

convening dozens of hearings to hear from officials at all levels of government on how funds are utilized, and mandating weekly reports on expenditures, and conducting audits and investigation on disaster assistance.

While I hope we will do more to cut spending and provide accountability, we all know that the Democratic plan is simply to spend, spend, and spend some more.

EXPIRING MEDICARE PROGRAM NEEDS URGENT CONSIDERATION

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of the House a matter that really needs urgent consideration. There are 160,000 elderly and disabled Americans who depend on Medicare part B, a program called the QI program, qualified individual. That program is due to expire on Friday. That program, that benefit, pays Medicare part B benefits to people with incomes that are 120 percent to 135 percent of the Federal poverty level. How that translates is that people who are making less than \$1,092 per month as an individual or \$1,459 per couple, they are due to lose their benefit which, for some people, would be almost 10 percent of their income. The Medicare part B insurance program covers medical services like physician service, lab service, durable medical equipment, outpatient and home health visits. We have a bipartisan bill sponsored by myself and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE), H.R. 3800. We have to act in the next 24 hours to save the financial condition for 160,000 elderly and disabled Americans.

ENERGY SECURITY

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, over the past several years, we have all gained firsthand experience on the effects of America's outdated energy system with gas prices going up and down. Atlanta, my home, has seen gas prices anywhere from \$3 to \$6 a gallon. The results of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita show all of us how terribly dependent we are on foreign sources of oil.

This is a large and complex issue and not a challenge easily solved. Our recently adopted new national energy policy will put us on the right track, but more is needed. It is critical that we address some of the systemic failures that have kept us dependent on others for energy and kept us from aggressively developing a reliable alternative source. While our economy expanded over the past decades, our ability to refine oil actually decreased. Since 1981, we have lost over half of our refineries. The most dynamic Nation in the world has not built a new refinery

in 25 years. We are more dependent now on foreign oil than ever before.

We must move away from foreign fuel sources and move toward a solution that maximizes alternative fuel. Mr. Speaker, energy independence is not just energy security, it is national security.

MORE MONEY FOR GUARD EQUIPMENT NOW

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, about 2 years ago, I traveled to Fort Hood, Texas, to see my Guard unit before their deployment to Iraq. I was surprised to see that they were using radios that their families had bought for them at a place called GI Joe's, a good store in Oregon in the Northwest. But the point is they did not have the equipment they needed, they could not train on the equipment they were going to use in Iraq, and now it turns out that that equipment is not available in the United States of America to the National Guard.

Yesterday, Lieutenant General Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, said he has about 34 percent of what is needed for the National Guard for equipment for homeland security, for emergencies, disasters or terrorist attacks. Thirty-four percent. He has radios, he said, that cannot communicate with the Army radios because they are Korean War vintage radios. This is an embarrassment for this country. This administration must give the Guard the tools it needs. We don't have to talk about a bigger role for the active duty military. We need to give the National Guard, who does not have problems with posse comitatus and other things, who performed admirably in this disaster, the tools they need for future disasters.

More money for Guard equipment now.

HURRICANE SAFETY ON THE CAPE VINCENT AND CAPE VICTORY

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, as the howling winds and incessant rain from the "Lady of the Gulf—Rita" moved closer to southeast Texas, 90 percent of the population in my district evacuated, but the first responders in Beaumont and other towns were worried about where to ride out the looming summer storm and potential floods.

Docked in the Port of Beaumont were the Cape Vincent, helmed by Captain David Scott, and the sister ship Cape Victory, with Captain Kevin Brooks. These two massive vessels transport military cargo to Iraq and Afghanistan.

The captains and the mayor, Guy Goodson, met briefly. The plan: Use the ships. The ships were loaded with first

responders and police cars, fire trucks, ambulances, city dump trucks, front end loaders and even police helicopters. The expert ship crews coolly but quickly took little time in safely securing our first responders and their equipment. Tugs in the port operated during the howling hurricane winds to secure the ships.

In this operation, there was no senseless red tape, no forms were filled out, no committees met, and no permission from bureaucrats was sought. The people of Texas appreciate Captain Brooks and Captain Scott and their crews for, as we say in Texas, "Gittin' 'er done."

GAMING INDUSTRY AND TAX BREAKS

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

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, when Hurricane Katrina hit the gulf coast, homes and businesses were destroyed and people were left with nothing. To help those in Louisiana and Mississippi return home and go back to work, the gulf coast region must be rebuilt. The gaming industry will invest billions of dollars as it rebuilds the gulf region, making it an essential part of restoring employment, economic growth and tax revenue. Congress must not withhold incentives to rebuild from any employer that provides good jobs and tax revenue if we want to revive the economy of this region.

There is a movement in Congress led by the self-righteous anti-gaming police to single out the gaming industry and prohibit it from receiving needed tax incentives to rebuild. I did not see any Members of Congress, and certainly not FEMA officials, handing out paychecks to out-of-work employees in the gulf coast region. I did see CEOs of gaming companies standing there in the muck up to their ankles handing out checks to their employees.

Contrary to the biased view of some, the gaming industry should be fairly and equally like any other business when Congress develops legislation to help rebuild this region. The gaming companies remain committed to the communities and the people in the affected regions.

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IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, we need comprehensive immigration reform. Specifically, we need reform to support those who enforce our laws, instead of rewarding those who break them. The United States may need a temporary worker program, but definitely not an amnesty program. Our immediate need is more border patrol agents and diligent cooperation from local and State law enforcement agencies.

The repercussions of poor immigration enforcement have a ripple effect across our entire Nation; and, indeed, an estimated 376,000 illegal immigrants are putting a tremendous financial strain on my State of Georgia. Every day we put off debating and passing comprehensive reform allows more opportunities for illegal immigrants to break our laws and cross our borders.

Mr. Speaker, illegal immigration is not a victimless crime, and I request my colleagues' support for real immigration reform.

QUESTIONING OF THE RESPONSE TO HURRICANE KATRINA AND HURRICANE RITA

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask to remove my name from H.R. 3824 if the report has not yet been filed. If it has been filed, I would ask that it be placed in the RECORD that if the manager's amendment is not approved, I will be voting "no" on H.R. 3824.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, I also want to add to the questioning of the response dealing with Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. I think it is imperative that committees of the House, particularly the Committee on Homeland Security, move forward with questioning how those who were in desperate need were responded to and how the chain of command performed.

The question was always who was in charge. I raise the question as well, whether there was sensitivity or sensibilities in contracting with the cruise line, \$246 million, to house individuals who had already been in water beyond belief. I would ask that that be investigated because those cruise ships are now sitting empty, and we are paying \$1,000 a week for empty cruise ships.

ADVERSITY REVEALS CHARACTER

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, a determined enemy abroad, catastrophe and political upheaval at home, these are times, as Thomas Paine wrote, that try men's souls.

But adversity does not create character. Adversity reveals character; and like the great Nation we serve, the character of this Republican majority under Speaker Dennis Hastert is strong, courageous, and will do the work the American people sent us here to do.

We will support the war on terror through to victory. We will rebuild our coastline with fiscal responsibility. We will close our borders and end our dependence on foreign oil. We will do this because the character of this Congress reflects the character of America, and that character is strong.

AMERICAN PARITY

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I find the debate over how we are going to pay for the reconstruction and revitalization of the gulf coast ironic because in the past few years this body has allocated nearly \$400 billion for the war in Iraq, without a peep, just a rubber-stamp Congress.

We have added \$3 trillion to our national debt with annual deficits at \$400 billion as far as the eye can see.

This has become the Congress known for hot checks. Yet when this Congress faces a tab for rebuilding America and American lives that is less than half of what we have spent in Iraq, suddenly everyone here is wearing green eye shades.

In Iraq, we have spent millions to rebuild the Sweet Water Canal System, rebuilding and repairing the levee system; and here in America, we cut the levee construction down in Louisiana by 80 percent.

Tuesday's Christian Science Monitor reported that the National Guard's response to Katrina was hampered by a lack of equipment because two-thirds of that equipment is in Iraq.

We need a new direction with new priorities. We need a Congress that is going to put some checks and balances and not act like a rubber stamp.

In the coming weeks, I intend to reintroduce the American Parity Act, a bill to ensure that, as we rebuild Iraq, we ensure that we also rebuild America.

This Congress cannot have one set of books, one set of priorities for Iraq, and another one for the American people.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3824, THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES RECOVERY ACT OF 2005

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 470 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 470

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3824) to amend and reauthorize the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to provide greater results conserving and recovering listed species, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed ninety minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment rec-

ommended by the Committee on Resources now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of the Resources Committee Print dated September 26, 2005. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 470 is a rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3824, the Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act of 2005. The rule provides for 90 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Resources and waives all points of order against consideration of the bill.

House Resolution 470 provides that, in lieu of the amendment recommended by the Committee on Resources now printed in the bill, the amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of the Committee on Resources print dated September 26 shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment and shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute.

House Resolution 470 makes in order only those amendments printed in the