, get out tomorrow. Get out. Get out yesterday. Now, this bill doesn't say that. It is more of a slow-bleed, sure-formula-for-defeat plan. But if you really think the war is in the tank, why spend another nickel there?

Now I understand, I haven't spoken to him, that my colleague from Georgia, JOHN LEWIS, has made that philosophical and principled position. JOHN is a liberal senior Member from Atlanta. And he says, I am against the war. Why should I vote to spend \$100 billion more there? I respect that position. But if you are going to spend the money and give the troops some assistance, why are you tying their hands at the same time? Again, if there is a U.S. interest, then is there not a U.S. interest in victory? Is there a U.S. interest in defeat? And so often the critics of

the war always dodge those important questions.

And you can go back to 2003 and cite many things that have gone wrong. I am a Republican and I will tell you what, there have been many things that we have misjudged and done wrong, and it is regrettable. And I would also say that even prior to 2003, maybe some things should have gone in a different direction. I will say, as a Member of the House at the time, we were driven by the 17 United Nations resolutions, which the Iraqi Government ignored. We were driven by the best intelligence estimates at the time, which said that there were weapons of mass destruction and Saddam Hussein would use them. That was a view that was shared by HILLARY CLINTON, JOHN KERRY, TED KENNEDY, and all the other leading Democratic critics of this war. But they all had the same conclusion in 2001, 2002 and 2003, leading to our resolution to give the President the use of force to go into Iraq. But I understand politics. Backseat driving and revisionist history just comes with the turf.

So we can politically revise history. I understand there is a short-term memory and a convenience factor, and if you are running for the Democratic Presidential nomination, you have got to be dodging and weaving, as JOHN KERRY did last time, voting for it and then against it and having positions all over the court.

But we are here now. Whether you are Democrat or Republican, the last election, November 2006, put the Democrats in charge. They are no longer in the back seat of the car. The President may have driven the car to where it is, but the Democrat Party now has its hand on the steering wheel. And you can steer good policy. And this, as the Los Angeles Times says, is bad policy, very bad policy.

If you believe there is a U.S. interest and you think, what would happen with the U.S. out of Iraq suddenly? There would be chaos, there would be civil war, and it is quite likely that the second largest oil-producing nation in the world would fall into the hands of anti-American, anti-Western terrorists and become a nation state of terrorists, a haven for more terrorists.

I don't know of anybody in the Congress that thinks it is a good idea to ignore terrorism the way we did prior to 9/11, when the two embassies were attacked in Africa, when the USS *Cole* was attacked in Yemen, and when the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center happened. We are not going to let that happen again. We understand that you just can't ignore terrorism, that you have to be engaged with it.

So if you believe there is an interest and there is a huge downside in sudden withdrawal, why would you vote for a bill that says we are going to withdraw but we are going to withdraw slowly? We are going to let our troops stay over there, but we are not going to give them the backup that they need.

Now, I have the honor of representing the 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Fort Hunter, Georgia. I also have a couple other military bases. But Fort Stewart leaves this week on its third deployment there. And I don't see how I could be expected to represent those soldiers and tell them, you know, ma'am, your son is patrolling the streets of Baghdad and I had the opportunity to send him 20,000 troops to cover his back and I voted no. Because it is a fundamental question. If you are in Iraq, do you want 20,000 more troops helping you or not? How can you say you support somebody if you are not going to give them additional troops to back them up?

Now, I don't believe this is a status quo vote at all, because General Petraeus, who is now our commander over there, has designed this plan as a way to ramp up our forces and clamp down on the violence and the attacks, train the Iraqi troops, and then stabilize the country and come home. I believe that that is an exit and a victory plan, and it is changing the status quo.

So why would you put the general in charge, who I think was approved by the Senate by a vote of 80 or 90 to zero, I don't think there was a dissenting vote, and then say to him, good luck, but we are going to micromanage the war because we have 435 Members of Congress who, General Petraeus, are mighty good military folks in own right. Maybe we should in fact move Congress to Baghdad, since all the generals seem to be in this room who have all the answers.

Mr. CARTER. Would the gentleman yield? I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Very good description of what we are looking at this week. And you are right; this may be one of the most critical votes that the people that hold these valuable seats that our people back home gave us are going to cast in their lifetime, because they are going to cast a life-and-death vote here.

You know, as you mentioned, the troops and the 1st Infantry Division that you represent over there in Georgia, I am very blessed to represent the folks at Fort Hood, Texas. We are the only two division posts in the entire world, as I understand it, and I am very proud to represent the 4th Infantry Division and the 1st Cavalry Division and III Corps.

As we meet here tonight, the 1st Cavalry Division is in Baghdad, and General Odierno and III Corps are in command.

□ 2000

Now, I have my soldiers from the 1st Cavalry Division, and I call them mine because I care about every single solitary one of those soldiers as they serve our country. I have them in harm's way tonight as we stand here, with great generals who know what they are doing, know their mission, and are ready to accomplish it.

I don't think the American people have really understood what General

Petraeus is trying to do with what some are calling a surge, but more familiar to our soldiers is a call for more boots on the ground; or as Jack said, for somebody to take your back.

But the real issue here is what is the plan for victory that General Petraeus has painted for us. Well, the plan is to involve Iraq in their own defense. The plan is for one battalion of American soldiers to back up a brigade of Iraqi soldiers as they go in and execute a new policy in the neighborhoods of terror in Baghdad. The Army will be backing up a brigade with a battalion. There are five battalions in a brigade. So that means it is a 5 to 1 ratio is the plan for the Iraqis to be in the fight versus the Americans. The Americans will provide all of the great resources, all of the know-how, all of the skill, all of the training, all the can-do that our American forces provide to the fight. But the Iraqis will go in and they will take care of cleaning out the neighborhoods in Baghdad. They speak the language. They know the culture and the religion. They know the various groups. They can do this in a much more effective way, with the support of General Petraeus' troops. And he has told us that he needs the additional boots on the ground to make this plan work.

Now, I think the American people are a people that believe in winning. You know, I sit around this House in our off time, and what are we talking about, who is going to win the next basketball game competition that is going on in this country? And we are talking about who is going to win, not who is going to lose.

When it is football season, we are looking for a winning season. When we have a baseball team, we want them to have a winning year and to win the pennant. We are a Nation that likes winners. We have the most effective fighting force in the history of man on the ground today, and they can win. And they are telling us we have a plan.

One of the problems that we have run into in Baghdad, and I have learned this by visiting with these generals. I visited just recently with the general who brought the 4th Infantry Division back, and they are ready and training to deploy again next fall for their third or fourth deployment.

What was said was we have demonstrated we can clear out an area like Sadr City, for instance. The 1st Cavalry Division went in 2 years ago and cleaned out Sadr City, redesigned the sewer system, got the electricity system working slightly, got the garbage that had been in the streets for years under Saddam Hussein cleaned out, and they did this under fire. And they also killed or captured the bad guys that they found, and ran the rest of them out of Sadr City. But they didn't have the resources to hold Sadr City.

This plan is to clear, hold, and rehabilitate. That's the plan that General Petraeus talked to the Senate about. That's the plan he has, as I understand it.

And the Iraqis will set up like stations in the various neighborhoods to do the clear with our help; they will do the hold with our help; and then teams will come in from the Army and the Marine Corps and like from the State Department to do the rehabilitation of the area and give them services they practically haven't had under Saddam Hussein, and some have never had in their lifetime.

This is a plan that I think we owe to our soldiers and their sacrifice, to give them a chance to get done. I am heart-sick that we have a plan that is supposed to be funding these troops to get this job done that is coming to the floor of the House, and it has provisions in that plan which it looks like to me are saying we don't think you can succeed. Therefore, we are setting up kind of a track to get you out because by a vote for the bill in its present state, we are saying to our soldiers overseas, we don't think you can get the job done and so here is how we are going to get you out, and here is the drop-dead date, August of next year, when you are getting out, like it or not.

You mentioned General PELOSI micromanaging. I have real problems with this bill, and I hope every Member of Congress will look at this bill and look at it in terms of human beings, i.e. our soldiers. It has a provision, and it has a provision which says no unit can go to the fight unless they are certified by someone, that they are fully trained, fully equipped before they are allowed to go. And if they cannot meet that certification on their demarcation date they will be by this bill defunded because they are not certified to go to the fight.

Meanwhile, there are troops in Iraq who are expecting to have a replacement coming in. They have been there for a year. But what does this bill say about those troops in Iraq? In this case, the 1st Cavalry Division from Fort Hood, Texas, next fall under this bill, once they reach 365 days in theater, this bill defunds those soldiers.

Now, if we fail to certify their replacements and we have defunded the soldiers and now you have a 1st Cavalry Division soldier who is short on gasoline and ammunition in the war, is that where we want that soldier to be? Is that caring for the American troops? And all of this is being managed from here, not from the generals that are in the fight?

I think it is a tragedy that we would even consider doing something like this, thinking we as a body have the military knowledge, superior to the people we just, by the example you gave, by a unanimous vote of the Senate hired a man to do the job.

Mr. KINGSTON. I think the genius of the U.S. Congress is not only can we solve health care and education and agriculture and transportation, but on the side, we can run a war. I am just saying, hey, with this kind of brain power, we all ought to go to Baghdad and put on a uniform.

Mr. CARTER. You go ahead. I have been there three times, and let me tell you, I like the professional soldier and the job he is doing.

Another interesting thing that is not being said that you need to know, and I think it is important and if you talk to the soldiers you will learn this, in the Anbar Province where the marines are operating with some of the airborne folks, and that is where the marines asked for 4,000 more troops to help them, for the first time we have had a change of support from the populace in Anbar Province. Al Qaeda is there. That is where our enemy that blew up our country, that is where they are. The marines are hunting them down, capturing or killing them. They are saying give us 4,000 more, and we will get this job done. Why is that? Because the sheiks are now cooperating. They are now saying to the marines, we will tell you where these guys are.

Mr. KINGSTON. Something curious is that the Speaker of the House said we need to get out of Iraq and go to Afghanistan where the real war on terrorism is.

It is kind of scary to think that someone who is third in line to the President would have that kind of a naive misunderstanding of the world we live in.

We have been joined by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER), and I want to hear what he has to say.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. I was listening to my friend from Texas's analogy about the sporting events, since that is on everybody's mind right now. I was thinking about two things. One, the proposal that is being put before this Congress, possibly this week, is to say, you know what, let's let the fans do the coaching. We hired us a head coach, but you know what, we have decided the fans know more about how to win this basketball championship, and so we are going to let the fans do that.

But the most compelling thing that I heard, and I want to talk a little bit about this trip, and the gentlemen both know, I just returned 10 days ago from being in Iraq for the third time. I was in Fallujah, was in Ramadi, and talked to General Petraeus, a four-star general who we have tasked to finish and win the war in Iraq, all of the way down to the privates. And one of the privates said to me, Congressman, it is like this. In sporting events, we have home games and we have away games. We lost one of our home games; let's win this away game.

He was referring to the attack on 9/11. That wasn't the first attack on home soil. So we have lost a couple of home games, we want to win the away games.

Also, the gentleman from Texas is exactly right. What we saw in Fallujah and Ramadi is that the sheiks are not only telling us where the bad guys are, but in one case, one of the sheiks from his particular tribe sent 400 or 500 of his young people from his tribe to enlist in the police force in the Iraqi

Army, saying not only do we want to tell you where they are, but we want to help you take these people out of our neighborhoods.

I believe one of the turning points that is going on in Iraq today is the fact that the Iraqi people are tired of what these terrorists are doing to their own country. They are tired of the killing. And I notice the gentleman has a picture of a street scene. I know what that father and mother are thinking: Will my children ever be safe to walk the streets of the neighborhood they were raised in?

The good news is the answer to that is going to be yes.

Now, is it still dangerous over there? Absolutely. But we are at war. I think some people are under the misconception that one day we are going to wake up and we are going to have some utopic situation in Iraq. The Israeli people have been waiting for that utopic situation for many, many years. There is still going to be violence.

We have violence in our own country. We have violence in our own cities. But one of the things I felt was most compelling when I was over there, and I was visiting with all of the way from General Petraeus down to privates to boots on the ground, and each one of our stops in Fallujah, in Ramadi, in Baghdad, we had lunch or dinner with the troops. Those are the people that really will tell you how things are going.

What they said is what the gentlemen both have been saying: Things are getting better. We are able to go into these neighborhoods, and we have a different tactic. We used to have a post and we would go in with a convoy and we would tour that area, and at the end of the day we would go back out. Now we are putting security posts inside the communities. I call it kind of like community policing. Now we have a presence there.

And one of the things that people don't realize, for example, in Baghdad, that presence looks like this. There are three Iraqi security force officers, whether they be police or army, to every one American. So what is happening, those people are coming up to those people that are in their neighborhood and saying, Down the block two ways is a bad person. And you know what? On a number of occasions we have gone down to where the people say they were, and not only did we find some high-value targets, we also found huge caches of weapons and IED-making things.

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So now I think the hearts of the Iraqi people are in this. I know that the hearts of our troops were because, as I shared with the conference, I believe, 2 weeks ago, those soldiers looked me right in the eye, and they said, Congressman, nobody has more invested in this war than we do.

One young man, this is his third tour. He said, sir, I have been in harm's way

three times for this country and for my country, and he said, nobody has more invested than I do. He said, Congressman, please go back and tell your colleagues, let us finish this job. This is a fight we can win.

And anybody that voted to send those troops over there just to go over there and play Army for a while and then come home with defeat made the wrong vote. When we send our young men and women in harm's way, we need to be sending them to win, not to place. We need to win those away games so that we do not have to fight any more home games.

I also shared with the conference, I believe, this week the story about a gentleman that joined me in the State of the Union for this year. His name is Roy Vallez, and Roy was sitting right back over here in this corner in a seat that my wife gave her ticket to Roy, and why Roy is so special is Roy has the distinction, unfortunately, of being the only father in America that has lost two sons in Iraq.

While Roy was here, he was going around telling everybody about how important it is for us to finish this war so that his sacrifice, his extreme sacrifice, that he made and his sons made was not all for naught. He had an opportunity to talk to the President of the United States who called him on his cell phone, and he and the President had a wonderful conversation. That is the message he said to the President. Now, if there is anybody that has a right to question whether we ought to pull out right now or quit or come home, I believe Roy Vallez probably gets a place at the top of the list.

Mr. KINGSTON. I do not think you will find Hollywood or the media clamoring around Roy Vallez the way they have Cindy Sheehan. I wonder what the difference is.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. I think it is a very good point. Unfortunately, the rest of the world does not get to hear the good stories.

Mr. KINGSTON. I have found the same way. I have been to Iraq twice, and when I go there to talk to the troops, their biggest enemy is the American media. They will tell you it is so frustrating, and they never would have believed the media was so bad.

I want to show you some statistics that I think are important because you have just been there, but this was a poll that, again, good old American media covered up that was actually in Sunday's London Times, a British company, the largest poll in the history of Iraq, over 5,000 people were surveyed.

Now, I think so often when we hear polls that CNN reports, they poll their newsroom, 25 people, all whose minds have made up against the war and against George Bush. But this was the largest poll in the history of the country, largest poll during the war, of over 5,000 people.

They found this: That al-Maliki's, as a Prime Minister, approval rating is 49 percent. In September, it was 29 percent. That is a significant statistic.

The other thing is we keep hearing that we are caught up in a civil war. Well, the flip side is this: It is 70 percent of the people do not believe that they are in a civil war.

Now, is it not strange that the Iraqis do not believe they are in a civil war, but if you poll the Democrat Members of Congress, I bet you 90 percent would say they are in a civil war, and yet somehow the folks who live there do not believe they are in it. I find that a strange, just a very big difference, but, you know, who knows? I mean, we are politicians. We know everything. So certainly we know what the Iraqis are up to, and maybe they do not.

The other thing that that poll, and it is not on my chart, but the other thing that the poll showed is that 66 percent of the people say they are better off now than they were under Saddam Hussein, conveniently unreported in American news, but I would recommend to you all to check out Sunday's London Times.

One other statistic that was not in the poll, but this is just a fact. But the month before we started the surge, and the surge officially started the 14th of February, the month before, there were 1,440 civilian casualties. Since that time there have been 265. You cannot ignore that statistic.

Now, I also want to give everybody a homework assignment. This is just for the folks back home. I would love you guys to see what the Democrat leadership says about the bill they are introducing tomorrow. Remember, this is a bill that is their official war plan.

Go to www.gop.gov/news/documentsingle, and what do we have? Aspx? This, if we can get this on camera, if anybody would come call me, I would love you to see the Democrat leadership explaining their plan. I am telling you, it is absolutely, it is almost right out of Comedy Central. Are they really saying this? Because everything is, well, what date y'all call getting out? Well, I do not know, let me ask my colleague here. Well, I do not know, let me ask my colleagues. It was kind of like, okay, can anybody tell us the capital of Iraq? This is, yes, it is on a GOP Web site. That is the only thing partisan about it. It is absolutely not touched up one bit.

I want to be sure everybody has an opportunity to look this up, but go to www.gop.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx? And ask for the document ID is 60396, and if you cannot find it, just call my office and we will give it to you, but it is scary. It is on one hand hilarious. On the other hand, it is scary that here is a leadership of a party saying here is our plan, and they cannot even explain it on prime-time television.

I wanted to say the scary part is these are high-stakes stuff, but please, look this up and watch this news conference. If you still think that this is the right thing to do, well, you are seeing something I am not seeing.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. I want to make the point, but I think that is one of the

things that concerns me most is that this global war on terrorism is a real war. So when we talk about bleeding out or getting out or whatever you want to call it of Iraq, the thing that the other side has not brought to us is what they are going to do next, what is next on the agenda, what are they going to do if they pull out of Iraq, then how are we going to continue to keep these bad people from following us back to the U.S.?

I think that is a real concern, and I think that the fact that the gentleman, I did the see the copy of the press conference, and it is disconcerting that those folks that are the folks that have the next plan.

Mr. KINGSTON. The gentleman also knows, both you guys being from Texas, that last year the Border Patrol, I believe, caught 115,000 people coming through the Mexican borders who were OTM, other than Mexican, and the concern of terrorists coming over here is real because we do have terrorists right now inside the United States border. We do not know how many cells or what they meet or what their intentions are, but we do know that they are here.

Mr. CARTER. I think that is a very good point. I also think it is a very good point to note that we are talking about, we need to get back to what we set out to do here in Congress with this supplemental bill. I mean, what did the President and the generals who are in charge of this fight ask us to do as a Congress? Did they ask us to load up a bill with pork so that folks back home would have all kinds of pork projects? No. They asked us to give them what it takes for them to do their job. They did not ask us to run the war. They asked us to help them do their job.

People love to quote generals around here, and, in fact, today I have heard twice quoted generals. Of course, these were all generals that are no longer in the fight, but they quote them, and they are certainly valid sources, and I do not criticize the opinions of those generals. They love to quote them. But I do not hear anybody quoting the opinions of the generals that are in the fight today, and yet they are giving us their opinions.

One of the things that some folks back home ask me, and I think this is a valid thing to pass on to everyone here in the House and to whoever may be listening, General Petraeus was asked about an exit strategy from Iraq. He said, let us get this deal to work because we think we have the right formula to make it work, and as we stand up the Iraqi troops and they show what they are showing us in preliminaries right now that they are now ready to participate, as we have these successes, we can start drawing down the troops.

So he told an exit strategy. How many of us have heard that in the media? All we hear is we are going to war, it is never ending, and there is no exit strategy, and the man that we just elected or voted for in the Senate

unanimously to be in charge has told us, this is not a never-ending situation. It is all about standing up the Iraqis and standing down the Americans, and we can get there if we do this thing well.

This man is considered by everyone in the military as the counterinsurgency expert of the Army. That is why we have got him over there.

So let us get back to what we are doing here. American soldiers, one of the things that just amazes me what the soldiers and marines do, they strap on between 80 and 100 pounds of stuff, sometimes more than that, and they go out in 140-degree temperature in metal vehicles and fight for the freedom of those people in Iraq. But this Congress and this bill wants to load on their shoulders an additional \$24 billion worth of pork, and it is a shame.

And why does this bill have this pork in it? What I mean by pork is things that have nothing to do with what we were asked to do, which is help our soldiers do their duty.

Mr. KINGSTON. Let me talk to you, for the \$23 billion extra that are not related to the war but are on this bill, designed to bring in more people to support it, this is what it includes: avian flu, \$969 million. We have already spent, I believe, \$5.6 billion on avian flu. We have already spent \$5.6 billion, but it is an emergency, we have got to spend nearly another billion.

Spinach, spinach recall, not spinach disaster, but recalling to the private sector, \$25 million.

Minimum wage, well, we know that is an emergency. Hurricane citrus program because of Katrina and Rita, I guess like avian flu, Katrina's the gift that keeps on giving in terms of any time you need to pass something.

NASA, \$35 million for exploration capabilities. Well, that is certainly emergency. We better deal with that on the backs of the soldiers.

Corps of Engineers, more repair to the levee system in New Orleans. I do not know how many times we are going to repair that levee system, but maybe the Corps of Engineers cannot get it right, and who knows, maybe we need to bring in the private sector.

And, of course, FEMA is going to get more money. I mean, what would an emergency bill be without the FEMA bureaucrats getting more money?

And then there is rental assistance for Indian housing, another emergency; crop disaster assistance, shrimp, \$120 million; frozen farm land, \$20 million; aquaculture operations, \$5 million for aquaculture for shellfish, oysters and clams. It does not have to do with Katrina, to my knowledge.

Of course, the emergency at the FDA, \$4 million for the Office of Women's Health. Big emergency. I guess you guys have been getting a lot of letters about that one.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, \$60 million for fishing communities, Indian tribes, individual, small businesses, fishermen and fish processors, \$60.4 million.

And then there is the emergency of Secure Rural Schools Act, \$400 million for rural schools to offset revenues lost by the Bureau of Land Management owning timber.

And then low-income energy assistance program, a little confused about this one because, you know, with global warming, and it already being March, well, who knows? I digress.

Vaccine compensation, \$50 million to compensate individuals for injuries caused by the H5N1 vaccine. Now, as you know, that is avian flu. And so of the \$5.6 billion we have already spent, and of the \$900 million we are about to spend, we still have to give \$50 million extra on that.

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Then, \$50 million for the Capitol Power Plant. I mean, we have got to get that building renovated.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. That and the Visitor Center are somehow tied together. I think they are having a race as to who can finish that project last.

Mr. KINGSTON. Yes, I think so. Then the children's health care program, the SCHIP program, the State Children's Health Insurance Program, there is a shortfall. But we have to ask ourselves, what is the shortfall? The gentleman Mr. CARTER knows, one of the big reasons is because the children's health system has been abused in many States because they have insured adults.

Mr. CARTER. We did discuss this last week, and this plan was good hearted. It was designed to help children. But some of our States said, wait a minute, here is our chance, this is free health care from the Federal Government for our State. Let's just include children and their parents, and maybe their brothers and sisters.

Mr. KINGSTON. And the grandparents.

Mr. CARTER. And the grandparents. In fact, let's just make it health care for everybody in our State that falls in this category. This is like the Federal Government, and now they have got a shortfall, which that is not kind of hard to figure out if you calculate it, what it costs to take care of the kids, and then you added all their extended family to the program, yes, they will have a shortfall. This isn't rocket science here.

Mr. KINGSTON. The gentleman will remember in committee last week, when we debated this funding, Dr. WELDON and I had an amendment. I pulled out a chart that showed the number of States that had put the majority of their money into adult health care rather than children's health care.

You know, if there is a problem out there, that should be addressed. I want to say for the record, these things aren't programs that don't have merit. All of these things that I have listed are, I think there are some valid arguments for them. Some reforms are certainly needed in many of them, but they don't belong in a war bill, a funding war bill.

Mr. CARTER. That's the key.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Doesn't the gentleman find it ironic, both of you, that in order to get support for this flawed plan where we are basically saying to our troops, we don't think you can get the job done, we are going to cut and run, we are going to slow-bleed this, that they have got to go out and start buying votes from their Members by offering up these projects, some of these pet projects from some of these Members in order to get support. Something as important as our national security is being bartered in the halls of the United States Congress.

I don't believe the American people think that's the way we ought to be doing business here. I don't think they think when we are making policy about keeping America safe, keeping America secure, making sure that when we send our troops somewhere, we support them 100 percent so that we can bring home the victory we send them to.

Now we are bartering for that progress with these projects. As the gentleman said, many of these things are worthwhile initiatives, but this is not the time nor the place nor the forum for those to be talked about.

Mr. KINGSTON. I want to read you this statement by the Speaker of the House, third in line for the President, March 19. This is NANCY PELOSI talking, "When we do this, when we transition, when we change the mission, when we redeploy the troops, build political consensus, engage in diplomatic efforts and reform and reinvigorate the reconstruction effort, then we can turn our attention to the real war on terror in Afghanistan. I hear the voice of the future in the Chamber. What a beautiful sound. What a beautiful sound."

Now, I guess that qualifies you to micromanage the war in Iraq because you have acknowledged there is no terrorism in Iraq, that it's all in Afghanistan. I guess if the real war is in Afghanistan, then the fake war is in Iraq. Therefore, it's okay, at the hands of the troop.

Mr. CARTER. We are sitting here with a concern that goes back 1,000 years between the Sunnis and the Shiites. That is why people talk about civil war.

Now, has anybody read what has been put in the Middle Eastern newspapers about if the Americans pull out, and it blows up in Iraq, the countries that will come to the aid of these two groups? The Iranians have said, we are not going to let Shiites be put down, we will come to their aid. The Saudis have said, we are not going to have genocide for the Sunnis who are the minority party, we will come to the Sunnis' aid.

I think Americans know that if you take Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia, that is the basic oil production region of the entire Middle East who could become involved in a region-wide conflict because of America's early pullout, as recommended by Speaker PELOSI. Then

you know how upset folks got about \$4-a-gallon gasoline? So what happens when over two-thirds of the world's supply is involved in a civil war or region-wide war in the Middle East if you don't care about doing the right thing? We certainly know people care about having \$10-a-gallon gasoline. It's kind of a sad, tragic thing to argue.

But let's get realistic about this. If we get stability in Iraq where there is not going to be this threat of genocide, if we can get there by them turning to their government for assistance rather than to militia and terrorists, that is our goal. If we get there, we keep a stable region, and America is affected by having stability in that region.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. We are talking about this civil war. One of the interesting things in Fallujah is we sat down, and at the table, across the table, was the police chief of Fallujah. Sitting next to him was a colonel in the Iraqi Army. The interesting thing about that meeting, one is Sunni, the other is Shiite. Yet they are working side by side to make sure that Fallujah, the streets of Fallujah, are again a place where families can walk and commerce can take place.

One of the interesting things that I saw on this trip, each trip I have seen progress. On this particular trip, I saw a lot more people out in the farmlands. What a lot of people don't know about Iraq is that at one time they were an exporter of agricultural products. This is a region of the world that is rich in a lot of natural resources. One of those is water.

But more people were engaged in the streets. We flew at night. We flew from Ramadi into Baghdad, flying over the city, a lot more lights, a lot more electricity on, not just in the city but out in the countryside. These are the kinds of things that are going to build that Nation.

To pull the plug after we have invested all of the lives and the resources into this initiative at this particular point in time is really unconscionable for our country even to consider that. I am concerned that a lot of people don't realize, as you said, what is really at stake here.

Mr. CARTER. I think that Americans clearly have a stake in a stable Middle East. If they don't realize they have a stake, they will know it when they go to the pump, if that region goes into turmoil. They will know it. You know, it's sad to have to talk in those terms, but it's the truth.

Let's get back to why we are here. We are here to give our troops the tools they need, the weapons they need, and the fuel they need to continue this fight and to see if this new direction will bring victory for a bunch of folks that deserve a victory.

Mr. KINGSTON. Let's also say that the supplemental is needed for a lot of needed equipment for these troops, and there is a lot of good in this supplemental.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. There is.

Mr. KINGSTON. I want to say also on a bipartisan basis, you have a lot of support for the good that is in the supplemental. I will hand it to the Democrat leadership, the Democrats on the Appropriations, for putting in things that we know the troops need such as the MRAPs, the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Humvees the troops want; more money for the joint IED defeat fund. We had some really good testimony on that. Increases for the defense health care program, that is important; more money for equipment and training, more money for Afghanistan to counterterrorist-laden regions, money for a shortfall in the theater. There is some very good things in this bill that we believe, on a bipartisan basis, that the troops need.

But the part which requires the Iraqi Government to do certain things, which they may or may not be able to do by a deadline of July 1, really does tie up the Commander in Chief. I will say we are an equal branch of government, but the Commander in Chief is in charge of wars, not Members of Congress.

Just to give you an example, to rewrite the Iraqi hydrocarbon law, which has to do with revenue sharing of the oil, I think it's a good thing to do. But I think if you say it has to be done a date certain, July 1, they might not be able to do that.

Here we are in the United States Government, last year we could not pass a budget. Right now, we are having trouble passing a budget. Sometimes these things take longer than they do shorter.

We got to give a new government the opportunity to get things done and not micromanage their government. But I think the biggest concern is, among other things, that there is still a pull-out. There is still a date certain for a pull-out, August 2008, and it's possible Iraqis won't be ready. It's possible we could do it before then.

What General Petraeus has outlined for us is to go full-fledged with this troop surge, bring stabilization while ramping up the training of our Iraqis, so that we can hand them the baton in a way that we have continued stabilization, and then we can go home. I think letting General Petraeus call that shot in Baghdad is far more important than 435 wannabe generals here in the United States Congress and in Washington.

Mr. CARTER. I agree with you wholeheartedly. That is our issue here tonight. I agree with you. They worked hard to put a lot of the needs in here. Let's not say that these other things that have been, in my opinion, wrongly added to this bill in the way of pork, those things are still very important to this country. Many of those things are important to my district, but I would tell my folks back home, as important as some of those things are, our kids have enough to carry on their shoulders in Iraq without carrying the burden of these projects which can be

dealt with in the regular appropriations process which is still to come, and the regular budget process which is still to come.

You know what? If passing legislation, if there were a drop-dead date we were told, we would be voting on this bill today. So if we were going to be having a drop-dead event in world politics today, it would drop dead today, because we didn't pass what we were promised we were going to pass today.

To put a time limit, to do it by the 1st of July or everybody comes home, when we are talking to them, that's the voice of a legislative body talking to another legislative body. And they know they can't meet deadlines in their Congress. We can't meet absolute deadlines in our Congress. Things happen. This is what's wrong with micromanaging from 6,000 miles away.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. The gentleman is exactly right. I think the point was made, this is a young government. This is a young government that is basically about 8 months old. Basically they are learning how to govern because they have been an oppressed people for so long.

I think about our Nation, we are going to celebrate over 230 years of history of this country, this Republic. We are still learning how to govern in many ways. I think talking about drop-dead dates, wouldn't it be nice if we had a drop-dead date to go to a balanced budget in this Congress?

The gentleman talked about the splitting of oil reserves, and I think some of the positive things are there has been a tentative agreement reached within some of the Iraqi leadership, and they are going to hopefully bring that to a vote here fairly quickly. Prime Minister Maliki is making it very clear that there is no one that is a sacred cow in this war. If there are bad people out there, no matter what their affiliation is, that they have permission to go and do that.

□ 2045

And the list goes on and on of the positives. Yes, we still have fatalities; yes, we still have people being killed in that country. But we have never, I don't know of a war we have fought that there weren't those costs.

Mr. KINGSTON. I wanted to point out one more time: Civilian casualties a month before the surge, 1,440; casualties after the surge beginning February 15, 265. Bombings have dropped 40 percent, from 163 to 102. And that would just be general bombings, IEDs. And then car bombings are down 35 percent, from 56 to 36. That is progress we are already seeing because of the surge.

And I want to get the guys home, but you need to complete the job, you need to have victory and make sure that we do not have to go back, and an arbitrary pullout date would cause that.

I also want to say this: I really do believe the Democrats are right in having more oversight. Frankly, I think that, as Republicans, we did not get the

oversight that we should have. We should have been tougher on some of the testimonies that we received. And I think that their suggestions of what the Iraqi Government should do aren't far off. But I think giving them deadlines when we have trouble passing legislation ourselves, I think that is a little unreasonable.

But then the biggest part is the arbitrary pullout date of March 2008. And I think you are setting up failure when you are doing that. That decision has got to be made by our generals in Baghdad.

Mr. CARTER. I thank the gentleman for letting us have this discussion tonight and allowing us to participate in this discussion. It has been a good one. I hope that the folks that are looking at this bill very hard and trying to decide how they will vote, I hope that they will vote to give our American soldiers all the resources they need, and give the trained professionals the opportunity to direct the fight, not certain Members of the United States Congress. And if that happens, I believe that we are on the road to success.

But we will have to have oversight, and we will have to watch it closely, and I for one am in favor of that, because what I care most about is the lives of those soldiers that I get to say good-bye to and welcome back home on the planes in Texas. And they matter to us in Texas, they matter to us in the United States. And we are proud of them, and we owe them everything we can to keep them alive, healthy, and successful. And I thank you for allowing me to participate.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. And I appreciate the gentleman's comments. And I also want to thank the gentleman from Georgia for allowing us this time tonight.

I think I would leave you and leave the American people not with my words and not with Members of Congress or even General Petraeus or some of the other military leaders, but I will leave you with the words I started off the evening with in my time here is the words of the young men and women that are boots on the ground, that have served not one tour, but two tours, and many of them three tours, when they looked me in my eye and they said, "Congressman, we want to go home. We want to spend time with our families. We want to go back to our communities. But, Congressman, we have a lot invested in this war, probably more than anyone else, and let us finish this job."

And so I urge my colleagues to listen to these young brave men and women that are doing phenomenal things for our country and for the people in Iraq. Listen to the soldiers: Let's finish this job.

Mr. KINGSTON. And, finally, let me say this: Let's defeat this bill. Let's come back on a bipartisan basis and come up with something better, something that gets Democrats and Republicans together in the name of the

troops, America, and international security.

It is in our interests to get the politics out of legislation like this and come back with something better, something more noble. And I believe we can do it, because we are Americans. Thank you.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLEIN of Florida). All Members of the House are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to the television audience.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be here again to spend a small amount of time on behalf of the Speaker's 30-something Working Group. I thank the Speaker of the House for allowing us this opportunity to come and share with our colleagues and share with the American people some, I think, very important thoughts on what is happening today.

It was interesting, I got to hear the end of our colleagues' remarks from across this side of the aisle; and one of the things they have asked of this Congress, and you hear it over and over again as we talk about this war in Iraq, is that we have to finish the job. And I think there is a question that has to come before that subject. We have got to start asking a little bit more in this place what that job is. I think that is what this debate is about, in part, this week, and the debate that we have renewed here since we have brought the House under new leadership. What is the job that we need to be doing in order to keep this country safe?

The answers to that have come in piecemeal fashion, in dribs and drabs over the past year. But maybe the most substantial piece of information, new information that helped us decide what that job is, was when we got last summer evidence through the National Intelligence Estimate that started to tell us that if our job is what we think it is, which is to do everything we can to keep this country safe, then our own Intelligence Community, the dozens of intelligence officers and organizations that contributed to that report came up with one unfortunately startling conclusion, and that was that our efforts in Iraq are on more days making us less safe as a Nation than making us more safe.

Why? Because we have not only destabilized the region, but we have created what that report called a cause celebre in that country, where extremists and terrorists around the world now see Iraq as their proving ground, as

their training ground, and as their breeding ground.

So what we are debating here today is, I think, exactly the question that is posed by the other side of the aisle: Let's start talking about finishing that job. That job is ridding this world of fundamentalism and terrorism and extremism that poses a threat to us no matter where it is. It is not confined by the borders of some country in the Middle East that we occupy today. It doesn't know the borders of nation states. It poses a threat to us in all forms and from all places.

And so this debate this week, the supplemental bill which this House will vote on shortly, is about refocusing our mission, starting to deal with the realization and the reality of a conflict against terrorism that goes far beyond the borders of Iraq.

Part of what this bill is going to do is not only redeploy our forces, but also bring our troops out of harm's way in that country. You can't ask them to be a referee in what has become a religious conflict in that country, one that military leader after military leader, our own commanding general on the field there, General Petraeus, has said himself just earlier this month that there is no military solution to what has become a civil and religious conflict on the ground.

Job number one is to recognize the limits of our brave men and women in Iraq. They do an unbelievably admirable job every day. We are so grateful, especially those of us in the 30-something Working Group who consider those men and women our contemporaries, that they have chosen to defend this Nation so that others of us are able to serve this country in a different way. In order to honor them, in order to support those troops, we need to bring them out of a fight that our military forces cannot win alone.

But this is also about refocusing that effort, and I think that is what we have to keep on coming back to here, is there are fights still worth fighting in other parts of the world, such as Afghanistan, where we are on the verge of losing control of that country back to the very forces that gave cover and umbrage to the people who attacked this Nation on September 11. Remember, it was not Saddam Hussein that flew planes into tall buildings in New York, it was Osama bin Laden's organization called al Qaeda that used Afghanistan and the Taliban as its place and center of operation. And that country, as we have shifted more forces away from Afghanistan into Iraq, is now falling back into chaos, and part of our mission here has to be a realization that there are places worth fighting, and there are places in which military forces cannot quell ongoing violence. Afghanistan is still a fight worth fighting.

But it is also about focusing our efforts back here at home. And one of the secrets starting to come out, and thanks in part to the work of Representative WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and

Representative MEEK and Representative RYAN, the work they did here on the late nights on the floor of the House, we were able to hear a little bit about this in the past year, was that this Congress over the last several years wasn't doing justice to the issues of homeland security, wasn't doing everything that we should be doing in order to protect our own people and our own borders here at home.

So this supplemental bill that everybody hears about that the Congress is going to vote on is not only going to finally do exactly what the will of the people have asked for in the election of last November, which is set a new course in Iraq, but it is also to start refocusing and redoubling our efforts back here at home.

The \$2.6 billion in this bill will be rededicated to the efforts to make sure that terrorism does not find harbor on the shores of this Nation. Over \$1 billion for aviation security, \$90 million for advanced checkpoint explosive detection equipment, \$160 million to increase air cargo screening, \$1.25 billion for new port transit and border security, \$150 million for nuclear security. We can go on and on and on. We are going to finally step up to the plate as a Congress and make sure that we are spending money to win the fight that matters to finish the job.

That job, Mr. Speaker, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, has to be done with the recognition that Iraq has become now a place that, on more days than not, presents a greater danger to this country by creating a hotbed, a training ground, a proving ground for terrorists. We need to start refocusing our efforts on fights that matter.

This is going to be one of the more important pieces of legislation that will come before this Congress, and I think it will honor that job that we are entrusted with, which is to protect this Nation from those that would do harm to it.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you so much to my friend from Connecticut. It is a pleasure to join you in the 30-something Working Group once again.

And we need to remind our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, that, on November 7, the American people sent us a very loud message. They sent us a loud message that they wanted us to move this country in a new direction. We began to do that. We heard them, and we began to do that in implementing our 100 hours agenda, our Six in '06 agenda, by adopting a bill that would establish an increase in the minimum wage, by having the student loan interest rate, by making sure that we hold pharmaceutical companies' feet to the fire and ensure that, for Medicare part D prescription drug beneficiaries, that we negotiate for lower drug prices. We wanted to make sure that we expand the research into uses of alternative energy.

So what do we do? We repealed the subsidies that were given away by the

Republicans to the oil industry so that we can use that money more appropriately to fund alternative energy research. We passed legislation that would implement fully the 9/11 Commission recommendations.

And, on top of that, the other piece of the new direction pie was clearly the message sent by the American people, Mr. MURPHY, that they want a new direction in terms of the war in Iraq. They are sick and tired of the rubber-stamp Republican Congress that we used to have giving the President a blank check, allowing the administration to go unchecked in terms of its utter lack of accountability, allowing contracts to be let with no questions asked; no hearings during the course of the years. We have now completed 4 years of this war, and up until the time when Democrats took over this Congress no questions, no hearings about the direction that the administration was taking this country and this war. A total shift from the war of necessity, which was the war in Afghanistan, which really was in direct response and had the widespread support of the American people, that really and truly was a response to the 9/11 attack; instead, a shift to a war of choice in the war in Iraq. And that was utterly unacceptable when Congress was misled and was given a set of facts on intelligence 4 years ago, when they misled Congress into voting for this war.

Now, we are still mired in chaos there. The administration has allowed Afghanistan to descend back into chaos when we had brought them democracy, and we had beaten the Taliban, and women had been given an opportunity to have freedom. Girls could go to school again. It was a new day in Afghanistan. And that has essentially been squandered. In favor of what? In favor of civil war in Iraq? In favor of us intervening and trying to resolve a civil war between the Sunnis and the Shiites that has gone on for hundreds if not 1,000 years?

When is this administration going to recognize that when we say the word, when we refer to the troops, Mr. Speaker, it is very easy to think, let's examine the term "troops." I think it is very easy to look at that word and not see it in a personal way. I think that we throw the word "troops" around so much that we forget that troops, a troop is a person.

□ 2100

We are talking about individuals who are fighting for this country and who are doing their duty. And most of them that are over there are on their third tour of duty, Mr. MURPHY.

I know I have told this the last few times that I have been here with my 30-something colleagues, but I went to Walter Reed. I cannot get it out of my mind, because I have two 7-year-old kids and a 3-year-old, and I can't imagine what this family has gone through.

But one of the soldiers that I visited when I went to Walter Reed before we

voted on the escalation resolution and rejected the President's policy, when we voted to adopt that resolution, rejecting the President's policy on escalating this war, I went to Walter Reed before we voted on that. And one of the soldiers I met was with his wife and with his young child, who was 6 years old, this beautiful 6-year-old little boy. And that 6-year-old little boy was so excited that his dad's tour was going to be done in August, and he said, my daddy is coming home forever in August.

His dad was sick in Walter Reed. He had contracted a mysterious illness. But he had been through three tours of duty. Each were a year. And his only son, his only child was 6 years old. And that meant that he missed half of his son's life already.

So when we refer, you know, without thinking to the troops, the troops, if it is a brigade or any one of a number of military terms that we use for individual troops or a collection of troops, we are talking about people.

And if we do not make sure that this supplemental passes, the choice is a plan to get our troops home and provide them with the equipment that they need and an exit strategy and benchmarks to ensure that the we and the administration hold the Iraqi government accountable to meet those benchmarks. The alternative is a continued blank check and a directionless war that has no end in sight.

It is a pretty stark contrast. We can eventually see our way clear and had there been a light at the end of the tunnel and adopt the supplemental and, in addition to that, provide the support that our troops need, the equipment that they need, the plan to get them home, and support for our veterans, which is incredibly important; \$1.7 billion in this bill for health care for our veterans.

We have this glaring, horrific problem at Walter Reed that went ignored by this administration. And thank God we had those, the heads that have rolled. But would they have rolled if Democrats weren't in charge of Congress? No. We know they wouldn't have, because, yet again another scandal would have been swept under the rug. The administration would have tried to ride it out, keep their fingers crossed, squeeze their eyes shut tight and hoped that they could endure until the next media news cycle went through.

No more, not now that we have balanced government, that we have the ability of this Congress to assert our oversight role and to reassert what the founding fathers envisioned, which was our system of checks and balances.

And I think we are all about third party validators here in the 30-Something Working Group. And I noted what this Washington Post article from Wednesday of last week, it was appropriately titled "White House Finds Trouble Harder to Shrug Off." And it goes on to talk about how, in

the past, questions about its, meaning the White House's, actions might have died down without the internal administration e-mails being made public, referring to the U.S. attorney scandal.

There are many issues that would have just been swept aside by this administration in the past, allowed to occur and ignored by the then Republican leadership here. But not now that we have a democratic Congress that is going to make sure that we hold this administration's feet to the fire, and make sure that they are responsible for civil liberties for all Americans, and fiscal responsibility.

I would be happy to yield to the gentleman.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, you are exactly right. There is a new day here. And I don't have the comparative experience that you do. I watched this place as an observer for the last several years. One of the reasons that I ran was you sit around in coffee shops and local community halls, and people generally don't pay much attention to the division of labor down here. I mean, people aren't necessarily talking about in their daily lives the co-equal branches of government. They are not thinking too much about the separation of powers. But you know what? They were forced to talk about it in the past several years, because people didn't understand how, in record numbers they were turning out, not only in elections, but in community meetings, to tell their Members of Congress that they needed a change in Iraq, because, not only did they have moral and intellectual objections to what we were doing over there, but they were talking to the families of those troops who were being sent over there without body armor. 18 months it took until our forces over in Iraq had the body armor that they needed. They were looking at statistics like the one we just found out earlier this month which said that 88 percent of the National Guard and Reserve troops are so poorly equipped that they are rated not ready by the military; that we have not one active duty reserve brigade in the United States that is considered combat ready. And so people out there were hearing over and over again from the families of the troops, the troops themselves, which was backing up their own instincts about the backwards nature of our policy in Iraq. And they wondered where Congress was. And they watched this place sort of shut down for a number of years. And they couldn't understand why their elected Members of Congress weren't standing up and asking some questions. I mean, at the very least, asking some questions about what this president was doing over there.

Mr. Speaker, there were six opportunities since this war began for this Congress, on supplemental appropriations bills, to stand up and try to perform some perfunctory oversight over this war; four emergency supplemental

bills, two emergency spending funds in the Department of Defense authorization bills, six times this Congress, under Republican leadership, had an opportunity to stand up and say, you know what? We are going to give you some more money to conduct this war, but we are going to put some strings on it. We are going to try to check your authority in some even elementary way. Not once. All six times this Congress stood down. Despite a lot of yelling and screaming from one-half of this chamber, this Congress stood down and gave President Bush virtually every single thing he wanted.

Now, listen. I understand you might have been lulled into a sense of complacency here. This Congress heard from this president over and over again that things were going well, things were going fine, everything was going to be better. We find out now that all along this administration knew that things weren't going well. In fact, they knew things were pretty terrible on the ground and they were plotting this new strategy, a very different one than I think the American people intended on Election Day. They wanted a new course of direction in Iraq. They didn't necessarily think that that policy was going to be escalation. I think they were counting on de-escalation. It was a slightly new direction, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

But here is the thing, is that people in this country became constitutional scholars over the last couple of years because they started scratching their heads when they picked up the paper every morning as this war was going nowhere but downhill, and there was deafening silence coming from Congress. And so there is a lot of commotion in here about this emergency supplemental bill because it has got some policy in it. We are actually, instead of rubber stamping the President's requests, we are actually saying, if we are going to give you another dime for this war, then we are going to make sure that you honor the will of the American people, that you step up to the plate and listen to the foreign policy community that this Nation has expressed through the Iraq Study Group; that you listen to your own generals, many of which who will tell you over and over again, that though there might be a political or diplomatic solution to what happens on the ground in Iraq, that it cannot be a purely military solution; that you start listening to the families of those troops who have cried out for years to equip them when they go over, to make sure that they are protected when they serve overseas, and to make sure that their health care is taken care of when they come back; that we actually conduct this war, redeploy our forces in a responsible manner. For the first time, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, this Congress is stepping up to the plate and actually conducting that type of oversight.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. You know, you are absolutely right. And in

addition to the oversight and accountability and new direction that the supplemental on Iraq seeks to provide for the direction that the actual conduct of the war is taking, it is really imperative that we focus on the portion of the bill that relates to what it does for our veterans because, clearly, this administration, and the former Republican leadership of this Congress, did a disservice to them. They spent, in the 2 years that I was here prior to your arrival, the careless disregard that I noticed for veterans coming from the former Republican leadership was just really unbelievable because so often, Mr. Speaker, I heard our colleagues and friends on the other side of the aisle stand on the floor and profess undying devotion to our Nation's veterans and how it was imperative that we support them.

Well, words are nice. But that is all they were because every opportunity that our colleagues had, in the time that I was here, when I first got here as a freshman, to help our Nation's veterans, the Republicans said no. No.

In January of 2003, which is actually prior to my getting here, the Bush administration actually cut off veterans health care for 164,000 veterans. Don't believe me? You have only to look at the Federal Register to see the documentation of that.

March 2003, the Republican budget cut \$14 billion from veterans health care that was passed by Congress, with 199 Democrats voting no. That was H. Con. Res. 95, vote Number 82 on March 21, 2003.

Then we moved to a year later, March 2004. One would think that the Republicans had a year to think about it and would have finally realized that it was time to stand up for our Nation's veterans. They certainly said it a lot. When it came to doing it, they fell short.

The Republican budget shortchanged veterans health care then by \$1.5 billion. That was passed by Congress with 201 Democrats voting against it.

In March of 2005, another year later, President Bush's budget shortchanged veterans health care by more than \$2 billion for 2005, and cut veterans health care by \$14 billion over 5 years, and passed with 201 Democrats again voting against it.

Now, let's go to the summer of 2005. And I was here by then. I could not believe that this happened, because for months and months the Bush administration denied that there was a shortfall, said that there was no problem, stalled and pushed back. And finally, in summer of 2005, Mr. MURPHY, after democratic pressure, the Bush administration finally had to acknowledge in Fiscal Year 2006 that there was a short fall in veterans health care that was their error of \$2.7 billion. And we had to fight all summer to get it fixed and have an emergency supplemental bill just to address the shortfall. It took pressure and cajoling and shame to finally bring them to the table and get them to do that.

And then in March of 2006, President Bush's budget cut veterans funding by \$6 billion, Mr. Speaker, over 5 years. That was passed by the then Republican controlled Congress.

Fast forward to January 31st of 2007. The new direction Democrats increased the VA health care budget by \$3.6 billion in the joint funding resolution.

And now, I can tell you that in our supplemental that passed out of the House Appropriations Committee last Thursday, on which I sit, with none of the Republicans, zero voting for it, \$1.7 billion to the request for veterans health care, including \$550 million, Mr. Speaker, to address the backlog at the VA health care facilities so we can prevent similar situations like what happened at Walter Reed because certainly, if we didn't know what was going on in Walter Reed, we have to make sure we address the needs of our veterans in health care facilities across this country that are run by this administration's VA agency.

\$250 million for medical administration so that we can insure we have sufficient personnel to address the rising number of veterans that are coming back from Iraq, and that we have to make sure we maintain a high level of services.

\$229 million for treating the growing number of veterans. \$100 million to allow the VA to contract with private mental health care providers to provide veterans, including Guard and Reserve members who so often are neglected, Mr. MURPHY, with quality and timely care; and \$62 million so that we can speed claims processing for returning veterans.

When I went to Walter Reed, and when I have gone home and talked to my veterans, and I know that you have experienced this too, the bureaucracy and the red tape that our veterans have to go through to get care. It is like they put roadblocks, it is like the VA and this administration puts roadblocks in front of our veterans on purpose.

□ 2115

It is like they delight in stalling them. I mean, it is not their money. I don't get it.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Reclaiming my time for a moment, in Connecticut we have the same problem that you talk about. It takes hundreds of days for veterans simply to get qualified for the benefits once they return. I mean, of all the benefit programs that this government runs, it would seem that the veterans program would be the easiest to qualify people for, right? Because what is the qualification? You served in the military. You fought for this country. There is a record of it. It is not hard to find. And yet we have constructed so much bureaucracy and so much red tape.

And I understand that a lot of the folks in the Department are trying to do a lot with not enough funding to do the job, but it is time that we cut

through it because we shouldn't be talking about a system that is of inferior care or equal care to that of what you or I get or people in this community get. Our veterans' health care system should be the gold standard of care in this country. We should accept nothing less than the best that our health care system can offer. And we know not only through the recent revelations at Walter Reed, but also simply in the conversations that we have door to door.

It was amazing to me in this last election, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, as I went door to door over the summer and fall. I did it almost every night, and almost without exception if you knocked on the door of a veteran, someone that had served in World War II through the more recent conflicts, almost without exception health care came up, whether it was a personal problem they had had with the system or a problem that a family member or one of their brothers and sisters in arms had encountered when they came back. Almost every single veteran brought that up because they have a notion, and it is exactly right, that when they come back here, their community should be able to stand up for them and make sure that they continue to be healthy, certainly make sure that the injuries they received in defending this country are treated expeditiously, efficiently, and with the best care possible.

And so it was remarkable to me how often this issue came up, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, just as you talked to people door to door. It was so real and so palpable because to the people who have served this country, there is no greater dishonor, and I am speaking as someone who has not served, but who has had the honor to know many that have, no greater dishonor to them than to come back to a country that doesn't express a deep and daily sense of gratitude for that service.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, for all the bad news that I heard on the campaign trail, the good news is this bill that we will vote on will honor that service, one of the biggest infusions of funding support for the veterans' health care system that this country has ever seen. And I can just hope that when I go back out there this summer, when I am going out just to knock on doors to check on people in a noncampaign environment, that you will hear a very different story, that they will feel finally their stories are being heard.

I yield to Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you. Because now they finally have responsive government, Mr. MURPHY. They finally know that the Members who represent them collectively in this Chamber, the Members that are leading this Chamber are hearing them, that it is not falling on deaf ears; that this institution is not of the special interests, for the special interests, and by the special interests any longer. Now we have restored this to actually be the people's House, and our leadership and

our agenda is a reflection of the interests of the people.

And as much as they might like to say that that wasn't the case, privately in their heart of hearts when they went to sleep at night, our Republican colleagues had to lay down in the dark by themselves when they went to bed and know that they weren't addressing the needs of the American people.

I mean, I am not someone who lives and dies by polling, but look at the polling. Look at the numbers towards the end of last year and how the American people generally felt about the job that this Congress was doing. That is a reflection on all of us. It is just appalling that the American people would have confidence in the twenties in the likelihood that Congress was going to be responsive to them. They would express support for their individual Member of Congress, but collectively as an institution they have lost confidence in us.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Reclaiming my time just for one point. Before coming over here, I was reading a really interesting front-page article, and I think it was a recent Newsweek or Time, and it was entitled, sort of, The Downfall of the Right, and it was talking about how the sort of conservative ideology has really fallen by the wayside in the past several years. And one of the things it had talked about was that when the class of 1994 was ushered into office, there was a sort of purity to their ideology. You disagreed with a lot of the things they stood for, but they did come in here as reformers. I mean, they did come in here and set a whole new bunch of rules for this House, how this place was governed. They changed the franking rules. They put in term limits. And you could have disagreements with some of the results of that ideology, but they did come in here with some real ideas rooted in some intellectual discussion about how you change Congress.

And what this article was sort of pointing out was that over time, over the last 12 years, the ruling party of this Congress became one that was guided by a set of ideas to one that was guided by a collection of special interests; that it was simply kind of an amalgamation of different lobbyists and different industries that would sort of pull and push for control over this place, and it stopped being one that was guided by any real ideas about how to move this country forward.

And it was an incredibly interesting survey on how the Republican Party has changed over the years. And if you want to know why their reign ended after 12 years, in part I think it is a recognition from the American people that this place stopped being about ideas and in the end started being about those special interests.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I want to segue to the U.S. attorney matter because what you just said brought something to mind. But before I do that, I do want to throw out yet another example of the neglect, of the

just stark neglect, that this administration has and has had for our veterans. I mean, take Walter Reed. I have a timeline in front of me, a neglect timeline for the treatment of the soldiers that are housed at Walter Reed and that seek services at Walter Reed, going back to July of 2004.

First I want to just put up this Newsweek Magazine cover, Mr. Speaker. This is a young woman who clearly has lost her legs, and I think the picture speaks all that it needs to without words. But the caption on the picture on the cover of Newsweek, which was the week of March 5 of this year, says: "Shattered in body and mind. Too many veterans are facing poor care and red tape. Why we're failing our wounded." And Walter Reed, there is no better example of what this article spoke to, Mr. Speaker, than the neglect timeline at Walter Reed.

If you go back to July of 2004, again, Mr. MURPHY, in the summer before I was elected, you had Major General Kevin Kiley appointed Walter Reed Army Medical Center's Commander.

In mid to late 2004, you actually had our colleague from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) and his wife stop visiting the wounded at Walter Reed out of frustration; Mr. YOUNG, who has been a champion for veterans. Believe me when I tell you that our colleague from Florida Mr. YOUNG is a legend, an absolute legend, that is revered in a bipartisan way in this institution. But Mr. YOUNG said he voiced concerns to commanders, including Major General Kiley, over troubling incidents he witnessed, but was rebuffed or ignored. He said, "When Bev or I would bring problems to the attention of authorities at Walter Reed, we were made to feel very uncomfortable." And the source of that was the Washington Post.

November of 2005, House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman STEVE BUYER announced that for the first time in at least 55 years, "Veterans service organizations will no longer have the opportunity to present testimony before a joint hearing of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees."

Now, talking about closing off access to the people that we are here to serve, can you imagine that they wouldn't let veterans service organizations testify in front of the Veterans' Affairs Committee? I mean, it is just mind-boggling.

August of 2006, Army Major General George Weightman assumes command of Walter Reed, replacing Major General Kiley.

September 2006, 13 Senators, 11 Democrats and 2 Republicans, sent a letter to urge then-Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman THAD COCHRAN, Republican from Mississippi, and Ranking Member ROBERT BYRD, Democrat from West Virginia, to preserve language in the House defense appropriations bill that prohibits the U.S. Army from outsourcing 350 Federal jobs at Walter Reed. A similar provi-

sion, introduced by Senators MIKULSKI and SARBANES, was defeated by a close 50-48 vote during the bill's consideration in the previous week.

Then in September 2006, Walter Reed awards a 5-year, \$120 million contract to IAP Worldwide Services, which is run by Al Neffgen, a former senior Halliburton official, to replace a staff of 300 Federal employees. Halliburton again. Who headed up Halliburton, Mr. MURPHY? Do you recall who headed up Halliburton?

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. For a period of time, it might have been the gentleman that currently serves as our Vice President.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Yes, I believe you are right. The gentleman that is currently our Vice President.

In February of 2007, just about a month ago, the number of Federal employees providing facilities management services at Walter Reed, Mr. Speaker, had dropped from 300. There were 300 Federal employees that were replaced with a \$120 million private contract run by a former senior Halliburton official, and the 300 dropped to fewer than 60. The remaining 60 employees went to only 50 private workers; 300 to 50 private workers.

February 19, we know it was revealed by the Washington Post that there was an expose detailing mistreatment of veterans at housing on the grounds of Walter Reed Medical Center. And what has unfolded since then is resignations of top generals, resignations of the Secretary of the Army. Heads are rolling, Mr. MURPHY, as they should be, because of the profound neglect of our wounded veterans and our veterans that need assistance from that very fine institution.

Not only did the heads roll, but it led the Appropriations Committee last week to adopt an amendment offered by my colleague who sits on my subcommittee, Mr. LAHOOD, to ensure that Walter Reed Army Medical Center is not closed down because not only do we need to get to the bottom of what is going on there, but we need to make sure that that institution not only continues to serve our Nation's veterans, but serves them well.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, you talk to Members on the other side of the aisle, and I think they share that same concern for veterans. I mean, they do. We are not suggesting that anybody in this Chamber was sitting here intentionally deciding that they were going to create the situations that happened on the ground at Walter Reed. It is just a matter of choices. It is a matter of the choices that were made here. And whether they were made consciously or unconsciously, it resulted in an abysmal situation for veterans.

The choices that ended up getting made here when it came to the fiscal situation in this country was to hand out massive, unprecedented tax breaks to the top 1 percent of income earners in this Nation while we were fighting a

war. While we were fighting a war. It never happened in this country. We have never asked this country to go into war without asking the entire country to sacrifice in order to pay for it, because here is the thing: The cost of the war isn't just the guns and the troops and the tanks and the armor. It is the health care for the people that come back here afterwards. The cost of the war is the whole thing.

And so we ended up short-changing our troops and short-changing the people that came back here because we decided that what was more important was to hand out another round of tax breaks, this last one to the persons in our districts, the rare folks who are lucky enough to make \$1 million a year. They got \$40,000 back from that tax cut.

I know if I showed up at their door and asked them, if you had to choose, if you had to choose as someone who is taking in income of \$1 million or more a year, would you take the full value of that tax cut if you knew that that was going to leave the decrepit conditions that we have found at Walter Reed, that that was going to result in waiting times of up to a year for services for the men and women that fight to protect us overseas? I know what their answer would be, and it should have been the answer of this Congress.

It now does get to be the answer. The answer now gets to be that our priority is going to be making sure that those folks are taken care of when they come home.

And do you know what? We have already voted for tax cuts in this Congress. You can do both. You can still find a way to provide targeted tax relief to people who need it, as the small business tax cut bill here in the House a couple of weeks ago, and honor those commitments.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, it is essential that we honor those commitments. And I was stricken by what our colleague from Georgia said at the end of the last hour when he referenced the need to be bipartisan, to come together and work on bipartisan solutions and move forward together. I was really glad to hear him say that.

But the room was shockingly silent for the last 2 years that I served here, that there really weren't calls for bipartisanship or locking elbows together and finding the way to the best public policy on issues of mutual concern.

But be that as it may, we agree that we should move forward in a bipartisan way. And, in fact, the open government and ethics package that we adopted as part of our New Direction agenda on the first day that we were here was a commitment on the part of our leadership and on the part of our Speaker NANCY PELOSI that we would have the most inclusive, open, and honest Congress in American history. And we have steadily been doing that every single day.

□ 2130

Unfortunately, the administration doesn't seem to be buying into that same concept of bipartisanship. Again, very nice words are said. I have seen the President stand in the Rose Garden and stand on the South Lawn and stand in lots of different really attractive camera shots talking about the need for bipartisanship. And yet, again, when it has come to light that there was a proposal out of the White House to fire 93 U.S. attorneys and subsequently we have gone back and forth with the White House about what the actual truth behind those suggested and then eventual firing of eight of them was, we have not been able to get a straight answer.

In fact, we have had a concern that administration officials, including the Attorney General, have come before Congress and been less than forthcoming. I want to be careful about the words I choose, but it has gotten to the point where we have been told so many different things about what was behind those firings that we are at the-boy-who-cried-wolf point now.

Again, speaking as a mom, I know I have talked to my kids, and sometimes children will be less than truthful when they are concerned that they might get in trouble. I know that my kids sometimes are worried they are going to get in trouble and that the potential punishment is worse if they tell me the truth than if they kind of soft-pedal the actual facts, and maybe what happens to them will be not the worst thing. But I always find out. I always eventually know what really happened. And that is exactly what is going on here.

Any parent will tell you that they have sat their children down and counseled them, "You know, it is always better to just tell me the truth, because I am going to find out anyway, and the consequences are going to be far worse for you when I do find out than if you were just up front with me in the beginning."

Maybe we have to talk to the President and the White House and the administration like moms talk to their kids.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I feel like I should admit something to you now.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Not to be your mother or anything now, but, seriously, maybe an elementary back-to-basics conversation is what is necessary, because clearly the process that they have been taking us through has been less than honest. We have had a lot of misleading excuses.

We have reached a point, and I sit on the House Judiciary Committee, Mr. MURPHY, where now our subcommittee has taken the step of feeling like in order to get to the bottom of it, we had to authorize the committee to issue subpoenas to bring the Attorney General and to bring Karl Rove and the administration officials associated with this scandal, with potentially being

less than truthful to this Congress, with covering up what actually happened, maybe a subpoena may be necessary.

I think that is sad and unfortunate, but we cannot have less than truth when we ask administration officials questions when they come before this institution.

I am glad about the potential for bipartisanship. During the hearing we had in Judiciary yesterday, a number of our Republican colleagues indicated they were also unhappy with what was going on with this administration. In fact, specifically on the issue of the attorney firings, one of their top leaders, another good friend from Florida, Congressman PUTNAM, actually said that he questioned the Attorney General's ability to continue to serve. I will quote what he said in the Washington Post.

He said, "His ability to effectively serve the President and lead the Justice Department is greatly compromised." During a lunchtime interview with reporters, he said, "I think he himself should evaluate his ability to serve as an effective Attorney General."

We are talking about the number four ranking Republican in their leadership on that side. Believe me, I know ADAM PUTNAM. He has served with integrity in our legislature in Florida, and does so here. If he is at that point, then you know there is something seriously wrong. There is seriously something wrong.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, I think it serves us well to sort of try to outline for people why this is such a big deal. Why do you have a senior member of the Republican leadership coming as close as you can come to calling for the resignation of the Republican sitting U.S. Attorney General? Why do you have the papers filled with this day after day? Why do you have the Judiciary Committee going to the unfortunate but necessary step of actually having to subpoena members of the administration to come before us?

It is pretty simple. If you are an average Joe out there, you want to know that if the guy next door to you commits a really bad crime, that he is going to go to jail, no matter who his political friends are, no matter what political connections he has; that justice should be blind. Justice should certainly be blind to politics.

Now, we can freely admit that when Bill Clinton came into office, he sent out notices that he was intending to get rid of all of the prosecutors and everybody was going to have to reapply.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. If the gentleman will yield for a second, when then-President Clinton did that, correct me if I am wrong, he was asking for the resignations of the Bush appointees, of the Republican appointees of his predecessor.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Correct.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Now, my understanding when this scandal occurred, we are talking about a situation where the President, I believe, was considering asking for the resignation of 93 of his own U.S. attorneys. Subsequently, they decided maybe that was going a little too far, so I think the number is eight, they only fired eight.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. That is correct.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. My recollection also is that there was some interference and some questions about specific cases for each individual U.S. attorney that were raised by some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle during this process before those firings.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. And there is the rub, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, is that it is one thing to decide to clean house and say okay, everybody goes. I am not going to examine all of your pasts and your political connections and whether you have done what you have asked, because I haven't served one day. I am just going to come in as a new president, which is their prerogative, and just clean house.

That not what happened here. In fact, there is a reason why somebody within the White House actually recommended that they fire everybody, because they knew that if you are going to start firing prosecutors, people that are given by the public and by this government the very grave responsibilities of carrying out our system of justice, then you better not inject any politics into it, because the worst thing that can happen to the American justice system, and for all of the inefficiencies of government, one thing we can stand very proudly by, is our system of blind justice.

We do have a system of justice that by and large makes decisions without political influence. If you are my neighbor and you did something wrong, no matter who you know, no matter how powerful you are, no matter how much money you have, you are going to pay for it. You are going to be held accountable for it.

But if prosecutors throughout this country start having to look over their shoulder every time that they decide to try that rich guy or that influential guy or politically powerful guy, and they have to wonder whether the consequence of that decision is going to be the political boss somewhere decides their job shouldn't be their's anymore, then that has immense, immense consequences for our system of government and our system of justice.

I know it is just eight. I know it is just eight. But if that message that those eight guys, men and women, those eight men and women, who for some reason displayed some act of political disloyalty to the President, don't get to hold their job anymore, then that has an unbelievable chilling effect on the rest of our prosecutors, and I think it has dire consequences for our system of justice.

So it is a big deal, and it should be a big deal. I hope that the President sees the light of day and decides to put the people that were responsible for this decision before Congress so that everything can be aired out.

His offer now is obviously certainly not acceptable. As the chairman of the Judiciary Committee today said, Representative CONYERS, said we might as well go down to the bar down the street and have this conversation, because that is about as much meaningful information as you are going to get out of that conversation.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. If the gentleman will yield, we should point out the President believes he magnanimously offered was to offer that the officials associated with this scandal to speak with, essentially, the Judiciary Committee, not under oath, that there be no transcript, and that Congress would not subsequently subpoena them.

That is when Mr. CONYERS said, yes, we could just go have a drink and have that kind of private conversation which reveals nothing, which has no accountability whatsoever.

Mr. MURPHY, the other thing that I think is important to note is that the first answer that we were given about why, and these people do serve at the pleasure of President. Again, that is why I drew my kid analogy. Because I never understand when I ask my kids, and, fortunately, I have very honest children, so this doesn't happen often, but little kids, when they are learning as they are growing up, they do dumb things.

What brought this to mind was the first answer that the administration gave was that, well, you know, we were concerned. We lost confidence in their ability. They weren't up to snuff, they weren't very good attorneys and they weren't doing a very good job.

As you might imagine, these are eight pretty capable people who thought they were doing a good job. When they had their ability questioned, a bunch of them got mad. We are talking about very loyal Republicans here, some who had been longstanding supporters and contributors to the Republican Party. They went out there and defended themselves and said, wait a second. I am pretty darn qualified individual. How dare you.

Then we dug a little deeper. It turns out, well, it is not that they were not qualified. It is more that they weren't aggressively pursuing Democrats who were being investigated in their jurisdiction.

The bottom line is we really don't know. And then they started pointing fingers at each other inside the administration. First, it was really Karl Rove. No, it wasn't Karl Rove, it was Harriet Miers that called for the firings.

The bottom line is to restore the confidence of the American people in their government, which is what we absolutely need to do, and that is our

goal. Because it was badly shaken by the Republican leadership, we need to get to the bottom of scandals like this.

I know we are getting closer to our end time and we want to make sure we have an opportunity to encourage people, if they have any questions or want to see the charts more closely we have seen tonight, we will give out the Web site.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I think, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, it is part of a pattern. Political influence in the judiciary, we are finding that prosecutors are being fired for not being loyal to the President. We find it in some of our scientific agencies, where basic scientific accepted data is being suppressed by the administration because it doesn't meet their political goals within some of our medical approval agencies and boards. Decisions are being made based on ideology, rather than on science.

We have had hearings on a lot of these subjects in the committee that I sit on, the Government Reform Committee, and you actually get some indignation expressed, as you said, from both sides of the aisle, from Republicans and Democrats on this issue. I think there is a bipartisan frustration at the administration's willingness to inject politics into a lot of places where politics have no business.

But at the same time that I accept there is criticism coming from both sides, I also note that there were a lot of things we probably would never have found out about unless we were asking the questions, and the questions weren't getting asked for a very long time. They are getting asked now. Maybe the answers are terribly palatable.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Or forthcoming.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Or forthcoming. When we get them, they are not the ones we want necessarily, but at least we are starting to get them, because we are asking them. And if you want to talk about restoring people's faith in government, we have to open it back up again. I hope that is something we can engage in on both sides.

I yield before we give the contact information.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. It has been a pleasure to join you, Mr. MURPHY. I have to tell you how thrilled I was that we expanded the 30-Something Working Group and we have now given ourselves a new chapter to talk about the issues that are important to the American people, and we have now the ability to hold the administration's feet to the fire and exercise Congress' oversight role which the Founding Fathers envisioned.

I would be happy to yield back to the gentleman to close us out.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I am happy my application was accepted, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

The 30-Something Working Group, we were given this opportunity by the

Speaker of the House, who has been so generous to allow us time on the floor to talk about issues that affect folks not only in their thirties, but issues that affect people throughout this country.

You can e-mail the group at 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov, and you can always visit us on the web at www.speaker.gov/30something.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, it was a pleasure to share this hour with you.

□ 2145

IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLEIN of Florida). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this evening on behalf of the Immigration Reform Caucus of this House of Representatives. Hopefully, as we go forward with the Immigration Reform Caucus in a bipartisan fashion, and our new chairman hopefully will be joining me during this hour, and that is Congressman Brian Bilbray from the great State of California who is determined to make the Immigration Reform Caucus of this House a bipartisan organization, and I really look forward to that change.

As we reach out to our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, both Republicans and Democrats, I think we can solve this problem of immigration, and in particular, illegal immigration. We have to do that, Mr. Speaker.

This is a hugely important issue. It is an issue to our security, it is an issue to our economy, and it is an issue to this great country, this sovereign Nation, the United States.

Tonight I come to my colleagues to talk about a problem not regarding illegal immigration, we may have an opportunity tonight to discuss some of those issues which are so important and which we have worked so hard on in the 109th Congress and hopefully we will continue to do so in the 110th Congress; but my concerns tonight will be addressed toward a legal immigration problem, Mr. Speaker. Let me repeat that, legal. That is a situation that we refer to as chain migration. Let me try to explain that to my colleagues.

I have here to my left a first slide, if you will, in this presentation. As we look at it, Mr. Speaker, at first glance those in the audience tonight might think, gee, GINGREY is up here with a chart of his high school or college chemistry periodic table; or somebody else may say, no, that is his grandchildren's Pac-Man game. It is a confusing chart to look at, but I am going to hopefully be able to, in a short period of time, to simplify this rather arcane, complex looking first slide. But this really is what this whole problem, this legal immigration problem is about, this chain migration issue, Mr. Speaker.

If my colleagues will focus their attention at the bottom of this first slide, I point to this very prominent kiosk, this icon that would be a legal permanent resident in this country. That individual, man or woman, could be here through any one of several ways of entering this country legally. It could be a skilled worker. And that is indeed why we have an immigration policy, to make our country better, to bring in skilled individuals from countries throughout the world, as we have always done since we started this country. That is the whole purpose of being able to bring individuals in based on what they can contribute. Certainly we want to make their lives better as well, but we want them to be able to contribute to our great Nation and enjoy the privileges of citizenship eventually.

So this individual comes, maybe as one of those legal immigrants, as a skilled worker; or possibly this first person that I am going to refer to at the bottom of the slide is a part of somebody's nuclear family, maybe it is the wife of a legal permanent resident who has already come; or maybe it is a minor child who has grown up and become of age to marry and have a spouse; or possibly this is an individual, a third category, who has sought asylum in this great country. And certainly that is what the Statue of Liberty is all about, that is what the inscription of the bottom of Lady Liberty says in regard to opening our arms to the oppressed and the people that need safety in this great country. So any one of these three categories, Mr. Speaker, of legal permanent residence in this country can start this chain migration. Which clearly, clearly our country never intended that effect.

What happens is this legal permanent resident is able to bring in his spouse or her spouse. And they can legally bring in their minor children. And let's say, based on the current fertility rate south of our border, our southern border, it is three children, three minor children. Now, that is one individual that, by virtue of bringing in an additional skilled worker under the quota for that particular country, has brought in four additional people by virtue of genealogy. And this is, of course, a nuclear family so far. We are talking then about a nuclear family, a husband, a wife and their three children.

Now, once the husband and wife become citizens, then the real problem begins, because at that point then each of the husband and wife can bring in their parents. This is perfectly legal to do this. So there are an additional, assuming that both parents of both the husband and wife are still living, which is very likely, maybe it is a man and a woman on each side who are in their late forties or early fifties.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, in addition to that, again, this one individual that is in this country legally, as a legal permanent resident, hopefully has become a citizen. At that

point, then all of his siblings and all of his wife's siblings can come into this country. And that is where the chain really takes off, because you repeat this over and over again. And at the end of 17 years, a short of 17 years and two generations, what you end up with under this insanity of legal chain migration is that one legal permanent resident who was brought into this country as a skilled worker, as an individual seeking asylum from a country in which they are suffering the devastation of oppression, or it happens to be a spouse of a legal permanent resident, that one person in a short span of 17 years can bring in 273 people, Mr. Speaker; 273 people. And that counts against the quota for that country.

So this is the problem, Mr. Speaker, that I think a lot of people just don't realize. We worry about a porous border. We worry about the fact that there are anywhere from 12 to 20 million illegal residents, immigrants in this country, many of them, of course, most of them probably are hardworking, God-fearing, good people, moms, dads, good families, and they are trying to do the right thing. And the only thing that they have committed, of course, is coming into this country illegally. But it is a huge, huge problem for us, as I said at the outset, in regard to the stress and strain on our economy, on our infrastructure, on our safety net programs, on our public school systems. But here we have something that is part of our legal permission to let people come into this country, and then bring in 273 additional extended family members. Not, Mr. Speaker, what we originally intended.

I want to go back and talk about the Jordan Commission. In the early nineties, Congresswoman Barbara Jordan from Texas, a very, very distinguished Member of this body, chaired that commission to study immigration reform and clearly said as part of the recommendations, there were a number of those recommendations, only some of which, Mr. Speaker, were implemented, but one of them was to say very specifically that it should only be a nuclear family, not this situation where because of this chain effect, that in a very short period of time of a couple of generations, or really a short period of 17 years, we end up with 273 people. And they may be good, hardworking, skilled men and women that can contribute to our society, can make their lives better, can make our lives better. But it is really not based on that, it is based totally on genealogy, by virtue of being related in some extended way, first, second, third cousins, aunts, uncles, grandfather or grandmother and on and on and on.

And what that does, other than just overwhelming the number of legal permanent residents who come into this country from a specific country on a yearly basis, indeed, Mr. Speaker, from Mexico to our southern border we are talking about maybe 30,000 a year, and that quota is surpassed in day one of the calendar year.

So you can't say, well, it just doesn't matter; that means maybe you are going to push these skilled workers a little bit further behind in the queue, but they will get there eventually. Well, they may get there eventually, but instead of 2 or 3 years, Mr. Speaker, it may be 15 years, it may be far beyond the time that it would be any advantage to them or us for them to remain in the queue. So this is the problem. We have a solution. I have a solution for it, and I want to talk about that as we go forward.

Mr. Speaker, this next slide that I have again just points out, and I hope my colleagues, I hope this writing is big enough. In case it is not for those in the back of the Chamber, I would be happy to go through it bullet by bullet. But this says "Chain Migration Equals Inter-Generational Relocation Program." It gives visa priority to the cousins, to the adult children and distant relatives of legal immigrants. It creates a backlog of visa applicants. And it allows, and this is the final point on this slide, Mr. Speaker, and of course I have already alluded to these points in my opening remarks, but it allows genealogy, not job skills, not education, not English proficiency to determine who immigrates to our country. We just can't afford that. We absolutely must use common sense and go back to the Jordan Commission recommendation in regard to limiting genealogy entry into this country based not on skills at all, but on just who you happen to be related to. And I will get to that in just a few minutes.

My colleague from Iowa is with us tonight. We call on him a lot, but he is always forthcoming with very, very good, useful information on many subjects, not the least of which is the issue of immigration. I am talking about Representative STEVE KING, my classmate. I thank him for joining me during this hour, and I look forward to his comments.

I would like to go ahead and yield the floor to him now for however much time as he would like to take. We can colloquy back and forth. And I certainly appreciate him being with us this evening.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank my friend, the gentleman from Georgia, for stepping up here tonight and organizing this Special Order and bringing this subject matter before you, Mr. Speaker, and before the American people.

□ 2200

This immigration issue that is before America is I believe the most complicated and least understood piece of policy that I have seen debated in this country in my lifetime.

I have been involved in the immigration issue since well before I came to Congress 5 years ago. Today as ranking member of the Immigration Subcommittee, I sit through immigration hearings two times a week, sometimes three times a week, sometimes more than that. Witnesses bring a lot of information before the committee, and

we are required to read a lot of information. And then one has to read the press clippings to try to understand what the American people are trying to divine out of the things that we are wrestling with here in this Congress.

As I state how complicated this issue is, and I look at the chart that Mr. GINGREY had up, the one that I believe demonstrates the 273 people that could be brought into the United States under the chain migration program, the family reunification plan, the plan that presumes that all family reunions, however minor or major, are reunions that all must take place in the United States as long as there is any one person of one of those families that is here. That is quite a presumption, that you can't have a happy family reunion except in America.

And the 273 that can generate from one individual that is lawfully present in the United States and starts this process, this is a calculation that isn't something that we happen to know in this Congress, because Mr. GINGREY has presented that here tonight; this is a calculation that is done by illegal immigrants and legal immigrants across the world, not just across our southern border into Mexico and points down south towards the Panama Canal, but China as an example. So the going rate, if you are a pregnant Chinese lady, is \$30,000 for a roundtrip ticket to come illegally into the United States, have the baby, get his little footprints put on a U.S. birth certificate and go on back to China. Then after the 18th birthday, that child can start the family reunification plan, and you start down the path of this chart that shows 273.

Mr. GINGREY. And the same thing, as I said at the outset, anywhere from 12 to 20 million illegal immigrants we estimate, and we hear talk about the need for a comprehensive bill that would include letting them pay a little fine and fess up and get a clear ID card, identify themselves, and all of a sudden become a permanent legal resident on a track to citizenship. Each one of those 20 million then could start this chain migration.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, that 273, that is the calculated number that one individual can bring in, and they might come in illegally and find the path to a legal lawful presence and then start the 273. When that chart was done, it was not really limited to 273 except space on the spreadsheet confined it to 273. The number could be 100 or more above that. And the size of the sibling unit, it might be 6 or 12. And if I remember right, the size of the unit for the chart was 3.1 siblings per family. A very conservative estimate.

So we have the automatic citizenship plan, the anchor baby plan, and that will yield 350,000 babies born a year to illegal mothers but on U.S. soil. Some argue their constitutional right to citizenship. I will argue that they also have to be subject to the jurisdiction of the United States when they are born.

Therefore, it is a practice, not a constitutional right. But we have 350,000 new citizens that would not be citizens if we enforced our law on that. That is NATHAN DEAL's bill, another leader on immigration from Georgia. I certainly support that bill.

But the family reunification, the chain migration, 273, and this usurps the kind of policy that the United States of America ought to have. Every nation, and we are the most generous Nation in the world when it comes to immigration, by raw numbers, by percentage of the population, by having a standard there that isn't a very strict standard at all, but we need an immigration policy designed to enhance the economic, the social and the cultural well-being of the United States of America.

As the gentleman from Georgia alluded, we are not measuring in this chain migration plan the relative merits of the individual immigrants that would come in. We are simply letting that be set by genetics of the family, maybe that and marriage and whatever kind of familial relationship they want to have. I would submit that we need to establish in this Congress, first we need to get control of the illegal flow over our borders. That is about 11,000 at night.

I have sat on the border and I have heard the fence squeak at night, and I have watched the shadows go by me. It is twice the size of Santa Ana's army pouring across the border. And then we have the 350,000 automatic citizenship anchor babies that are born, and the family reunification plan. All of those things are out of the control of the Federal Government right now.

Because we have those elements and we have the overstayers of the visa that are not being enforced, because of that, the immigration issue has become so chaotic that we cannot engage in a rational immigration debate that can be designed to do the things I say and enhance the social, economic, and cultural well-being of America.

If we can get enforcement back under the control of the American people, then I believe we need to put together a matrix, a score system, a score sheet that rewards potential immigrants for their education level, for the capital that they bring into the country with them, for the business acumen that they might have, for the likelihood that they can assimilate into this broader, overall American culture that we have, so we can have some cultural continuity in the United States of America and assimilate and tie together and maintain this vision of one people, one people under God. As we sit today, it is out of our control.

Another thing that we are going to see, a White House initiative, a Senate initiative, and I believe a House initiative coming together trying to get a critical mass of voters between the Democrats and Republicans in the House and Senate to work with the White House on this bill that I believe

clearly the American people understand, and that is amnesty. That is the bill which has been dropped in the House within the last day.

But the thing we must insist upon, however the issue of amnesty is resolved, however the issue of the national ID card is resolved, we must insist on an overall national cap. The aggregate of all of immigration components that are there, and I think there are 30-some different categories that people can come into the United States legally under, that needs to be capped.

So if a family reunification plan takes up to a million a year, fine, we hit the cap, we stop. No H-1Bs, no work permits. It is simply we hit the cap.

Mr. BILBRAY. If the gentleman would yield on that, I think the American people don't realize that we take more legal immigration than all the world combined. We are taking now more than we ever have.

But first, I want to stop a second and thank the gentleman from Georgia for hosting.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank him, and I would like to do it formally. I would like to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. BILBRAY), who is chairman of the Immigration Reform Caucus in the 110th Congress. I look forward to his leadership on this caucus of the Congress, this bipartisan effort on his part. The gentleman from California certainly knows of what he speaks.

Mr. BILBRAY. I would thank the gentleman from Georgia for hosting our report on immigration to the American people tonight from the Congressional Caucus.

People have to understand how really, really we have bent over backwards to accommodate people to immigrate to this country. We have about 800,000 people become citizens. We have a million that are allowed to be permanent resident aliens every year, and then we have another million-plus that are allowed to come here to work in the United States. That is almost 3 million people a year that we are accommodating from overseas in one way or the other. And when people say we are a Nation of immigrants, we are a Nation of legal immigrants; but there is a reasonable level of immigration. When the American people realize that we just absolutely have our doors open, there is no excuse for illegal immigration, and we have to make sure that our legal immigration policies are reasonable.

I don't think it is much to ask, those of us who are sworn to represent the people of the United States, to make sure that the American immigration policy is for America first and for the immigrant second. We not only have a right, we have a responsibility to make sure that our immigration policy serves the American people. Like every other policy that the Federal Government is initiating, the American people should come first before anyone else.

This issue of the cost of just the legal immigration, let me give you one cost that most people don't think about. The cost just in one State of giving birth to the children of illegal aliens in California is \$400 million a year. That is \$400 million just for giving free birth to the children of illegal aliens. In San Diego County, it is \$22 million a year just for birthing babies of people that aren't supposed to be in the country.

You add that up, the impact on the taxpayers, there is no way in the world I can believe that any man or woman can stand up in this Chamber and say I am for a balanced budget, I am for fiscal responsibility, but I am for giving amnesty that has been estimated to be \$50 billion if Mr. KENNEDY and some people in the House get their way of rewarding people for being here illegally.

I think there is a basic issue that we ought to call down and say, since when does this country believe that those who follow the law should be punished and told to stay at home, but those who break the law get rewarded and get into this country?

And since when is it not the right thing to do to make sure that our immigration policy serves the people we are sworn to represent in this Chamber and in the Senate? It is a major issue that the American people need to be asking those that they have sent to Washington.

I, as the new chairman of the Immigration Caucus, look forward to working with Democrats and Republicans because I think in all fairness, immigration is not a Democrat or Republican issue, it is an American issue. And Americans across this country on both sides of the political divide believe it is time we address this issue reasonably and not make the terrible mistake we made in 1986 of rewarding people with amnesty and not doing something about enforcement.

I appreciate the chance to be able to address the issue. That chart scares me to death. And I just say this as a practicing Catholic with five children. Your numbers are a lot lower than for those of us that are in my Mass every day. I think we have to recognize this number as a huge threat of really overturning the entire concept we have of reasonable immigration levels, and those reasonable immigration levels are not only our right to set here in Washington, it is our responsibility to do that.

I yield back.

Mr. GINGREY. I thank the gentleman, and I hope the gentleman will be able to stay and continue as we have a colloquy on this issue.

Just by coincidence, we have the Catholic caucus here, as we have the gentleman from California and the gentleman from Iowa and myself, so we know about these large families.

But to put it in perspective, in regard to numbers, Mr. BILBRAY mentioned the fact that a million come into this country as permanent legal residents every year. It varies from country to

country and hemisphere to hemisphere, the overall quota. And then that million additional that come in under all of the visa programs, the H-1B, et cetera, temporary agricultural workers and various skill levels, you are talking about an additional million.

But from 1776 to 1976, 200 years of our country's existence, the average number of immigrants was about 250,000. So that just shows you where we are today; and of course we are not talking about the 3 or 4 million illegals if we don't close down our border and secure our border. Not close it down, secure our border. Then you are going to have 3 or 4 million illegals in addition to that.

The gentleman from Iowa has been mighty quiet for the last few minutes, and I yield back to him.

□ 2215

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia.

The thought that goes through my mind as I listen to that discussion about the cumulative total of legal immigrants in the United States, it occurs to me that the Senate bill that passed last year that they said was not amnesty, that the American people rejected because clearly it was amnesty, according to Robert Rector of the Heritage Foundation, would have legalized over the next 20 years, and that is the calculation period of time that we have for immigration, 66.1 million people.

It also occurs to me that back in 1986 when President Reagan signed the amnesty bill, that was supposed to legalize 1 million people, and that went over 3 million people.

Mr. BILBRAY. Actually, it was—

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, I am happy to yield to the gentleman to make any clarification he likes, but I have a flow in my thought process here that I want to make sure I can stay with here.

The published numbers, though, was supposed to be amnesty for 1 million and ended up being 3.1 million the numbers I have. Then if you go up to 1996 in California, when President Clinton accelerated the naturalization of a group of citizens in the number of 1 million in 1996.

So I am pointing this out that 1 million people was an outrageously high number in 1986, was an outrageously high number in 1996, and last year, the Senate passed a bill that legalized 66.1 million people, and we swallowed that and talked about it not in terms of the magnitude of it but just simply is it amnesty or is it not amnesty.

But put this into the scope, that the point I want to make here is that my numbers show, my census numbers, from 1820 until the year 2000, and those would be the years when our census was keeping track of the naturalization, that period of time, 1820 to 2000, the sum total, the cumulative total of all naturalized citizens come into the United States was 66 million.

So the Senate would have legalized a number in one of the stroke of the pen

equal to the sum total of all legal immigrants that have come into America in all of its history and still leave these kind of programs here. That is the essence of the point I wanted to make.

Mr. BILBRAY. I just remember I was involved with running the County of San Diego in 1986, and I remember that before the bill was passed the number estimate was 300,000. It was after the bill was passed that they said, oh, it might be as high as 1 million, and then they kept continuing the deadline and increasing those who qualified to apply, and it ended up being 3 million. So I just think people have got to remember, when the bill was passed, what was being told was 300,000, and what ended up being the final number was 3 million.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman from California.

So, picking up on this point, I want to broaden this discussion, if I could, a little bit, too, and that is, the labor supply in the United States of America. We hear continually from the other side the specious argument that we do not have a labor supply in the United States, and so since there is a demand for more cheap labor, therefore, you ought to bring in more cheap labor, as if the United States of America was just a giant ATM and there was nothing more to our Nationhood than a giant ATM.

We are more than a giant ATM. In fact, we are a sovereign Nation based upon a constitutional foundation, and we have a whole series of foundations that have created and established American exceptionalism, and without going down into the components of American exceptionalism, I would point out that we do have a labor supply, Mr. Speaker. That labor supply is not something where you just go looking at an unemployment rate and say, well, traditionally, it is kind of low, it is 4.6 percent. How many does that make? A few million out there you could hire. You could add up a few that are on the welfare rolls.

It is more than that. Look at the whole United States of America as if we were one huge company. If you were going to establish a company in a locale, you would not just go into that locale to measure how many were on the unemployment rolls and count them and say that is the only available labor supply. You would hire a consulting company to go in and survey that region and find out how many people were underemployed, how many people were not in the workforce, and how many people were unemployed so that you could look at the universe that could be hired from.

I did that for the United States of America. It was not hard to do. I am kind of astonished those big business interests did not do that. So I went to the U.S. Department of Labor's Web site, and I started to add up what about the people that are not in the workforce.

Well, between the ages of 16 and 19, there are 9.3 million that are not even

doing part-time work, and then you go into the ages of 20 to 24, and there is a number there that I believe is 5.1 million. 9.3 million for the teenagers, 5.1 million for the 20- to 24-year-old, and you go on up the line. So I began adding up these available workforce, and I went on up to 65, and then I thought but you know Wal-Mart is hiring up to 74. They get greeters there to hand you your cart at 74. So they are available workforce, too, not a lot of them, but they are there. You add this up, there are 6.9 million working illegals in America, and there are 69 million non-working Americans of working age.

So any company that is worth their salt would look at that and say all we have to do is go hire 1 in 10 of those that are not in the workforce. One in 10 is all it takes to replace the illegal labor that is in America.

If you want to look at it from another perspective, Mr. Speaker, I would submit this, that 4.7 percent of the workforce is illegal labor, and they represent 6.9 million workers but they are not as productive as more educated, more efficient and more effective workers that are the American workers. So they are really only doing 2.2 percent of the work. Well, if you wanted to replace 2.2 percent of the work, if this great huge megafactory of the United States of America got up in the morning and realized that 2.2 percent of your labor force was not going to show up for work, it could happen all at once but it will not, then you could make an adjustment on your production line and you would just say to the people, well, you know that 15-minute coffee break that you have in the morning and the afternoon, for the sake of this emergency that we are in, we are going to shorten that down to 9.5 minutes in the morning and 9.5 minutes in the afternoon, and you have picked up 2.2 percent of your productivity. Eleven minutes a day will more than recover all the illegal labor in America in the size of the economy that we have.

We are not in a labor crisis. We just simply always will have more demand for cheap labor as long as we have more labor that makes it cheaper.

Mr. GINGREY. I thank the gentleman from Iowa. I want to move back now for just a moment and focus again on the solution to this problem of chain immigration, and we will get into further discussion of some of the many things this Congress, and the 109th Congress when we were in the majority and led this great House of Representatives, some of the many good things that have been done in regard to controlling illegal immigration.

But let me just for the moment, before my colleagues some possibly have to leave, refocus on this issue of chain migration, Mr. Speaker, because we have presented the problem. We have spent maybe 20, 25, 30 minutes talking about the problem of chain migration, the one person bringing in 273 others, not based on skill, strictly being, I

guess, based on the luck of your birthright, genealogy, and how inappropriate that is and how we cannot afford to continue to do this. We have a solution.

But Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to call my colleagues' attention to this next slide, and again, it depicts on this scale of justice, as we have here in the middle of this slide, on the one side you have an imbalance, too much emphasis, too much weight in regard to the second cousin of an immigrant, i.e., chain migration.

On the other side, however, not weighing so heavily in this scale of this balance of justice is the skilled laborer waiting to emigrate into this country.

This is what this hour is mainly about, Mr. Speaker, that we need to correct this. We need to get back to what Congresswoman Barbara Jordan recommended to this House back in the early 1990s as she chaired the Commission on Immigration Reform.

Basically, this is what she said, Mr. Speaker, in this next slide: Proposed tripartite immigration system, legal immigration. That basically, as I said at the outset of the hour, people come to this country first and foremost maybe as a skill-based worker, skill-based admission; or possibly on the far side of the slide, come in as a refugee for humanitarian reasons, a humanitarian admission; and then, finally, the nuclear family admissions that Congresswoman Jordan, the distinguished lady from the great State of Texas talked about, nuclear family admissions, Mr. Speaker.

That is the solution to this problem, and how we got away, how we did not follow her recommendation, there were a number of things that were recommended that were enacted by this body, but we missed the most important, and that is in regard to nuclear family admissions.

This print is far too small for my colleagues to see, even in the front of the room, so I want to point out, under nuclear family, the first priority would be spouses and minor children of United States citizens, under the nuclear family. The second priority would be parents of the United States citizens, and the third priority, as we talked about, would be spouses and minor children of legal immigrants. Of course, hopefully they will become and we want them to assimilate into our society. We want them to be part of this great country, the United States of America, and at that point of course they could bring their parents, both husband and wife, as part of this nuclear family.

Mr. Speaker, in my final slide, here is the result of that. Again, this is the initial skilled worker that comes in legally. This is her husband or his wife and their three minor children. That is a total of five people, one permanent legal resident and an additional four. Now, when husband and wife become citizens of the United States, then each of them under this new Nuclear Family Act, and that is what I want to present

to my colleagues tonight, the bill that I have introduced, H.R. 938, remember that number, many of you on both sides are considering signing on to this bill. Many of you already have. I think we are up over 60 at this point, and hopefully, there will be many more when they understand the magnitude of this problem that we are presenting tonight.

So H.R. 938, the Nuclear Family Priority Act, taken almost verbatim from Congresswoman Barbara Jordan's recommendations back in 1990, again, a distinguished Democratic Member of this body, these two, husband and wife, when they become citizens, they can bring their parents. Assuming both parents are living, then that is four additional people, and then they in turn having become citizens can bring their parents in. There is a possibility that if the parents were divorced and remarried, that instead of two on each side, there would be four.

I do not want to confuse my colleagues with another arcane slide, but basically, this is the bottom line to take home. On this slide, if all of these people came in under the Nuclear Family Priority Act, you are talking about 35 people. Chain migration, which currently is the policy, you are talking about 273 people.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are talking about cutting that down by 87 percent, and that is not small change. That is a significant solution to this problem, moving in that direction to enact the Nuclear Family Priority Act.

So, again, it is straightforward. I leave this slide up and let my colleagues continue to look at it. I want to yield back now to the gentleman from California (Mr. BILBRAY).

Mr. BILBRAY. Well, I would just like to congratulate you on explaining exactly what your legislation is focused on. You articulated the problem, the challenge, and it seems to me not only a very common-sense approach but a very, very compassionate approach to the issue.

I think any American that thinks about hundreds of people coming to this country because one person was allowed in sort of boggles your mind saying why has not anybody brought this up before.

□ 2230

I think that look at your diagram there, and the level of legal immigration you are proposing per person, based on family relations, is quite reasonable. I don't think any of us, especially those of us that are a family from immigrants, my mother came from Australia, could say that is an unreasonable and an unfair proposal and unrational proposal at this time.

I really want to compliment you at actually addressing this issue, because we are talking about a lot of other difference issues. But this is one that is sort of below the radar, people aren't talking about, and I am glad you are able to bring it up. I think that is why

our Wednesday evening reports to the American people on the status of immigration is so important. I want to thank you sincerely for bringing up this issue and for introducing this bill.

Mr. GINGREY. I thank my colleagues, the gentleman from California, the gentleman from Iowa, for being with me tonight. The hour is getting late. I appreciate their sharing their knowledge. It is so important that our colleagues do that, because we have very bright Members of this body on both sides of the aisle. We are not all experts on every issue, but we help one another. We share our knowledge. We rely on each other.

I am very grateful to Mr. BILBRAY and Mr. KING of Iowa for being with me today, to help me talk about not just this issue of chain immigration, that's the main focus of the hour, but to discuss the overall problem of Georgia.

It is a huge problem. We can't really afford to turn our backs and shut our eyes and bury our head in the sand with regard to 3 or 4 million additional people coming in every year illegally on top of those 2 million that are coming, as the gentleman from California pointed out in his earlier remarks. There is no way, this country cannot sustain that.

He talked about the cost in California and their problem, indeed, as a border State, is a lot bigger than it is in the State of Georgia. Of course, their population approaches 55 million, and the population of Georgia is 9.3 million. But on a percentage basis, we have a huge problem in Georgia as well, maybe fourth or fifth number percentage-wise of illegal immigrations of any State in this country. I think the last count in Georgia was about 750,000.

We have got a problem. Certainly, we are a great country. I think that we have done some great things in the history of this Nation. Indeed in 1969, we put a man on the Moon. If we can do that, we can solve this problem. We just need to have the will. I think my colleagues are helping bring that to the attention of the Members of this House and this Congress, both House and Senate, to the administration, to the American people. I like it when we talk during these times to our colleagues in a bipartisan way and say that, look, we can do this together. We all worry about who has got the power and who is in control, and who is in the majority, and who is the Speaker, and who are the committee chairs, and who is the next President. Of course, that will be upon us pretty soon.

But in the meantime, there are so many things that we can do in a bipartisan way and really pat ourselves on the back, because I don't think our constituents care whether the Democrats solve this problem or the Republicans solve this problem. They want us to do it in a unified way.

We have got such a few more on the Democrats side of the aisle in this 110th, a few more on our side of the aisle in the 109th back to 1994, these

things go back and forth. But we can't let that tie our hands and keep us from going forward and getting things done for the American people.

I know that my colleagues that are here with me tonight, and I think all the colleagues of this 435-Member body would hopefully say, right on, Gingrey, we agree with you on that.

Mr. BILBRAY. Let me say this as a Republican. I think the American people will be so pleased if the Democratic majority would bring a bill forward that addresses the major source of illegal immigration, and that is illegal employment. If the Democrats were brave enough to just come forward, not with an amnesty that rewards illegals for being here, not pandering to the illegals and the whole industry that has been built up around that, but went and actually did a project that addressed the real source of illegal immigration; and that is, have a simple employer verification system and a crack-down on the people that are profiteering from illegal immigration, and that's the employers. IF the Democratic Party did that, I think the American people would embrace that.

I think it's a real chance for them to show that they can get the job done and get this issue done that the Republicans didn't get done. You know, as an American, I think that is more important than Republicans having to take advantage of this issue. I just wouldn't be happy as an American to see the Democrats sit there and actually get the job done so I could join them, could vote with them at doing, actually getting the legislation through that the American people have been waiting for too long. I would sure love to be surprised, and I am sure the American people would love to see us working as Democrats and Republicans for America first, not our party first and our Nation second.

I just tell you, I think that our grandchildren would be well served, because all of us, I know the three of us here, if it meant somebody on the Democratic side getting credit for it, then God bless them. What's important is that we leave an America for our grandchildren that is worth our grandchildren living in, and taking care of this problem is going to be part of the important part of doing that.

Mr. GINGREY. You know who else would be pleased, and that is the employers in this country, and a lot of the industries. In Georgia, I mean we have got agriculture, we have the poultry industry, we have the carpet industry. We all have the homebuilding industry in every State, and I know that most of my friends that are in those businesses pay good wages, they pay good benefits, they are treating their employees in a compassionate way.

In return, they are getting a heck of a day's work for their wages that they pay, and I think they would welcome, I think that the employers would welcome. I know Representative KING, in a bill that he introduced in the last Con-

gress and has championed in regard to an identification system that is fool-proof, and we can do that, we can have a tamper-proof, biometric identification card. And I think our employers, and I have talked to many of them, and I commend them, but there may be a few that are paying low wages and gaming the system. You always have that problem. But we will ferret them out.

At the same time, kudos to those who are playing by the rules and doing the right thing.

Mr. BILBRAY. I think the key is the fact that every legitimate employer wants to have a simple system that lets them know who is qualified to work and who is not. The employer doesn't want to be the person having to make that determination.

We require every employer in this country now to get a Social Security number for their employee. All we are saying now, with the Silvestre Reyes-David Dreier bill, H.R. 98, is we will now give the employee a card to prove that it's their number, so that the employer, when they get this number, gets it from a card, doesn't just take somebody's word. It gives us, as legitimate citizens or legal residents, the ability to prove this really is our number, not 20 other people that are using that number somewhere else down the road.

This issue of upgrading the Social Security card seems so simple. We haven't done this since the 1930s, though every driver's license from every State has been upgraded since then. Now that we have done the real ID bill, where we are requiring finally that driver's licenses be upgraded, isn't it appropriate that the Federal Government do the same thing with our card, our Social Security, to upgrade it to be as tamper-resistant as the new driver's license would be?

Mr. GINGREY. There is no question about that.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I wanted to make the point that we tried mightily in this House last year to bring immigration reform, we passed H.R. 4437. It had a lot of the things in it that would clean up the problems that we have with an enforcement here, internally, domestically, with employment enforcement, as well as border enforcement. That bill, of course, didn't make it through the Senate. The Senate passed their amnesty bill, and we passed our enforcement bill.

We came back and we did the one thing that we could agree to, and that was provide the online border security at the fence. That was something the American people wanted and demanded, and it was right, and it was appropriate, and it was just.

But the reason that that was the one thing we could agree on, because there is a tug of war going on in this country, a tug of war would be going on between big business that wants to have a supply of cheap labor, and people that want to have a supply, a long supply of voters, or at least people in the

United States they can count for the census purpose. There is a lot of political power, most of that is on the left, and there is a lot of business power, most of that is on the right.

We have this, it's an unusual, odd and some would say an unholy alliance. I think of it as a set of barbells where you have the weight on the right of the business interests, where you have the weight on the left is the political power, and the barbell in the middle, that handle that you pick it up with, the bar, that's the middle class. The middle class is being squeezed ever more narrow because of the overload on the upside and the overload on the downside our economy.

We got to this point last year, and we did all we could do. But the American people became cynical because they weren't seeing legislation get to the President's desk that fixed the problem. Now we are faced again this year with trying to arrive at a consensus, trying to arrive at something that preserves the rule of law, does not provide amnesty, satisfies the interests on both ends of that barbell that I described, and doing it quickly. Because once we get past the summer, once we get past the August break, we are into the fast slide into the next Presidential race, as well as the elections here and a third of the Senate.

But the Presidential race, if it's done and if it's done right, we will take this issue up in Congress, and if we don't solve it first, it will become the issue du jour of the Presidential debates. And I am looking forward to a Presidential candidate that will step forward with clarity on this issue and start that inertia towards the White House. That is the one thing that can solve this issue. That is my best hope.

Mr. GINGREY. The point the gentleman from Iowa is making is that we have really tried hard in this body to address this problem. We on this side of the aisle, when we were in control and had the majority in the 109th, felt very strongly that first and foremost to solve the problem and ultimately decide what to do with the 20 million that are estimated to be here illegally, is to stop the hemorrhaging. As a physician member, I use that expression a lot, having been a surgeon in my previous life, OB/GYN physician, but you have to stop the bleeding. If you sit there and let the patient continue to bleed, and that is analogous to the porous borders, the 3 or 4 million that continue to come in every year, in addition to the 2 million that the gentleman from California was talking about earlier, then the patient is going to die. That patient, as the lifeblood seeps out of us, is the United States of America.

So it is so important to do the things that we have done, tried to do in regard to Mr. SENSENBRENNER's legislation. He was a champion in regard to the REAL ID Act. Basically the REAL ID Act was just in response to the request of the survivors of the 9/11 victims. As they

testified before the 9/11 Commission and made those recommendations, 41 or so specific recommendations, one of the most important ones was to say you have got States that issue driver's licenses without requiring any proof of legal residency. The 9/11 hijackers, 19 of them I think, had something like 53, a total in the aggregate of 53 legal issued driver's licenses from some 10 or 12 States.

So basically what we said is, look, we can't tell you, we the Federal Government can't tell the States how to run their motor vehicle department and how they issue driver's licenses and to whom and how long and how much you pay for driver's licenses, what age you have to be, whether you have to take driver's ed or not. That is a State prerogative, certainly. But if they do not have proof of legal residence, not citizenship, because a permanent legal resident certainly can be granted a driver's license, then they can't use that license from that State for Federal purposes, like getting on an airplane and blowing it to smithereens or using it as a guided missile.

I see Mr. Speaker is tapping me down. I didn't realize, I was having so much fun with my colleague from California, the chairman of the Immigration Reform Caucus, that all of a sudden our time has expired.

I appreciate his patience and indulgence. I continue to promote the Nuclear Family Protection Act. Let's all get behind it and thank you.

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate our hour. I hope the people in Colorado enjoyed prime time back there.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 0103

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WELCH of Vermont) at 1 o'clock and 3 minutes a.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1433, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSE VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 2007

Mr. CARDOZA, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-63) on the resolution (H. Res. 260) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1433) to provide for the treatment of the District of Columbia as a Congressional district for purposes of representation in the House of Representatives, and for other purposes,

which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1591, U.S. TROOP READINESS, VETERANS' HEALTH, AND IRAQ ACCOUNTABILITY ACT, 2007

Mr. CARDOZA, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-64) on the resolution (H. Res. 261) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1591) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of medical reasons.

Mr. KUCINICH (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for March 19 and 20.

Mr. MITCHELL (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for March 19.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today after 1:30 p.m. on account of attending a memorial service.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. PALLONE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. LARSEN of Washington, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DICKS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. INSLEE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SMITH of Washington, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. JONES of North Carolina) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, March 26, 27, and 28.

Mrs. BLACKBURN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DUNCAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 5 minutes a.m.), the House adjourned until today, Thursday, March 22, 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:

911. A letter from the Secretary of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting notification that the Warfighter Information Network-Tactical (WIN-T) Program exceeds the Nunn-McCurdy Program APUC and PAUC thresholds, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2433(e)(1); to the Committee on Armed Services.

912. A letter from the Deputy Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Annual Report of the Reserve Forces Policy Board for Fiscal Year 2006, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 113 (c)(2); to the Committee on Armed Services.

913. A letter from the Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting authorization of Captain Thomas J. Eccles to wear the insignia of the grade of rear admiral (lower half) in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

914. A letter from the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, Department of State, transmitting a report on the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief: Annual Report on the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, as requested in Pub. L. 108-25; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

915. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's report entitled "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2006," pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2304(b) Public Law 87-195, section 502B(b); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

916. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's report on "Overseas Surplus Property," pursuant to Public Law 105-277, section 2215; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

917. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a copy of Presidential Determination No. 2007-14, Relating to the Largest Exporting and Importing Countries of Certain Precursor Chemicals under Section 490(b)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

918. A letter from the Acting Executive Secretary, U.S. Agency for International Development, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

919. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's five-year National Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Program Plan, pursuant to Public Law 109-59, section 5301; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

920. A letter from the Board of Trustees, National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust, transmitting the National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust's annual management report covering FY 2006, pursuant to 45 U.S.C. 231n Public Law 107-90, section 105; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk

for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. DINGELL: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 545. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to clarify that territories and Indian tribes are eligible to receive grants for confronting the use of methamphetamine, with an amendment (Rept. 110-35 Pt. 2). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. WAXMAN: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. Supplemental report on H.R. 1433. A bill to provide for the treatment of the District of Columbia as a Congressional district for purposes of representation in the House of Representatives, and for other purposes (Rept. 110-52 Pt. 3). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. OBERSTAR: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 1195. A bill to amend the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users to make technical corrections, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 110-62). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. ARCURI: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 260. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1433) to provide for the treatment of the District of Columbia as a Congressional district for purposes of representation in the House of Representatives, and for other purposes (Rept. 110-63). Referred to the House Calendar.

Ms. SLAUGHTER: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 261. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1591) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes (Rept. 110-64). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. KELLER (for himself and Mr. FORBES):

H.R. 1615. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide penalties for aiming laser pointers at airplanes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. McGOVERN (for himself, Mrs.

EMERSON, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mrs. TACUSCHER, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. HINCHAY, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. SCHIFF, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. RUSH, Mr. HOLT, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. NORTON, Ms. LEE, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. OBERSTAR, Ms. HERSETH, Mr. LAHOOD, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. WALSH of New York, Mr. KIND, Mr. STARK, Ms. WATSON, Mr. MCNULTY, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. BOUCHER, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. POMEROY, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. LANTOS, Ms. CARSON, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. KILDEE, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. FARR, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. HARE, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. WELCH

of Vermont, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. OLVER, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Ms. BALDWIN):

H.R. 1616. A bill to amend the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 to reauthorize the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 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. CARNAHAN:

H.R. 1617. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 561 Kingsland Avenue in University City, Missouri, as the "Harriett F. Woods Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. CAMP of Michigan:

H.R. 1618. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a credit for the purchase of plug-in hybrid vehicles; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CONYERS (for himself, Mr. KIL-

DEE, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. MCCOTTER, and Mr. DINGELL):

H.R. 1619. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the Model T Ford Automobile and the 100th anniversary of the Highland Park Plant, Michigan, the birthplace of the assembly line, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mrs. CUBIN (for herself, Mr. UDALL

of Colorado, Mr. REHBERG, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. HERGER, Mr. CALVERT, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. CANNON, Mr. HELLER, Mr. SIMPSON, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, and Mr. RENZI):

H.R. 1620. A bill to provide permanent funding for the payment in lieu of taxes program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (for himself and Mr. SHIMKUS):

H.R. 1621. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide individuals with disabilities and older Americans with equal access to community-based attendant services and supports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia (for

himself, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. BOUCHER, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. GOODE, and Mr. WOLF):

H.R. 1622. A bill to provide a waiver from sanctions under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 for certain States, local educational agencies, and schools; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. HINOJOSA (for himself, Mrs.

DAVIS of California, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. EDWARDS, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. HONDA, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. RUSH, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. FILNER, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. SALAZAR, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. NORTON, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts):

H.R. 1623. A bill to improve graduation rates by authorizing the Secretary of Education to make grants to improve adolescent literacy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr.

MCNULTY, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. BOREN, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY):

H.R. 1624. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a program of grants for the detection and control of colorectal cancer; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LAHOOD (for himself, Mr. RUSH, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. BEAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. KIRK, Mr. WELLER, Mr. COSTELLO, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. HASTERT, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. HARE, and Mr. SHMKUS):

H.R. 1625. A bill to establish the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mr. ALTMIRE):

H.R. 1626. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide liability protections for volunteer practitioners at health centers under section 330 of such Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. MYRICK:

H.R. 1627. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to require that the Commissioner of Social Security notify individuals of improper use of their social security account numbers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PALLONE:

H.R. 1628. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to permit the admission to the United States of nonimmigrant students and visitors who are the spouses and children of United States permanent resident aliens, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. POMEROY (for himself and Mr. WILSON of Ohio):

H.R. 1629. A bill to amend title XVI of the Social Security Act to clarify that the value of certain funeral and burial arrangements are not to be considered available resources under the supplemental security income program; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PUTNAM:

H.R. 1630. A bill to amend the Head Start Act to provide greater accountability for Head Start agencies; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. RANGEL:

H.R. 1631. A bill to amend section 245(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate the deadline for classification petition and labor certification filings; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. REICHERT (for himself and Mr. WALZ of Minnesota):

H.R. 1632. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the annual report required on veterans' reemployment rights; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. ROTHMAN (for himself, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. SIREN, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. BISHOP of New York, and Mrs. MALONEY of New York):

H.R. 1633. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to prohibit the Secretary of Homeland Security from prescribing regulations that preempt more stringent State regulations governing chemical facility security; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD (for herself and Mr. SIMPSON):

H.R. 1634. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish grant programs to provide for education and outreach on newborn screening and coordinated follow-up care once newborn screening has been conducted, to reauthorize programs under part A of title XI of such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SALI:

H.R. 1635. A bill to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committees on Natural Resources, and Appropriations, 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. VISCLOSKEY (for himself, Mr. McCOTTER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HIGGINS, and Mr. LIPINSKI):

H.R. 1636. A bill to establish a United States-Poland parliamentary youth exchange program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. DICKS (for himself, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. HIGGINS, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. FARR, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. McGOVERN, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. HONDA, Mr. OLVER, Mr. HOLT, Mr. STARK, Mr. GILCHRIST, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. FILNER):

H. Con. Res. 96. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that there should be enacted a mandatory national program to slow, stop and reverse emissions of greenhouse gases; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ISRAEL:

H. Res. 258. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that there should be established a National Auto-immune Diseases Awareness Month, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LOBIONDO (for himself and Mr. KENNEDY):

H. Res. 259. A resolution honoring and recognizing the work of the Meals on Wheels Association of America, its member senior nutrition programs throughout the country, and their annual March For Meals campaigns; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Mr. ROTHMAN introduced a bill (H.R. 1637) for the relief of Malachy McAllister, Nicola McAllister, and Sean Ryan McAllister; 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. 39: Mr. KIRK.
 H.R. 63: Mr. EVERETT, Mr. LAHOOD, and Mrs. SCHMIDT.
 H.R. 177: Mr. GORDON.
 H.R. 178: Mr. JEFFERSON and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
 H.R. 180: Mr. HIGGINS.
 H.R. 192: Mr. BURTON of Indiana.
 H.R. 260: Mr. PORTER.
 H.R. 303: Mr. BACHUS, Mr. KIND, Mr. PAUL, and Mr. SOUDER.
 H.R. 319: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
 H.R. 333: Mrs. EMERSON, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. PAUL, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. SOUDER, and Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 343: Mr. FILNER.
 H.R. 346: Mr. SHMKUS, Mr. COBLE, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. BURGESS,

Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DREIER, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. ROHRBACHER, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. WICKER, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. LEWIS of California, and Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 422: Mr. CUMMINGS.
 H.R. 471: Mr. WALBERG, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, and Mr. BLUNT.
 H.R. 473: Mr. LAHOOD.
 H.R. 503: Mr. WELCH of Vermont and Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 507: Mr. CLEAVER.
 H.R. 510: Mr. THORNBERRY.
 H.R. 511: Mr. CASTLE, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. WALSH of New York, and Mr. WELDON of Florida.

H.R. 524: Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. HALL of Texas.
 H.R. 552: Mr. UPTON, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. BOREN, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. SPACE, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. ROSS, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. ROTHMAN, and Mr. PASTOR.

H.R. 563: Mr. ADERHOLT.
 H.R. 566: Mr. CARNEY.
 H.R. 583: Mr. WICKER, Mr. TERRY, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. CASTLE, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. ALLEXANDER, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, and Mr. MORAN of Virginia.

H.R. 620: Mrs. CAPPS and Mr. HONDA.
 H.R. 621: Mr. PASTOR and Mr. HILL.
 H.R. 625: Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Mr. NUNES, Ms. WATERS, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. DREIER, Mr. HERGER, Mr. RADANOVICH, and Ms. PELOSI.

H.R. 676: Ms. NORTON and Mr. DOYLE.
 H.R. 688: Mr. EMANUEL.
 H.R. 694: Mr. BUTTERFIELD and Mr. RODRIGUEZ.
 H.R. 695: Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 698: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.
 H.R. 704: Mr. TERRY.
 H.R. 734: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
 H.R. 752: Mr. TOWNS, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, and Mr. LAMPSON.

H.R. 768: Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California.
 H.R. 801: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. KUHL of New York, and Mr. CONYERS.
 H.R. 822: Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 840: Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. ABERCROMBIE.

H.R. 882: Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. KELLER, and Mr. MARCHANT.
 H.R. 916: Mr. BACHUS, Mr. FILNER, and Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 923: Mr. SKELTON.
 H.R. 971: Mr. BOUCHER, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. SHULER, and Mr. PAUL.

H.R. 980: Mr. ALLEN, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. KIND, Mr. FARR, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CHANDLER, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, and Mr. SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 988: Mr. FILNER, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. McNERNEY, and Ms. ESHOO.
 H.R. 991: Mr. SOUDER.
 H.R. 1014: Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. ISSA, Mr. WAXMAN, and Mr. HINCHEY.
 H.R. 1017: Mr. McNULTY.
 H.R. 1030: Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
 H.R. 1031: Ms. HIRONO and Mr. STARK.
 H.R. 1032: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California and Mr. ROSS.
 H.R. 1059: Mr. POE.
 H.R. 1076: Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 1078: Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. REYES, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GORDON, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. COHEN, Mr. McNULTY, Mr. CLAY, Mr. BOUCHER, Ms.

SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. JEFFERSON, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Mr. HINCHEY.

H.R. 1084: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 1104: Mr. CARDOZA.

H.R. 1108: Mr. RAHALL.

H.R. 1125: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, and Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H.R. 1153: Mrs. DRAKE.

H.R. 1157: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. RENZI, Mr. CAPUANO, and Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 1176: Mr. CROWLEY.

H.R. 1188: Mr. CLEAVER and Mr. SIRES.

H.R. 1193: Mr. HINCHEY, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. GORDON, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, and Mr. WELLER.

H.R. 1214: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, and Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota.

H.R. 1222: Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, and Mr. CARNEY.

H.R. 1223: Mrs. CAPPS and Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota.

H.R. 1228: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 1237: Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. COHEN, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. JEFFERSON, and Mr. BOUCHER.

H.R. 1261: Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. FLAKE, and Mr. ROGERS of Michigan.

H.R. 1266: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.

H.R. 1270: Mr. GOODE.

H.R. 1279: Mr. FILNER and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1282: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. MCNULTY, and Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 1289: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 1303: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 1314: Mr. FORBES and Mr. KINGSTON.

H.R. 1324: Mr. KIRK.

H.R. 1330: Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. KAGEN, and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 1333: Mr. TANCREDO, Mr. WOLF, and Mr. PASTOR.

H.R. 1343: Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. BER-

MAN, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. TERRY, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, and Mrs. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 1346: Mr. COHEN, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. OBERSTAR, and Mr. SIRES.

H.R. 1350: Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 1363: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, and Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 1384: Mr. BERMAN, Mrs. BONO, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. ISSA, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. WATERS, and Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1386: Mr. KIND, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. MCNULTY, and Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.

H.R. 1395: Mrs. MYRICK.

H.R. 1424: Mr. DINGELL and Mr. ALTMIRE.

H.R. 1428: Mr. TERRY and Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1430: Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. WOLF, and Mrs. MUSGRAVE.

H.R. 1439: Mr. KILDEE, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. KIND, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. FILNER, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. GORDON, Mr. GOODE, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, and Mr. CULBERSON.

H.R. 1441: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. WEINER, Ms. WATSON, and Mr. ENGEL.

H.R. 1457: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 1481: Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas.

H.R. 1497: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 1498: Mr. WU, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. INSLIEE.

H.R. 1499: Mr. COSTA.

H.R. 1506: Mr. WAXMAN, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. STARK, Ms. LEE, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. HONDA, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 1532: Mr. MORAN of Virginia.

H.R. 1535: Mr. RANGEL, Ms. CARSON, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. BORDALLO.

H.R. 1539: Mr. BONNER and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.

H.R. 1543: Mr. MANZULLO.

H.R. 1560: Mr. ROSS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. RAMSTAD.

H.R. 1566: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1567: Mr. MCDERMOTT and Mr. HOLT.

H.R. 1576: Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. GORDON, and Mr. BECERRA.

H.R. 1581: Mr. ACKERMAN.

H.R. 1594: Mr. CARNEY.

H.R. 1595: Mr. SENSENBRENNER and Mr. ABERCROMBIE.

H.R. 1604: Ms. WOOLSEY.

H.J. Res. 1: Mr. THORNBERRY and Ms. HERSETH.

H.J. Res. 12: Mr. CARNEY.

H. Con. Res. 33: Ms. WATSON and Mr. INSLIEE.

H. Con. Res. 71: Ms. NORTON.

H. Con. Res. 75: Mr. ELLISON.

H. Con. Res. 83: Mrs. MUSGRAVE.

H. Con. Res. 92: Mr. COHEN.

H. Res. 25: Mr. NADLER and Mr. CROWLEY.

H. Res. 55: Mr. WU and Mr. ABERCROMBIE.

H. Res. 76: Mr. UDALL of New Mexico.

H. Res. 111: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H. Res. 146: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H. Res. 179: Mr. SIRES, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. COLE of Oklahoma, Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. ELLSWORTH, Mr. BERRY, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. PAUL, and Mr. BUCHANAN.

H. Res. 186: Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. GILCHREST, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HONDA, and Ms. CASTOR.

H. Res. 189: Mr. HONDA, Mr. HILL, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Ms. BERKLEY.

H. Res. 221: Mr. GONZALEZ.

H. Res. 226: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H. Res. 231: Mr. BURTON of Indiana and Mr. PAUL.

H. Res. 233: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H. Res. 234: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. MEEK of Florida, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H. Res. 241: Mr. RUSH.