

Congratulations to the Chicago White Sox. But our little team of 42 years for the first time in the history of the State of Texas took Texas to the World Series. Not only did we take Texas to the World Series, but being in my congressional district, the Minute Maid Park, the Astros are my constituents, among many others. We gave our community just a heck of a lot of joy, as you heard the buzz going around the children, the young people, the elderly, season ticket holders and others. I cannot thank the Astros enough.

We still believe. We may not have made it this time around, but we still believe in the Houston Astros.

UNIFORM BUILDING CODES

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

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that is of great concern to me, the prudent spending of our precious Federal tax dollars. In an ever-difficult budget environment, we need to be more vigilant in determining how these funds are spent.

So far Congress has provided \$61 billion in Federal funds for the recovery of the gulf coast. As we turn our attention to helping rebuild this area, any Federal funds for rebuilding should be spent according to a modern, uniform statewide building code. Did you know that Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama do not have statewide building codes?

Today I will introduce a sense of Congress resolution that Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama should adopt modern, uniform statewide building codes so that their rebuilding is, quite frankly, up to code. Every other State on the eastern seaboard already has similar codes. The Gulf Coast States should, too.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution. Quite frankly, it is a must.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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 addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PROTECT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I have taken the floor previously to talk about the shortcomings of the administration's efforts in the area of homeland security.

As an expert in aviation security, I have criticized the fact that the Republican majority and the White House have seen fit to arbitrarily cut the number of screeners, which not only causes obvious inconvenience for passengers, but it creates the potential for security threats as the smaller number of screeners are under tremendous pressure to process a large number of people in a short period of time. And they are being asked to do it with 1980s equipment.

Now, you can do it one of two ways. You can have a lot of people with crummy equipment or a few people with state-of-the-art equipment. This administration is trying to do it on the cheap without enough people and with obsolete equipment that cannot detect plastic explosives at passenger checkpoints and often in carry-on bags or checked baggage or cargo.

Our ports, I have talked about that, a tremendous vulnerability, not doing radiological detection. Nobody is going to shoot a missile at us, the failed Stars Wars system notwithstanding, but they may well try and smuggle in a nuclear device in a container. Our ports and our borders are wide open to such smuggling with just a very few deployed radiological devices.

But Katrina brought home another lesson, which is we need to be ready both for unnatural disasters, terrorist attacks and natural disasters. And there is a looming natural disaster that this administration has ignored, and that is the potential of H5N1 flu, the bird flu, so-called, should it become easily transmissible between bird species and humans, and then human-to-human contact could perhaps spread the disease widely.

The numbers are absolutely shocking regarding the potential for loss of life because of this. The administration, the President apparently read a book, that is great, and the book was about the great pandemic, and suddenly he got excited about it. Except experts in his administration and worldwide have known since before he became President that there was a potential for species crossover with this flu, and a tremendous loss of life is potential from this.

This administration last year in preparation for this looming disaster, and it already infected and killed a number of humans at a rate of better than 50 percent in Asia last year, so last year in preparation for this they took some steps. They put more money in the budget for vaccines, antiviral drugs and basic research. Woo, yea for them.

But guess what? The total spending was \$110 million, approximately half of what they spent on chastity education in America. That is how high this ideological administration put on the idea

of protecting America against an influenza outbreak. They could spend almost as much money as they put together for abstinence-only education.

Now, that seems to be kind of a misplaced priority. Belatedly now they are talking about billions and accelerated research and stockpiling antiviral drugs. I gave a floor speech last summer calling upon the administration to begin to stockpile the drugs. Unfortunately, virtually every other country in the world is in line ahead of the United States of America, and the drugs are not manufactured here to buy those drugs, because those other countries have chosen to stockpile them to protect their people. Even though they do not work very well, they are the only thing we have now.

Now the administration is talking belatedly about a crash program to try to develop vaccines 2 or 3 or 4 years down the road in the hope that this crossover will not take place before then. This is yet another example of poor planning by this administration; the fact that they created this huge new bureaucracy, the Department of Homeland Security, that failed so miserably when Katrina occurred.

And, oh, by the way, Brownie, you did a heck of a job. That hack who failed so miserably is still on the Federal payroll. Can you believe that? The guy is pulling down over \$100,000 a year sitting over there having failed so miserably. The President cannot even get rid of him, let alone other political cronies in this administration.

And they are failing us in other areas of security that I referenced earlier, and they are failing the American people in this critical health care component.

Much more robust steps must be taken quickly. The clock is ticking. It is already perhaps very, very late. We can only hope that this virus does not evolve too quickly through nature, and I know this administration does not believe in evolution, but that is how viruses happen. They do evolve. All it needs is a couple of small changes, and it will be transmissible. It will be a pandemic. We need to do more to protect the American people.

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.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON).

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