on the Media and the U.S. Ambassador to Kazakhstan. It is hoped that President Nazarbaev will not sign this problematic bill into law.

Mr. Speaker, in light of these circumstances, Kazakhstan's bid to chair the OSCE in 2009 cannot be supported. I strongly believe that backing Kazakhstan's candidacy would cause more difficulties than will result from Astana's disappointment over not winning this prize.

None of this means that we should not strive to develop the best possible relations with Kazakhstan, on a mutually beneficial basis. There are many areas of current and potential cooperation between our countries, including Kazakhstan's entry into the WTO, energy, military security and anti-terrorism. Nor does my inability to support Kazakhstan's candidacy for the OSCE Chairmanship in 2009 mean that I do not hope to be able to back a future bid. Nothing would please me more than to report to this Chamber that Kazakhstan has met its commitments on democratization and human rights and richly deserves to lead the OSCE. A Kazakh chairmanship would also move the Organization eastward in the symbolic sense, bridging what has become an uncomfortable gap between the former Soviet republics and Europe.

But that moment has not yet come, Mr. Speaker. I would encourage the Kazakh leaders to avail themselves of the opportunity of additional time to constructively engage the OSCE. Working to ensure that the Organization succeeds would aid Kazakhstan's bid for a future chairmanship, while expressing sour grapes over a denial can only add to the impression that Kazakhstan is not ready for a leadership role.

The OSCE Chairmanship represents acknowledgement of progress already made, not a stimulus to future, unproven progress. Urging the Kazakhs to defer their bid would leave the door open for Astana, should demonstrable reforms on human rights and democratization be forthcoming. That progress was promised by President Nazarbaev, when he signed the Helsinki Accords as his country joined the OSCE in 1992.

INTRODUCTION OF BIRTHDAY RESOLUTION FOR WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, today, along with my friend and colleague from New York, Representative NITA LOWEY, I am introducing a resolution to recognize President Clinton's 60th birthday which will occur this August 19th. President Clinton has had a long and distinguished career in public service including serving as Governor of Arkansas and President of the United States. During Clinton's two terms in the White House, this country experienced unprecedented economic expansion including the creation of 22 million jobs. He worked with our NATO allies to end the ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, and he played a major role in bringing peace to Northern Ireland. Since leaving office in 2001, President Clinton has continued to devote himself to helping people around the world through the Clinton Foundation. It is because of his commitment to not only the American people, but to the people of the world that I am honored today to recognize President Clinton's birthday and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4890, LEGISLATIVE LINE ITEM VETO ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. I rise in strong opposition to this sham budget proposal offered by Republican Leadership. This legislation will not reduce the deficit or spending through earmarks and will grant unprecedented power to the Executive Branch.

The line-item veto proposed today will expand Presidential power and challenge the separation of powers critical to the function of our government. It is an extreme dilution of the authority of the legislative branch if the President can hold a member's priorities hostage in order to garner votes for other initiatives. We have already seen an increase in abuse of power by the leadership in this House in order to force members to vote with the President, particularly during the debate on Medicare Part D, CAFTA, and last year's budget reconciliation bill.

Republicans today are decrying the practice of earmarking projects. However, since 1996, under the Republican watch, the number of earmarks has grown from 3,023 to 13,012 last year. As the Majority party, Republicans have had the power for the last 12 years to reduce earmarks and to add oversight to this process. But as former Reagan official Bruce Bartlett stated, "George W. Bush has turned out to be one of the most free-spending presidents on records . . . Apparently there is no pork barrel program so egregiously unjustified that he won't sign it into law".

This Republican Majority has lost all credibility on fiscal responsibility. Since President Bush took office, the Administration and Republicans in Congress have turned a $5.6 trillion surplus into a $3.2 trillion deficit. Our federal debt is $8.3 trillion—much of which is borrowed from foreign countries. In fact, this Administration has borrowed more money from foreign nations than all 42 previous U.S. Presidents combined. And under Republican rule this Congress has had to raise the debt limit four times.

A line-item veto will not solve this problem. In fact, the way this bill is written, it could actually increase spending. According to the Congressional Budget Office, giving the President this extraordinary new authority will allow the Chief Executive to pressure Members to support Administration priorities in return for promises not to cancel projects. Studies of states that have a line-item veto have documented this effect in state legislatures.

Mr. SPRATT offered a substitute measure in the Rules Committee that would have taken a real step in addressing our budget deficit. This bill would restore pay as you go rules, forcing Congress to face our spiraling deficit. It would also reduce earmarks by mandating public disclosure, and prevent reconciliation from increasing the deficit. Unfortunately, as is too often the case, the Rules Committee denied the House the opportunity to vote on this alternative. Mr. Chair, if Republicans were serious about restoring fiscal discipline we would be having a real discussion today about the Democratic substitute.

I believe strongly that it is our moral responsibility to reduce the deficit and to relieve our children and grandchildren of this reckless legacy. However, the bill on the floor today is another attempt to ask the American people to believe the Republicans are the party of fiscal responsibility, while actually making our budget situation worse. I urge my colleagues to reject this bill.

IN HONOR OF THE ASILOMAR CONFERENCE CENTER

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the California State Parks Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove, CA. Ordinarily, one would not expect a Member to rise on the floor to acknowledge the birthday of a conference grounds, but Asilomar is no ordinary place. For starters, Asilomar is nestled in the coastal dunes of the Monterey Peninsula. The name itself is Spanish for refuge by the sea.

Asilomar also boasts an extraordinary history. It began life in 1912 as the western regional conference grounds for the YWCA on 30 acres of beach front property donated by the precursor of the Pebble Beach Company. Within a year, the YWCA hired the pioneering San Francisco architect Julia Morgan. By 1921, additional land had been donated and many buildings were completed, including the centerpiece Phoebe Hearst grand meeting hall. The center could by then accommodate up to 500 people at a time. Over the course of the 20s, Asilomar grew not only as a site for YWCA activities but also as a center for religious retreats, Scouting events, and very popular summer camps. All of that ended with the Depression. Unable to pay its bills, the YWCA decided in 1934 to cease operating Asilomar. For almost 20 years Asilomar floundered along under various concession or cooperative agreements until the YWCA finally decided to sell the property in 1951.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Asilomar is part of my own family's story. In 1955, my father Fred Farr entered the California State Senate. And while it is true that my father cared deeply about the future of Asilomar, it is also true that my mother Janet would have never let him ignore the question of its future. That year my father authored legislation along with his Assembly counterpart, Alan Patee, directing the State Parks Department to purchase Asilomar for the now unbelievably low amount of $350,000. The bill, SB 2007, passed both houses of the legislature without opposition. Unfortunately, Governor Knight then vetoed every park bill before him that summer. Needless to say, that act did not make the Governor a very popular man on the Monterey Peninsula. The uproar over the veto forced the administration to rethink its position. In December 1955, the Governor reversed his opposition to Asilomar's purchase. In the ensuing