though we are supposed to be reforming our immigration system in the aftermath of 9/11, Time Magazine has just reported that 3 million illegal aliens will enter this country, adding to the 10 million who are already here. This is the largest number since 2001, the year we were attacked. Is this progress? No.

And now we are allowing these matricula consular cards which are issued as a form of identification in Mexico. We are allowing this form of ID even though the FBI reports that there is no centralized database for issuing these cards, there are no uniform standards for its issuance, and in some cases all an applicant has to do is simply say, I am who I am. The FBI determined that these are not adequate standards and that they are fraught with fraud. I wholeheartedly agree.

Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed that we are allowing these ID cards to be used. I am deeply concerned that their use places our national security at risk.

WASHINGTON RESULTS BODE WELL FOR DEMOCRATS

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, my home State of Washington is considered a swing State this November. Yesterday, Washington held its fall primary election, the first litmus test between Republicans and Democrats. The results make clear that Washington is going to vote Democratic in a very big way on November 2.

Christine Gregoire is going to make a fine Democratic Governor.

PATTY MURRAY, Senator MURRAY, will remain a U.S. Senator.

Dave Ross is going to make a fine Democratic Congressman from the Eighth Congressional District, one new seat for the Democrats.

Don Barbieri is going to make a fine Democratic Congressman from the Fifth Congressional District. That is another new seat for the Democrats.

People know, Mr. Speaker, what 4 years of Republican control has done to America. People know and they are paying attention.

So, Mr. Speaker, ask the President to keep coming out to Washington and spend all the money he can. It will be good for tourism. It might even create a job or two, more than he has done in the other Washington.

By the way, Mr. Speaker, I got 86 percent, too. We are all coming back and we are going to get our country back in 47 days and a wake-up.

NBC GETS MEDIA BIAS AWARD

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, last week I announced a weekly award for the worst example of a biased liberal media article. The nominees for the first Media Bias Award are:

NBC's ''Today'' show for interviewing Kitty Kelley for 3 consecutive days about her book on the President's family, filled with second-hand sources, rumors, and falsehoods; Newsweek Magazine for this week's cover story on ''The Secret Money War'' in the Presidential campaign. Newsweek neglected to report that the top five outside money groups all have Democratic Party ties and have spent a combined $91 million attacking President Bush; the New York Times for repeatedly hammering Republicans for their get-out-the-vote efforts among church members while never criticizing Democrats for political speeches in churches; The Washington Post for its coverage of the Democratic and Republican conventions. The day after the Democratic convention, The Post ran three positive front-page stories about the Democratic nominee; but the day after the Republican convention, The Post featured two negative and only one positive front-page story on President Bush.

Mr. Speaker, the winner of the first Media Bias Award is NBC for its decision to feature Bush critic Kitty Kelley on the Today show 3 days in a row. This is the Media Bias Award to NBC.

IN PRAISE OF NORTH CAROLINA SENATOR JOHN EDWARDS

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

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise my friend and colleague, North Carolina Senator JOHN EDWARDS. I want to call attention to a specific accomplishment on behalf of ordinary Americans that has earned him the reputation as a people's lawyer.

Valerie Lakey, a 5-year-old girl, was maimed when a swimming pool drain malfunctioned. Her family had nowhere else to turn, and JOHN EDWARDS proved the company that made the drain knew it was dangerous to children, yet did nothing.

Jennifer Campbell was born in 1979 with severe brain damage because, as a jury later determined, her mother's doctor botched the delivery. The hospital covered up the malpractice and Jennifer's parents were forced to turn to JOHN EDWARDS for a measure of justice.

My Republican colleagues talk about what they call ''lawsuit abuse'' as part of their negative ads on JOHN EDWARDS and JOHN KERRY. But let the record be clear: JOHN EDWARDS has spent his entire life fighting for ordinary folks who could not fight for themselves. JOHN EDWARDS and JOHN KERRY have a plan to make North Carolina a stronger home and respected in the world. I am proud of my friend JOHN EDWARDS and know he will make a great Vice President.

LAWSUIT ABUSE REDUCTION ACT

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

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank my colleagues for passing H.R. 4571, which is the Lawsuit Abuse Reduction Act.

In the NFL, a coach can challenge a referee's call; but if he is wrong, he has to give up a time out. It seems fair. But there is no personal risk for an unscrupulous trial lawyer to file a lawsuit against a company or a person and then offer to settle a dispute for less than the cost to defend the case in court. In the criminal laws, this would be termed extortion. But under the tort laws, it becomes a thriving industry.

Mr. Speaker, when the Senate passes the Lawsuit Abuse Reduction Act, it will be illegal to sue someone for an imaginary offense and cause them to pay thousands of dollars in legal fees in order for a judge to make a final official ruling. When one of these cases is deemed without merit, the attorney filing the suit will be responsible for paying the legal fees of the defendant. It seems like a simple commonsense approach to me.

I urge my colleagues to join me in asking the Senate to take immediate action to pass lawsuit abuse reduction in the United States.

THE NATIONAL DEBT

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

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, it has been 1,215 days since the current administration assumed stewardship over our Federal budget. During that time, our national private debt has increased by 1.733 trillion. According to the Web site for the Bureau of the Public Debt at the U.S. Department of Treasury, yesterday our Nation's outstanding privately held debt alone was $4.343 trillion, an increase of 39 percent in just 3½ years. And foreign holdings of that debt now total $1.79 trillion, an increase of $780 billion since January, 2001, and now 41 percent of all privately held debt.

Total Federal debt at the end of this current fiscal year in just 15 days, including obligations to Social Security and Medicare, is projected to be $7.372 trillion.

It is time to stop the bleeding.

TRANSPORTATION, TREASURY, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire). Pursuant to House Resolution 770 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. 5025.