women of the 278th were able to train members of the Iraqi police and the Iraqi army, over 10,000 policemen, soldiers and border enforcement personnel. This training is essential to our mission in Iraq. In order for the Iraqi people to truly feel empowered in their new country, they must complete the circle of modern democratic nations.

One half of the circle is being completed by the participation of the Iraqi citizens in both the electoral process and their developing free economy. The other half of the circle, and perhaps the most vital piece, is an established Iraqi security force run by and composed of Iraqi citizens that has the ability to protect its own people without relying on the American military. When the day comes that the Iraqi people and soldiers can provide protection for the average citizen to go about their daily lives with the knowledge they are safe, that will be the day when all Iraqis can point to their country, a country able to stand on it own, and they can tell the world we are free.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that all of my thoughts and prayers, along with those of constituents, continue to go to all of our military personnel serving in Iraq, including the 900 Tennessee Guardsmen, who are still ''in country.'' Thank you for their great work. We look forward to their return. God continue to be with the men and women of the 278th and the United States Armed Forces. Keep them safe and strong. Return them home to America.

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.)

A SOLDIER'S SACRIFICE

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, Army Specialist Darren Howe died on November 3 from injuries he sustained in Iraq. The Bradley armored personnel carrier he was driving struck a roadside bomb outside of Baghdad.

The explosion caused the personnel carrier to catch fire. Specialist Howe, who was already severely burned, regained control of the vehicle and drove it to safety. He then moved to the rear and helped pull 13 fellow soldiers to safety.

Darren was from Beatrice, Nebraska, a town of 12,000 resting peacefully in the heart of the Great Plains. In an extraordinary tribute, the town mourned together in profound respect for the man who fought so bravely and honorably on its behalf.

Lining both sides of Nebraska Highway 77 and Beatrice's downtown district, were hundreds of people holding hands over hearts and American flags. School children from the town's Catholic and Lutheran schools stood respectfully with handmade posters. Shopkeepers, clerks, business owners, the elderly, people with disabilities, seniors from the high school, lined Main Street to pay tribute to the man who graduated less than 3 years ago.

Outside the Pamida, the Sack Lumber, and the local hardware store, signs and billboards read ''Specialist Darren Howe: A True Hero.'' What a fitting tribute to a true leader.

Darren and his family received his medals, including a Bronze Star and Purple Heart. A rifle salute marked the lowering of his casket into the ground. The only sounds thereafter were the sobs of loved ones forced to say a final goodbye. Even his warrior father gave a last sorrowful salute to his martyred son.

Darren had followed the footsteps of his father into the military. Darren was also a steadfast husband and father, providing for his wife, Nakia, and their two children, Shaye-Maleigh and Gary-Dean.

Howe was solid, steady, focused, determined. Nakia wears a medallion around her neck from the Third Infantry Division with the inscription ''Standing on a Rock.''

Darren served his country and fellow soldiers without regard for his own well-being. His heroic sacrifice came as no surprise to those who knew and loved him. Darren Howe was a young man who did things the right way and lived in accordance to a code of respect, honor and responsibility. And as Jodi, his mother, told me, he was also a very devoted son.

Such a man as this deeply impacted the town of Beatrice, Nebraska. Such a man as this saved the lives of his fellow soldiers and such a man gave himself in service to his country. Specialist Darren Howe is a hero, and our country is grateful for his service and ultimate sacrifice.

GULF OPPORTUNITY ZONE PUBLIC FINANCE RELIEF ACT OF 2005

Mr. McCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Ways and Means be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 4337) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for Gulf tax credit bonds and advance refundings of certain tax-exempt bonds, and to provide a Federal guarantee of certain State bonds, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, and I do not intend to object, I want to thank the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. McCRERY) for his efforts in this regard to this bill. I want to thank the gentleman from California (Chairman THOMAS) and the ranking member, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), and all of the members of the Committee on Ways and Means and others who have taken up the cause of helping our dear friends and my constituents back in Louisiana, our constituents back in Louisiana.

The gravamen of the problem that this bill addresses is that our local governments, are State governments, are severely handicapped to serve their citizens because of a lack of finance to service our people. Our city has lost its tax base completely, and so has the school board and other cities in our region. Our State is facing a big budget hole because of the decimation of our cities on a fiscal basis.

This bill gives us a chance to address those issues through self-help approaches, through the refinancing of bonds, through the extending of taxable bonds, and through the extension of bonds to service debt. I think it is an important part of the recovery of our State of Louisiana. I am very grateful to this House and to my colleagues on the Committee on Ways and Means, Mr. McCRERY, for his leadership on this issue and for our partnership in this endeavor.

Mr. McCRERY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. JEFFERSON. I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. McCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JEFFERSON) for the hard work that he has put into this effort to allow the State and our municipalities the ability to help themselves. That is what this bill will do.

Mr. JEFFERSON has worked tirelessly with me to try to clear the way for passage of this bill this evening. His efforts are to be commended. I thank him very much.

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the bill, as follows:

H.R. 4337

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 ''Gulf Opportunity Zone Public Finance Relief Act of 2005''.

SEC. 2. GULF TAX CREDIT BONDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart H of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 54A. CREDIT TO HOLDERS OF GULF TAX CREDIT BONDS.

''(a) ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT.—If a taxpayer holds a Gulf tax credit bond on one or more credit allowance dates of the bond occurring during any taxable year, there shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by this chapter for the taxable year an amount equal to the sum of the credits determined under subsection (b) with respect to such dates.

''(b) AMOUNT OF CREDIT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount of the credit determined under this subsection with respect to any credit allowance date for a Gulf tax credit bond is 25 percent of the annual credit determined with respect to such bond.

''(2) ANNUAL CREDIT.—The annual credit determined with respect to any Gulf tax credit bond is the product of—

''(A) the credit rate determined by the Secretary under paragraph (3) for the day on which such bond was sold, multiplied by

''(B) the outstanding face amount of the bond.

''(3) DETERMINATION.—For purposes of paragraph (2), with respect to any Gulf tax credit bond, the Secretary shall determine daily or cause to be determined daily a credit rate which shall apply to the first day on which there is a binding, written contract for the sale or exchange of the bond. The credit rate for any day is the credit rate which the Secretary or the Secretary's designee estimates will permit the issuance of Gulf tax credit bonds with a specified maturity or redemption date without discount and without interest cost to the issuer.

''(4) CREDIT ALLOWANCE DATE.—For purposes of this section, the term 'credit allowance date' means March 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15. Such term also includes the last day on which the bond is outstanding.

''(5) SPECIAL RULE FOR ISSUANCE AND REDEMPTION.—In the case of a bond which is issued during the 3-month period ending on a credit allowance date, the amount of the credit determined under this subsection with respect to such credit allowance date shall be a ratable portion of the credit otherwise determined based on the portion of the 3-month period during which the bond is outstanding. A similar rule shall apply when the bond is redeemed or matures.

''(c) LIMITATION BASED ON AMOUNT OF TAX.—The credit allowed under subsection (a) for any taxable year shall not exceed the excess of—

''(1) the sum of the regular tax liability (as defined in section 26(b)) plus the tax imposed by section 55, over

''(2) the sum of the credits allowable under this part (other than subpart C and this section).

''(d) GULF TAX CREDIT BOND.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The term 'Gulf tax credit bond' means any bond issued as part of an issue if—

''(A) the bond is issued by the State of Alabama, Louisiana, or Mississippi,

''(B) 95 percent or more of the proceeds of such issue are to be used to—

''(i) pay principal, interest, or premiums on qualified bonds issued by such State or any political subdivision of such State, or

''(ii) make a loan to any political subdivision of such State to pay principal, interest, or premiums on qualified bonds issued by such political subdivision,

''(C) the Governor of such State designates such bond for purposes of this section,

''(D) the bond is a general obligation of such State and is in registered form (within the meaning of section 149(a)),

''(E) the maturity of such bond does not exceed 2 years, and

''(F) the bond is issued after December 31, 2005, and before January 1, 2007.

''(2) STATE MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—A bond shall not be treated as a Gulf tax credit bond unless—

''(A) the issuer of such bond pledges as of the date of the issuance of the issue an amount equal to the face amount of such bond to be used for payments described in clause (i) of paragraph (l)(B), or loans described in clause (ii) of such paragraph, as the case may be, with respect to the issue of which such bond is a part, and

''(B) any such payment or loan is made in equal amounts from the proceeds of such issue and from the amount pledged under subparagraph (A).

The requirement of subparagraph (B) shall be treated as met with respect to any such payment or loan made during the 1-year period beginning on the date of the issuance (or any successor 1-year period) if such requirement is met when applied with respect to the aggregate amount of such payments and loans made during such period.

''(3) AGGREGATE LIMIT ON BOND DESIGNATIONS.—The maximum aggregate face amount of bonds which may be designated under this section by the Governor of a State shall not exceed—

''(A) $200,000,000 in the case of the State of Louisiana,

''(B) $100,000,000 in the case of the State of Mississippi, and

''(C) $50,000,000 in the case of the State of Alabama.

''(4) SPECIAL RULES RELATING TO ARBITRAGE.—A bond which is part of an issue shall not be treated as a Gulf tax credit bond unless, with respect to the issue of which the bond is a part, the issuer satisfies the arbitrage requirements of section 148 with respect to proceeds of the issue and any loans made with such proceeds.

''(e) QUALIFIED BOND.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The term 'qualified bond' means any obligation of a State or political subdivision thereof which was outstanding on August 28, 2005.

''(2) EXCEPTION FOR PRIVATE ACTIVITY BONDS.—Such term shall not include any private activity bond.

''(3) EXCEPTION FOR ADVANCE REFUNDINGS.—Such term shall not include any bond—

''(A) which is designated as an advance refunding bond under section 149(d)(7), or

''(B) with respect to which there is any outstanding bond to refund such bond.

''(f) CREDIT INCLUDED IN GROSS INCOME.—Gross income includes the amount of the credit allowed to the taxpayer under this section (determined without regard to subsection (c)) and the amount so included shall be treated as interest income.

''(g) OTHER DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL RULES.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) BOND.—The term 'bond' includes any obligation.

''(2) PARTNERSHIP; S CORPORATION; AND OTHER PASS-THRU ENTITIES.—

'' (A) IN GENERAL.—Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary, in the case of a partnership, trust, S corporation, or other pass-thru entity, rules similar to the rules of section 41 (g) shall apply with respect to the credit allowable under subsection (a).

''(B) NO BASIS ADJUSTMENT.—In the case of a bond held by a partnership or an S corporation, rules similar to the rules under section 1397E(i) shall apply.

''(3) BONDS HELD BY REGULATED INVESTMENT COMPANIES.—If any Gulf tax credit bond is held by a regulated investment company, the credit determined under subsection (a) shall be allowed to shareholders of such company under procedures prescribed by the Secretary.

''(4) REPORTING.—Issuers of Gulf tax credit bonds shall submit reports similar to the reports required under section 149(e).''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Paragraph (2) of section 54(c) of such Code is amended by inserting '', section 54A,'' after ''subpart C''.

(2) Subparagraph (A) of section 6049(d)(8) of such Code is amended—

(A) by inserting ''or 54A(f)'' after ''section 54(g)'', and

(B) by inserting ''or 54A(b)(4), as the case may be'' after ''section 54(b)(4)''.

(3) The table of sections for subpart H of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''Sec. 54A. Credit to holders of Gulf tax credit bonds.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years ending after December 31, 2005.

SEC. 3. ADVANCE REFUNDINGS OF CERTAIN TAX-EXEMPT BONDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (d) of section 149 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to advance refundings) is amended by redesignating paragraph (7) as paragraph (8) and by inserting after paragraph (6) the following new paragraph:

''(7) ADVANCE REFUNDINGS OF CERTAIN GULF COAST BONDS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—With respect to a bond described in subparagraph (C) which is not a qualified 501(c)(3) bond, one additional advance refunding after the date of the enactment of this paragraph and before January 1, 2011, shall be allowed under the applicable rules of this subsection if—

''(i) the Governor of the State designates the advance refunding bond for purposes of this paragraph, and

''(ii) the requirements of subparagraph (E) are met.

''(B) CERTAIN PRIVATE ACTIVITY BONDS.—With respect to a bond described in subparagraph (C) which is an exempt facility bond described in paragraph (1) or (2) of section 142(a), one advance refunding after the date of the enactment of this paragraph and before January 1, 2011, shall be allowed under the applicable rules of this subsection (notwithstanding paragraph (2)) if the requirements of clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (A) are met.

''(C) BONDS DESCRIBED.—A bond is described in this subparagraph if such bond was outstanding on August 28, 2005, and is issued by the State of Alabama, Louisiana, or Mississippi, or a political subdivision thereof.

''(D) AGGREGATE LIMIT.—The maximum aggregate face amount of bonds which may be designated under this paragraph by the Governor of a State shall not exceed—

''(i) $4,500,000,000 in the case of the State of Louisiana,

''(ii) $2,250,000,000 in the case of the State of Mississippi, and

''(iii) $1,125,000,000 in the case of the State of Alabama.

''(E) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements of this subparagraph are met with respect to any advance refunding of a bond described in subparagraph (C) if—

''(i) no advance refundings of such bond would be allowed under this title on or after August 28, 2005,

''(ii) the advance refunding bond is the only other outstanding bond with respect to the refunded bond, and

''(iii) the requirements of section 148 are met with respect to all bonds issued under this paragraph.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to advance refundings after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4. FEDERAL GUARANTEE OF CERTAIN STATE BONDS.

(a) STATE BONDS DESCRIBED.—This section shall apply to a bond issued as part of an issue if—

(1) the issue of which such bond is part is an issue of the State of Alabama, Louisiana, or Mississippi,

(2) the bond is a general obligation of the issuing State and is in registered form,

(3) the proceeds of the bond are distributed to one or more political subdivisions of the issuing State,

(4) the maturity of such bond does not exceed 5 years,

(5) the bond is issued after the date of the enactment of this Act and before January 1, 2008, and

(6) the bond is designated by the Secretary of the Treasury for purposes of this section.

(b) APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury may only designate a bond for purposes of this section pursuant to an application submitted to the Secretary by the State which demonstrates the need for such designation on the basis of the criteria specified in paragraph (2).

(2) CRITERIA.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the criteria specified in this paragraph are—

(A) the loss of revenue base of one or more political subdivisions of the State by reason of Hurricane Katrina,

(B) the need for resources to fund infrastructure within, or operating expenses of, any such political subdivision,

(C) the lack of access of such political subdivision to capital, and

(D) any other criteria as may be determined by the Secretary.

(3) GUIDANCE FOR SUBMISSION AND CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall prescribe regulations or other guidance which provide for the time and manner for the submission and consideration of applications under this subsection.

(c) FEDERAL GUARANTEE.—A bond described in subsection (a) is guaranteed by the United States in an amount equal to 50 percent of the outstanding principal with respect to such bond.

(d) AGGREGATE LIMIT ON BOND DESIGNATIONS.—The maximum aggregate face amount of bonds which may be exceed issued under this section shall not exceed $3,000,000,000.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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

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

AMERICAN MILITARY PRESENCE FUELING IRAQI INSURGENCY

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, if there was any doubt that the Bush administration has it Iraq's policy totally wrong, the actions taken yesterday in both Houses of Congress shattered that notion. In the Senate, 79 Senators voted in favor of an amendment designating the year 2006 as a period of significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty. The amendment also requires the President to provide Congress with a quarterly report detailing United States policies and military operations in Iraq.

And in the House, the Out of Iraq Caucus, led by Ms. WATERS, introduced a discharge petition to force the House to openly debate the Homeward Bound legislation. Homeward Bound is the bill introduced by the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE). It is H.J. Res. 55, and it calls for bringing our troops home no later than October 1, 2006. The petition must be signed by 218 Members of Congress and then will force a debate on the floor.

This debate would include 17 hours of open debate, allowing every Member of Congress a chance to offer an amendment or talk about the war in Iraq from their very own perspective. Regardless of where my colleagues stand on the war and regardless of their political affiliation, I urge them to sign onto this discharge petition because we are long overdue for a conversation here on the floor about Iraq. It is a conversation that we need to have because it has been a long time.

Anyone watching at home may remember the last time Congress debated this matter. It was May 25 when I introduced an amendment to the defense authorization bill, an amendment asking the President to put together his plans for bringing our troops home and to provide those plans to the appropriate committees in the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, 128 Members of this House voted for that amendment, and if the vote were held today, I am sure we would have many more than 128 votes. Of those 128 votes, 5 were Republican, 122 were Democrat, and one was our Independent from Vermont.

Unfortunately, we cannot have that vote again because the Republican leaders in Congress will not allow it. They will not bring important Iraq legislation like the bipartisan Homeward Bound legislation up for debate on the House floor. Think about it, the last time we debated this vitally important issue was nearly 6 months ago, and that was the first time and only time we have talked about it since the beginning of the war.

Since Congress will not have this debate, we have had to resort to taking matters into our own hands. That is why we are working to bring Homeward Bound to the House floor, and that is why 61 of my colleagues joined me in sending a letter to the President last week urging him to make four key policy changes in his position on Iraq.

First, we asked him to engage in greater multilateral cooperation with our allies. We simply cannot keep 160,000 American soldiers in Iraq and hope for the situation to just change for the better because it is our very military presence that is fueling Iraq's growing insurgency.

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Instead, the President should actually eat a little crow, admit his mistakes and ask our allies, the same ones we offended in the buildup of the war, to establish a multinational interim security force for Iraq, possibly run by the United Nations or NATO. The U.N.'s Department of Peacekeeping Operations would be particularly well suited to managing this task, as a matter of fact.

Second, the U.S. must pursue diplomatic and nonmilitary initiatives. If we seriously want democracy to take hold in the Middle East, then we need to get serious about changing our role from that of Iraq's military occupier to its reconstruction partner.

Instead of sending troops and military equipment to Iraq, let us send teachers, scientists, urban planners, and constitutional experts as a larger diplomatic offensive, one that will allow us to regain our lost national credibility while, at the same time, creating Iraqi jobs and bolstering Iraq's economy.

Third, let us prepare for a robust, postconflict reconciliation process. There is no shortage of national healing that needs to occur in Iraq after nearly 3 years of death and 3 years of destruction. That is why we should encourage an international peace commission to oversee Iraq's postconflict reconciliation. This group would coordinate peace talks between the various factions in Iraq, providing all Iraqis with a sense of ownership and hope over their country's future.

Finally, and most important of all, we must bring our troops home. The human cost of this war has been absolutely staggering. To save lives, end the war and prevent our Treasury from spiraling even further into debt, we need to end this war.

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE IS THE GOAL

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I come from agriculture country in southeast Georgia, and it is always remarkable to me that 2 percent of our population feeds not just 100 percent of the American population but a great deal of people all around the world. In fact, one thing that is even more interesting is that our ag production outpaces our ag consumption. We have more food than we can eat because our farm supply is so strong. Very vital of course to have food, but it is also vital in our society to have energy and fuel for our cars. Yet the world demand and the world supply are almost even. And the gentleman knows from the gulf coast what