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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Reverend Kenn Hucks, Pastor, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lebanon, Tennessee, offered the following prayer:

Our Father, we offer to You our greatest praise and thanksgiving for another day to serve You and our fellow man. Thank You for the grace and blessing to live in this great land.

Grant to every American in this great assembly a craving for Your wisdom, the courage to express it, and the commitment to never turn away from what is right.

Bring true and lasting peace to our world. Allow spiritual renewal to sweep our great land, and help us to truly become one Nation under God that is indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Help each of us to humble ourselves under Your mighty hand and truly love our neighbor as our self.

Protect our Armed Forces, prosper our workforce, and prescribe the path of Your will for all of America and for every American. In our Savior's name, amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. HILL) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HILL led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING THE REVEREND KENN HUCKS

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

Mr. COOPER. Madam Speaker, we were privileged today to have deliver our opening prayer the Reverend Kenn Hucks from Lebanon, Tennessee, Immanuel Baptist Church, formerly in BART GORDON's district, and now in my district. We are also privileged to have his beautiful wife Kim with us today sitting in the family gallery.

This is a church that started in 1947 with just a few dozen members, and now it is in the top 1 percent of the Tennessee Baptist and the Southern Baptist Conventions, due to a long line of inspirational pastors, the latest of whom is Kenn Hucks, who joined the congregation, was called to the ministry in 2002. We appreciate his great spiritual leadership in our community, and we appreciate his being with us today.

BUSH BUDGET

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

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I would like to speak about the budget this morning and the concern that I have that the budget President Bush has proposed makes it very clear that his priorities are out of touch with everyday Americans. President Bush would rather maintain his tax cuts for the wealthiest in our communities, while leaving seniors, veterans and working families behind.

He also believes that his budget will rid our Nation of debt in 5 years, even though he wants to keep spending billions of dollars in Iraq and maintain these tax cuts for the most wealthy.

Further, President Bush continuously fails to be up front with the American people about the true cost of the war. Even in the supplemental that he proposed, he fails to acknowledge the additional cost of the troops and support personnel that will be required by the troop surge. Folks, the numbers simply don't add up.

I am disappointed that the budget fails to include ample funding for the Everglades restoration and beach renourishment, which are an important asset and resource in our country. The Everglades and our beaches in Florida are not only important to Floridians, but also national treasures enjoyed by millions of Americans each year.

It is time for our government to step up to the plate and fulfill its commitment to the Everglades, our beaches, and all our other natural assets; I am going to fight to make this happen.

President Bush's priorities are out of step, and as we continue to debate his budget, I am confident Congress will restore funding to many of the programs our American families deserve and depend on.

ELIMINATING PREVENTABLE HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATED INFECTIONS

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

Mr. TIM MURPHY OF Pennsylvania. I would like to welcome my colleague from Pittsburgh in his first time in the Speaker's chair.

Mr. Speaker, more people die each year from infections they pick up in hospitals than from AIDS, breast cancer or auto accidents. The Centers for Disease Control reports these health care-associated infections contribute to 90,000 deaths per year, with annual costs exceeding $50 billion. Medicare costs for patients who contract an infection while hospitalized is five times higher than for patients without these infections. For Medicaid patients, costs are 14 times higher.

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Many hospitals have dramatically reduced infection rates by implementing patient safety procedures. I will be introducing the Healthy Hospitals Act to provide financial incentives to hospitals for savings gained from eliminating these infections, and require public reporting of infections so health care providers and patients can work together to save lives and money. We need patient-centered health care that promotes patient choice, patient safety and patient care quality.

To learn more about eliminating preventable health care-associated infections, I invite my colleagues to visit my Web site at Murphy.house.gov.

PRESIDENT'S BUDGET CONTINUES TO SHORTCHANGE VETERANS AND MILITARY RETIREES

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

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, we have an obligation as a government to provide assistance to the men and women who have bravely served our Nation in our military; but once again, President Bush sent us a budget this week that significantly shortchanges veterans health care.

While our brave troops are fighting abroad as of right now, the President proposes a $3.5 billion cut in veterans health care over the next 5 years. His budget also provides less than veteran service organizations say is needed to meet the growing needs of veterans, including the fact that we have a growing robust amount of veterans with the Iraq-Afghanistan war.

For the fifth year in a row, the budget raises health care costs on 1.3 million veterans, imposing $4.9 million in increased copayments on prescription drugs, and new enrollment fees on veterans over the next 10 years.

The budget also increases TRICARE health care premiums for the Nation's military retirees, and includes several other changes in military health care that have been rejected by Congress in previous years.

If these proposals are not successful during the 2008 fiscal year, the budget for military health care will continue to be underfunded by at least $1.8 billion.

Mr. Speaker, America's veterans deserve better, and they will get it from this Democratic House.

CAMERAS IN THE SUPREME COURT

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court is the most powerful Court in the world. These nine black-robed individuals rule on constitutional matters that affect all Americans for lifetimes. The third branch of government holds its session in public, as it ought to be.

The theory behind public court proceedings is that the more public and open, the more likely they are to be fair. More courts throughout the vastness of America are expanding on this public trial concept by allowing unobtrusive cameras in the courtroom. This allows citizens to view court proceedings. When I was a judge in Texas, I allowed cameras to film criminal trials, including a capital murder case. I found that this enhanced the concept of a fair public trial.

Those that have never been a trial lawyer or a trial judge say that lawyers play to the cameras; but lawyers don't play to the cameras, they play to the jury or the court.

So open Supreme Court proceedings to cameras. Let America see what takes place. And to those judges who are opposed to this openness, maybe they shouldn't be doing what they do when the camera is not rolling.

And that's just the way it is.

KUCINICH 12-POINT PLAN FOR IRAQ

(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, we are sacrificing our entire domestic agenda for an illegal war in Iraq.

When you look at the President's budget, reductions in education and health care over a period of time will cause many necessary programs to be cut for the American people. Meanwhile, the White House is discussing whether or not to bring refugees from Iraq to the United States.

Now, think about it a minute. We are prosecuting an illegal war in Iraq, we are illegally occupying the country, we are building permanent bases in Iraq, and now we are talking about bringing refugees here. The real humanitarian thing to do would be to end the war by ending the occupation, closing the bases and bringing our troops home.

That is exactly what my 12-point plan would do. I reached it with the help of people from the international community, the U.N., people who have experience in peacekeeping. They say we can bring in an international security force once we get agreement from the countries in the region, and we can bring our troops home.

We have to stop this disaster in Iraq, bring our troops home, end the occupation.

CONGRESSIONAL INACTION JEOPARDIZES WALLOWA COUNTY ROADS, RESCUE SERVICES AND PILT

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

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, the failure of Congress to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and Communities Self-Determination Act amounts to another breach of faith to more than 600 forested counties and 4,400 school districts across our great country.

For Wallowa County, Oregon, this means the road department and the sheriff search and rescue budgets will be slashed in half. There are more than 700 miles of roads in Wallowa County maintained by a current staff of 14. Soon only seven will try and keep up with this responsibility; that is one person for every 100 miles of road in Wallowa County. That is the same distance as between Washington, DC, and Richmond, Virginia. County Commissioner Mike Hayward says, ''Impact to our roads and rescue services will put our citizens and visitors at risk.''

Loss of the county payments program will also have a significant negative impact on more than 18 county governments across America whose Payment in Lieu of Taxes funds could be reduced by as much as 20 percent.

This Congress must keep the Federal Government's word to the people who live in timbered communities and pass H.R. 17. Time is running out for them.

BUSH SLASHING FUNDING TO EDUCATION AND JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS IN 2008 BUDGET

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, the President's budget serves as a blueprint as to what his priorities will be for the upcoming year.

At a time when our economy is becoming increasingly competitive, it is essential that we fully fund education programs across the board. Unfortunately, education is not prioritized in the President's budget.

Funding for No Child Left Behind remains about $15 billion below the level promised when the bill was first signed into law in 2001. How can we hold our schools accountable when the President refuses to provide the funds needed to improve many of these schools?

The President finally makes good on a 6-year-old promise to increase the amount of money given to low-income students through the Pell Grant program, but it comes at a price. The President proposes recalling all Perkins loans and eliminating nine other higher education assistance programs.

At a time when college is becoming more out of reach for many Americans, we should be looking to strengthen all college assistance programs so more high school seniors have a chance to attend.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats, this one included, will once again make education a priority for our Nation's students.

AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to stress the importance today of our partnership with the people of Afghanistan.

The 9/11 attacks were planned in Afghanistan, and a number of those who planned it are still at large, including Osama bin Laden. President Hamid Karzai's leadership is vital, as is his continuing work to bring stability and security to Afghanistan; he is an important ally in the global war on terrorism. Unfortunately, reports suggest that progress in Afghanistan continues to be undermined by Taliban and terrorist forces operating out of Pakistan.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot allow Afghanistan to become a failed state again; therefore, we must ensure that terrorist operations in Afghanistan stop and terrorist sanctuaries and safe havens across the border in Pakistan are eliminated. And we need more cooperation from Pakistan. Let's not neglect the situation in Afghanistan. We do so at our peril.

BUSH ADMINISTRATION NOT PREPARED TO SEND TROOPS TO IRAQ WITH PROPER SUPPLIES

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

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, as we know, President Bush wants to send another 22,000 young American men and women into harm's way in Iraq in the face of overwhelming opposition, even within his own party and his own administration. Now we are learning that the military does not have all the equipment needed to safely send these troops to Iraq. The Washington Post reported last week that the increase in troop levels will create major logistical hurdles for the Army and Marine Corps, which are short thousands of vehicles, armor kits and other equipment. Even the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Force Development said, ''We don't have the armor kits and we don't have the trucks,'' and it will take months for the Army to obtain the necessary supplies.

This is simply one more piece of evidence that the administration's proposal to increase troops in Iraq is terribly misguided. It is another example of how the rhetoric of supporting the troops is not matched by the reality.

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FORMER BORDER PATROL AGENTS IGNACIO RAMOS AND JOSE COMPEAN

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, you know, we are discussing national security every single day on the floor of this House, and our Border Patrol agents seem to be the forgotten soldiers fighting this war on terror. They guard our border every single day and protect our country from terrorists, from human traffickers, from drug traffickers.

Former Border Patrol agents Ignacio Ramos and Jose Compean were recently convicted of shooting a drug smuggler while they were patrolling and protecting the border. Then they were sentenced to a decade in prison. You may have read that our own U.S. Attorney had this drug smuggler brought from Mexico, gave him immunity to testify against our agents, and then the smuggler was released.

Now the drug smuggler is suing the U.S. Government for damages. As soon as Agent Ramos began his sentence in a Federal prison, he was assaulted by drug smugglers and drug users who were inmates in that prison. Ramos was doing his duty, protecting Americans from the thugs and the drug smugglers. Now we have failed to protect him.

BUSH WANTS TO MAKE TAX CUTS FOR WEALTHY PERMANENT WHILE INCREASING TAXES ON 30 MILLION

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, last month during his State of the Union message, President Bush said that it is possible to balance the budget without raising taxes, but that is not the case. The President's health care proposal would increase taxes on more than 30 million Americans.

You didn't hear that during the State of the Union address, but the President wants to tax Americans who have what he calls gold-plated health coverage. The overwhelming majority of these Americans are middle class workers who oftentimes accepted better health care coverage over pay increases during negotiations with their employers. Many of these workers either need the substantial coverage for themselves or a sick family member.

The President's tax increase proposal is the latest assault on employer-provided health care. Employers with older and sicker workers pay higher insurance premiums, not because they have gold-plated insurance, but because their insurance companies charge them for more coverage. At a time when 1 million more Americans are becoming uninsured every year, the administration should not provide employers another reason to drop their health care coverage for their workers.

HOPE SHINES AFTER THE DISASTER

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, this weekend, a deadly tornado inflicted enormous damage in my Congressional district. Yet even in the darkest times, the victims of the storm were enveloped in the incredible generosity of its neighbors. By Saturday, over 1,400 volunteers provided 22,000 meals and snacks and distributed 1,000 health kits.

Tim Miller and his three sons helped the Suggs family gather their belongings after the storm left. Tim Miller said, ''I'm just doing what I can to help.''

Villages resident Al Seiden said, ''Despite our house being destroyed . . . if you look around, there are at least eight people, volunteers, friends and neighbors who have come in and helped us . . . The spirit of this community is unbelievable.''

Wendy Spencer, the COE of the Governor's Commission on Volunteerism adds, ''We are receiving so many offers to help, which is wonderful. Our goal is to maximize this generosity to be as effective as it can be for meeting the needs of the tornado survivors now and in the weeks and months to come.''

Congratulations to all these volunteers. Great job.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge American Heart Month, which is observed each year throughout February. I anticipate that many of my colleagues will attend events in their districts commemorating Heart Month, as I will.

As we do, I urge all of us to pay special attention to the effects of heart disease on women. The good news is that heart disease deaths are beginning to decline among women.

The bad news remains, however, that heart disease is still the number one killer of women in this country. Although awareness among women about their risks for heart disease is increasing, awareness remains particularly low among minority women.

Let's take the opportunity during American Heart Month to talk with the women in our lives and in our community about their risks for heart disease and the preventive steps they can take to decrease these risks.

SUPPORT THE METHAMPHETAMINE REMEDIATION RESEARCH ACT OF 2007

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

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 365, the Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007. In Minnesota, methamphetamine usage has increased dramatically over the past decade. With that being said, legislators, law

enforcement and concerned citizens are all taking the necessary steps to protect our communities from the threat of methamphetamine usage and production.

This legislation addresses the difficult problem of meth lab remediation. Meth production, which occurs most often in residential homes, leaves behind dangerous toxic waste. In fact, according to the Minnesota Department of Health, meth production leaves behind up to 7 pounds of dangerous chemical waste for every pound of meth produced. This waste presents a health risk to future residents and an environmental risk to the surrounding area.

In 2005, in Minnesota, 88 major meth labs were discovered, each of which presented significant risk. Although Minnesota has strong local and State guidelines for dealing with meth lab remediation, the Federal Government can still play an important role in making our communities safer.

H.R. 365 will direct the EPA to research and establish important voluntary guidelines for meth lab remediation. Furthermore, the bill will bring together local and State agencies, organizations and individuals to share their best strategies for cleaning up meth labs and determining when they are inhabitable.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is a necessary step toward improving the meth lab remediation process nationwide. It will help local, State and Federal law enforcement safely move forward after discovering a meth lab, and it will make local communities dealing with the methamphetamine problem cleaner and healthier. I encourage its passage.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

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

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, February marks the 44th annual American Heart Month, an effort to raise awareness of the single largest cause of death for both men and women in this country, heart disease. Like the country as a whole, heart disease is the leading cause of death on my island of Guam.

However, heart disease is increasingly becoming an issue for Pacific Islander women. In fact, a recent Centers for Disease Control study indicates that heart disease is responsible for 214 deaths per 100,000 women on Guam. This is a staggering rate, and only through greater awareness and education can we begin to confront this challenge.

I urge everyone, Mr. Speaker, to take this opportunity to battle this disease by educating others about the benefits of healthy living and the risk factors contributing to heart disease.

NEW NATIONAL SECURITY ESTIMATE SHOWS THAT THERE IS NO MILITARY SOLUTION IN IRAQ

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, last week, the White House received a new National Intelligence Estimate from our intelligence agencies that confirms what we already know: The situation in Iraq is bad and likely to get worse. The NIE report concluded that the U.S. has little control over the day-to-day developments in Iraq and that there is a strong possibility of further deterioration.

The report also refutes the President's claim that we could begin to see progress from his troop escalation within the next 6 months. Instead, the President's own intelligence experts expressed deep doubts that the Iraqis will be able to gain any real control over their militias within the next 18 months.

They also stressed that the major security problem is not the presence of al Qaeda but instead is the Iraqi-on-Iraqi violence. The intelligence officials make clear that the political accommodations are crucial to reducing sectarian tensions, but the report concludes that the parties are unwilling or unable to make them at this point.

ADMINISTRATION DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH SUPPLIES FOR TROOP ESCALATION PLAN

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

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, as President Bush moves forward with his unpopular plan to send an additional 22,000 troops to Iraq, it is crucial that this Congress take a hard look at how this surge affects our national security throughout the rest of the world.

Last week, General James Conway, the Marine Corps Commandant, told the House Armed Services Committee that if troops were needed somewhere else in the world, the response would be a lot slower than we might like. Army Chief of Staff Peter Schoomaker went as far as saying that pooling resources for troops in Iraq limits our ability to respond to emerging strategic contingencies.

Mr. Speaker, after hearing all these warnings from military officials about the President's escalation plan, Congress must step in and voice its opposition in the name of protecting our national security. The days of rubber stamping the President's war plans are over.

STIFLING IRAQ DEBATE IN SENATE

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, democracy is based on the free exchange of ideas, debating issues to find a solution reasonable people can agree upon. However, when it comes to discussing the most important issue facing our Nation, the Senate Republican leadership is more concerned with giving the President political cover than engaging in a democratic debate of ideas.

The Republican Senate leadership is even blocking the voices in their own party by filibustering debate on any resolution dealing with the war in Iraq, including the McCain-Graham resolution supporting the President's troop surge and the Warner-Levin resolution in opposition to it. The consideration of these resolutions, especially the bipartisan Warner-Levin resolution, would serve as the basis for the first real debate on the President's flawed Iraq war policy since the war began nearly 4 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve a democratic discussion of ideas on the issue that is most important to them. Next week we will have a debate here in the House that will allow each of us to speak our minds on the President's plan, and I would hope that the Senate leadership would allow the same debate over in the other Chamber.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DOYLE). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Recorded votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

METHAMPHETAMINE REMEDIATION RESEARCH ACT OF 2007

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 365) to provide for a research program for remediation of closed methamphetamine production laboratories, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 365

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 ''Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Methamphetamine use and production is growing rapidly throughout the United States.

(2) Materials and residues remaining from the production of methamphetamine pose novel environmental problems in locations where methamphetamine laboratories have been closed.

(3) There has been little standardization of measures for determining when the site of a closed methamphetamine laboratory has been successfully remediated.

(4) Initial cleanup actions are generally limited to removal of hazardous substances and contaminated materials that pose an immediate threat to public health or the environment. It is not uncommon for significant levels of contamination to be found throughout residential structures after a methamphetamine laboratory has closed, partially because of a lack of knowledge of how to achieve an effective cleanup.

(5) Data on methamphetamine laboratory-related contaminants of concern are very limited, and cleanup standards do not currently exist. In addition, procedures for sampling and analysis of contaminants need to be researched and developed.

(6) Many States are struggling with establishing remediation guidelines and programs to address the rapidly expanding number of methamphetamine laboratories being closed each year.

SEC. 3. VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES.—Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (in this Act referred to as the ''Administrator''), in consultation with the National Institute of Standards and Technology, shall establish voluntary guidelines, based on the best currently available scientific knowledge, for the remediation of former methamphetamine laboratories, including guidelines regarding preliminary site assessment and the remediation of residual contaminants.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the voluntary guidelines under subsection (a), the Administrator shall consider, at a minimum—

(1) relevant standards, guidelines, and requirements found in Federal, State, and local laws and regulations;

(2) the varying types and locations of former methamphetamine laboratories; and

(3) the expected cost of carrying out any proposed guidelines.

(c) STATES.—The voluntary guidelines should be designed to assist State and local governments in the development and the implementation of legislation and other policies to apply state-of-the-art knowledge and research results to the remediation of former methamphetamine laboratories. The Administrator shall work with State and local governments and other relevant non-Federal agencies and organizations, including through the conference described in section 5, to promote and encourage the appropriate adoption of the voluntary guidelines.

(d) UPDATING THE GUIDELINES.—The Administrator shall periodically update the voluntary guidelines as the Administrator, in consultation with States and other interested parties, determines to be necessary and appropriate to incorporate research findings and other new knowledge.

SEC. 4. RESEARCH PROGRAM.

The Administrator shall establish a program of research to support the development and revision of the voluntary guidelines described in section 3. Such research shall—

(1) identify methamphetamine laboratory-related chemicals of concern;

(2) assess the types and levels of exposure to chemicals of concern identified under paragraph (1), including routine and accidental exposures, that may present a significant risk of adverse biological effects, and the research necessary to better address biological effects and to minimize adverse human exposures;

(3) evaluate the performance of various methamphetamine laboratory cleanup and remediation techniques; and

(4) support other research priorities identified by the Administrator in consultation with States and other interested parties.

SEC. 5. TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CONFERENCE.

(a) CONFERENCE.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and at least every third year thereafter, the Administrator shall convene a conference of appropriate State agencies, as well as individuals or organizations involved in research and other activities directly related to the environmental, or biological impacts of former methamphetamine laboratories. The conference should be a forum for the Administrator to provide information on the guidelines developed under section 3 and on the latest findings from the research program described in section 4, and for the non-Federal participants to provide information on the problems and needs of States and localities and their experience with guidelines developed under section 3.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 3 months after each conference, the Administrator shall submit a report to the Congress that summarizes the proceedings of the conference, including a summary of any recommendations or concerns raised by the non-Federal participants and how the Administrator intends to respond to them. The report shall also be made widely available to the general public.

SEC. 6. RESIDUAL EFFECTS STUDY.

(a) STUDY.—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall enter into an arrangement with the National Academy of Sciences for a study of the status and quality of research on the residual effects of methamphetamine laboratories. The study shall identify research gaps and recommend an agenda for the research program described in section 4. The study shall pay particular attention to the need for research on the impacts of methamphetamine laboratories on—

(1) the residents of buildings where such laboratories are, or were, located, with particular emphasis given to biological impacts on children; and

(2) first responders.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 3 months after the completion of the study, the Administrator shall transmit to Congress a report on how the Administrator will use the results of the study to carry out the activities described in sections 3 and 4.

SEC. 7. METHAMPHETAMINE DETECTION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

The Director of National Institute of Standards and Technology, in consultation with the Administrator, shall support a research program to develop—

(1) new methamphetamine detection technologies, with emphasis on field test kits and site detection; and

(2) appropriate standard reference materials and validation procedures for methamphetamine detection testing.

SEC. 8. SAVINGS CLAUSE.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect or limit the application of, or any obligation to comply with, any State or Federal environmental law or regulation, including the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.) and the Solid Waste Disposal Act (42 U.S.C. 6901 et seq.).

SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Environmental Protection Agency to carry out this Act $1,750,000 for each of the fiscal years 2007 and 2008.

(b) NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the National Institute of Standards and Technology to carry out this Act $750,000 for each of the fiscal years 2007 and 2008.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 365, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 365, the Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act. This is the same legislation which passed the House a year ago, but was not enacted into law. Unfortunately, the need for this legislation is just as strong today as it was then.

We have a terrible problem with methamphetamine in Tennessee and the Nation as a whole. One side effect of the methamphetamine epidemic is the chemical waste dump left behind by meth cooks. H.R. 365 focuses on cleanup needs for former meth labs, a tremendous problem facing communities across the country.

The Drug Enforcement Agency reported more than 12,500 domestic meth lab seizures in 2005 alone. These meth labs, most often found in residential settings, are contaminated, not only with methamphetamine but also with other toxic residue associated with the production of meth. These chemical residues pollute the inside of a residence and also threaten septic and water systems. The meth epidemic has not only devastated families, it has also left thousands of potentially toxic waste dumps spread across the country.

Right now, there are unsuspecting families living in homes that were once illegal meth labs. Dangerous and hidden toxic substances on these sites threaten the health of these families, with children being the most vulnerable to the devastating long-term effects of exposure.

H.R. 365 addresses the specific problem of determining the level of cleanup required to ensure that a former meth lab is safe for occupation.

I want to stress that H.R. 365 is not a Federal mandate. Rather, it requires the EPA to develop model, voluntary, health-based cleanup guidelines for use by States and localities if they desire.

In addition, H.R. 365 authorizes this to initiate a research program to develop meth detection equipment for field use.

This will help law enforcement agents detect active meth labs faster and assist in measuring the levels of contamination in former meth labs.

Finally, H.R. 365 requires a study by the National Academy of Sciences on

the long-term health impact of exposure to meth labs on children and first responders. It authorizes a total of $5 million for EPA and NIST to carry out these activities over 2 years, a bargain by any standard. The bill is endorsed by the National Association of Counties, the National Sheriffs' Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Narcotics Officers' Associations' Coalition, the National Association of Realtors, the National Multi-Housing Council and the National Apartment Association.

H.R. 365 is not the complete solution to the methamphetamine epidemic. Unfortunately, there will always be people who decide to harm themselves by using methamphetamines, dangerous drugs such as meth or manufacturing dangerous drugs such as meth.

□ 1030

H.R. 365 aims to protect innocent people whose lives are endangered by these illegal activities.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Ranking Member HALL, Representative WU, and Representative CALVERT for working with me on this legislation in the past Congress, and for sponsoring this legislation for reintroduction in the 110th Congress, as well as I want to thank Mike Quear for the good staff work that has helped bring this bill before us.

This bill is an important component in helping our local communities combat the meth problem. I would urge everyone to vote ''yes'' on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to place two letters in the RECORD.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,
Washington, DC, February 7, 2007.

Hon. JOHN D. DINGELL,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN DINGELL: Thank you for your willingness to allow floor consideration of H.R. 365, the Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007, to proceed unimpeded. As you may know, this bill addresses very important environmental research issues and is a priority for our caucus; approximately half of the House Democratic Caucus has cosponsored the legislation.

I have been cognizant of the jurisdictional limits of the Committee on Science and Technology since I began writing this legislation. Therefore, I instructed my staff to work with the Office of the Parliamentarian to assure a sole referral to the Committee on Science in the 109th Congress and to the Committee on Science and Technology in the 110th Congress. I am pleased that they were successful in both Congresses in keeping the bill within the Science and Technology Committee's black letter jurisdiction over environmental research and development and standardization of weights and measures.

I acknowledge that your committee, if it had so chosen, would have had the right to request a sequential referral of this legislation, both in the 109th Congress and in the 110th Congress. Since this did not occur, I am unable to predict whether the Speaker would have given the Committee on Energy and Commerce a formal referral. I would like to make it clear that I recognize that sequential referrals sometimes do occur at this point in the process and I further recognize that our proceeding to the Floor of the House with this legislation should not be construed as deciding this issue one way or the other.

As you requested, I will insert our two letters in the Congressional Record as part of the consideration of the bill on the House floor. I value your advice and expertise and welcome it any time you wish to share it on legislation that has been referred to the Committee on Science and Technology.

Sincerely,

BART GORDON,
Chairman.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, February 6, 2007.

Hon. BART GORDON,
Chairman, Committee on Science, House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write with regard to H.R. 365, a bill to provide for a research program for remediation of closed methamphetamine production laboratories. You introduced it on January 10, 2007, and it is scheduled for floor consideration tomorrow under the procedure for suspending the rules.

As you know, I support passage of the bill, and I do not intend to object to its consideration on the House floor. I want to make clear, however, that my support is provided with the understanding that you and I agree that the referral and consideration of the bill does not in any way serve as a jurisdictional precedent as to our two committees.

I request that you send to me a letter confirming our agreement and that, as part of the consideration of the bill on the House floor, you insert our two letters in the Congressional Record. If you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me or have your staff contact Jonathan Cordone, Deputy Chief Counsel to the Committee, at ext. 5–2927.

Sincerely,

JOHN D. DINGELL,
Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I also rise in support of H.R. 365, the Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007, that was introduced by our colleague Mr. GORDON, who is obviously the chairman of the Science and Technology Committee, along with ranking member Mr. HALL, Mr. CALVERT, and also Mr. WU.

I want to especially thank Congressman CALVERT for his steadfast leadership on this issue for such a long time. He has really been the voice on this issue in Congress for a long time, and has worked with everybody on both sides of the aisle on this legislation.

As Mr. GORDON said, he stated just a while ago, this legislation is very similar to the legislation that passed the Science Committee and the House in the 109th Congress. Mr. Speaker, it passed by a voice vote then. This one also, though, addressed changes made by the Senate in that bill that passed the Congress before.

Over the past decade this issue, the spread of methamphetamine, has been plaguing really everyplace around the country. It has been killing individuals, destroying families, devastating communities in every conceivable part of our country in areas that you would not think that this could happen, in residential areas. It is a huge, huge problem.

We also have to deal with the harmful residue that this horrible substance leaves behind in homes. Those substances cause harm to human beings and to their health for years to come. This legislation focuses on the cleanup of the former meth labs.

H.R. 365 addresses the significant contamination associated with these labs and would provide voluntary guidelines to clean up the former labs. And, again, as I said a little while ago, these meth labs are present all over the United States in residential areas, in places that one would never think this could happen.

Currently, Mr. Speaker, there are no national guidelines or regulations on how to clean up and remediate a residential meth lab for reoccupation of people. States and localities are struggling to protect the public and also the law enforcement officers and the first responders, and they are trying to find a solution that is practical also for the property owners.

Many of the ingredients used in the manufacture of this product are highly dangerous and toxic, and are believed to damage the skin, the eyes and the lungs of even people who move into a house where there used to be a lab. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to hopefully the passage of this legislation and the Senate sending it to the desk of the President for his signature.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, let me first compliment Mr. DIAZ-BALART for a good explanation of the bill and the threats that go with this.

I now would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CARNAHAN), a member of our Science Committee.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 365, the Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007. This bill will be an important tool in the methamphetamine epidemic that is sweeping across our country.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman GORDON for moving these bills so quickly through the Science Committee so that we may continue the antimeth initiatives in this new Congress. The bill charges the EPA with the development of health-based guidelines to assist State and local authorities in cleaning up former meth lab sites.

According to the 2006 National Drug Threat Survey of State and Local Law Enforcement, meth was named most often the greatest drug threat. Well, I am proud to say that my home State of Missouri has been a leader nationwide on issues such as expansion of stem cell

research and creation and implementation of the historic preservation tax credit. My State, unfortunately, has the most prevalent meth problem.

Based on data from 2005, Missouri had a reported staggering 2,252 meth lab incidents, the highest in the Nation. Jefferson County, in the heart of my district, has the highest number of meth lab incidents in Missouri, reporting 259 incidents in 2005 alone.

I have seen firsthand the negative and harmful impact of this in my district. I have met with law enforcement throughout my district and compliment them on their aggressive and innovative programs.

But the large amount of meth lab incidents in Missouri means that police, firefighters and other first-line responders are exposed to meth labs in the line of duty. While some States have already passed laws to require cleanup of meth labs, Missouri and many others have not.

This bill is vital, because we need the EPA to create these voluntary guidelines for first responders nationwide. This bill would be beneficial in determining the effects of meth exposure. In addition to creating guidelines for cleanup, the bill would also require the National Academy of Sciences to study the long-term impacts on first responders, children and property owners.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT).

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join Chairman GORDON, Mr. HALL and Mr. WU as the lead sponsors of H.R. 365, the Methamphetamine Remediation Act of 2007.

Mr. Speaker, we were very close to sending this legislation to the President for signature at the end of the last Congress, so I greatly appreciate the chairman keeping this issue at the forefront of this Congress and for steering the bill quickly through the Science and Technology Committee at the start of the 110.

Mr. Speaker, I also thank the committee's majority and minority staffs who have diligently worked together and with the Senate over the last few years to develop and revise this legislation.

As a founder and cochairman of the Congressional Caucus to Fight and Control Methamphetamine, I know the meth epidemic in our country shows no deference to district or party line. This is an issue everyone can agree is wreaking havoc on communities across our Nation.

As mentioned by my colleagues, H.R. 365 focused its efforts on procedures and standards needed to decontaminate a site where a methamphetamine lab is found so our communities can more thoroughly remediate these sites.

The creation of voluntary health-based remediation guidelines for former meth labs, created by the Environmental Protection Agency, will protect and ensure the health of our citizens and the surrounding environment.

This is a distressing issue with many, and certainly my area of Riverside, California, and, quite frankly, most of America has been all too familiar. Meth poses significant environmental threats as its production leaves, as mentioned, 5 to 6 pounds of toxic waste per pound of methamphetamine developed.

The Drug Enforcement Agency estimates that more than 68 percent of all meth labs are located in ordinary homes in rural and residential areas. State and local agencies need all of the resources and tools that we can provide them to remediate the contamination that remains after meth labs are dismantled so that innocent families are not in danger.

Although we are all aware that more needs to be done to win the fight against this devastating drug, I am convinced that H.R. 365 will be an important step and will be welcomed by our communities.

So I thank Chairman GORDON for his good work, and I encourage all of my colleagues to pass this commonsense legislation.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. CALVERT for cosponsoring this legislation last session as well as this session, and for his work as cochair of the important Methamphetamine Caucus.

I now yield 2 minutes to my friend from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN), an alumnus of the Science Committee.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it was a preeminent privilege to serve with the gentleman on the Science Committee when he was a chairperson in waiting, and I am honored to call you Mr. Chairman today.

Mr. Speaker, this is a serious problem. I beseech, I urge, I implore, I beg that my colleagues would support this legislation, H.R. 365.

365 is an appropriate number for this legislation, because this is a 365/24/7 problem. And this problem must be dealt with. This is a dangerous drug to produce. It is toxic. It is poisonous. It is deadly. It can explode. Twenty percent of all labs are discovered because of fire or explosion.

And as bad as this is, there is a sinister side to this drug. Innocent people are being harmed by virtue of this drug being in residential property that landlords are not aware of. And when these innocent persons move in with their children, the residue from this product is causing damage to the liver, damage to the lungs, may cause cancer, and it creates problems in the neurological system.

Mr. Speaker, we must act now. These labs are in all 50 States. No State is beyond the scope of this problem. Two-thirds of the residential settings are victimized with these labs. Between 2003 and 2005, the DEA pointed out that 47,000 lab incidents occurred. We must act now if the innocent are to be protected from this deadly assassin. I beg that we all support this important piece of legislation.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BOSWELL).

(Mr. BOSWELL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 365, and I associate myself with the remarks just made. Well said. It is a scourge to our country.

I want to thank Chairman GORDON and Ranking Member HALL of the Science and Technology Committee for their hard work on this important piece of legislation. I also want to thank the Meth Caucus leadership, Messrs. CANNON, CALVERT and LARSEN, who I have worked with.

Meth has wreaked havoc on our communities. Every district in our Nation has in some way felt the impact of what methamphetamine can do to families, the burden it places on local law enforcement and public health, and the toxic effect it has on the environment. In my State of Iowa alone, we had roughly 350 meth lab busts last year. Although this number is significantly down from 1,500 busts in 2004, it still presents a tremendous problem for my State.

I personally thank Marvin Van Haaften of Marion County, our recent drug czar, for his great work and leadership in this cause. In order to effectively continue our efforts to eradicate meth from our communities, we need every piece of information available. This legislation will increase the pool of information that local law enforcement and others rely upon.

Mr. Speaker, I am particularly pleased that this legislation takes the necessary steps to coordinate the development of meth detection equipment with emphasis on field detection equipment. I believe having reliable equipment in the field will not only strengthen meth-related cases, it will increase the safety of our law enforcement officers, enabling them to take necessary steps to protect themselves from the toxic environment caused by the production of methamphetamine.

Furthermore, the study commissioned by the legislation exposes the long-term effects of exposure of meth labs on children and first responders. This help is long overdue. I am proud this legislation addresses the issue.

Mr. Speaker, as a cosponsor of H.R. 365, I strongly urge my colleagues to support and pass this measure.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the former youngest attorney general in the Nation, who saw firsthand the problem with methamphetamine in Kentucky (Mr. CHANDLER).

Mr. CHANDLER. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today in support of my

good friend and chairman, the fine gentleman from Tennessee, who is on a mission of mercy.

Mr. Speaker, this issue is extremely important to all people in this country, and truly it represents an epidemic. It is a problem that does affect every single State in our country, and unfortunately it has had a disproportionate effect on my home State of Kentucky, as I know it has also in Tennessee.

Law enforcement officials, in my view, have done an incredible job in fighting the meth epidemic. According to the Office of Drug Control Policy, in June of last year, there were almost 57 percent fewer methamphetamine lab seizures in Kentucky than in the previous years; however, our State still ended the year with well over 500 meth lab incidents.

Our law enforcement officials cannot do it alone. Fighting production of meth is not the last battle we face when dealing with this terrible drug. We have to take it a step further.

□ 1045

Meth is highly volatile, and because it is often produced in homes, apartments or hotel rooms, this drug can threaten the health of whomever may occupy that space later. We must ensure that the environments of our families are free of the remnants of meth production. We must take the necessary steps so that the authorities know how to best clean former sites and develop new technologies for detecting this harmful drug. And, Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what this bill does.

I encourage my colleagues to support this fine piece of legislation and help our communities in their fight against this truly difficult epidemic.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to a former DA from New York State who, once again, has seen this epidemic firsthand and has dealt with it there, and now, as a new Member of Congress, he is dealing with it on a national basis, Mr. ARCURI.

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, as a former DA from upstate New York, I know firsthand the scourge that methamphetamine has laid upon our rural areas. And I represented a district that was both urban and rural, and I saw that methamphetamines did to the rural areas what crack cocaine did to the urban areas. And I think that it is imperative that we take these steps that we are taking to fight methamphetamines.

The difference, however, between methamphetamines and crack is that there is a derivative effect that methamphetamine has, and that is that it affects the people who live in the households of people who produce methamphetamines and law enforcement officers when they go into those areas. So it is very important that this bill is passed because it does exactly what local law enforcement needs, and that is for the Federal Government to act in a way that develops strategies for fighting methamphetamines, strategies for protecting our law enforcement officials.

So I strongly support this bill, and urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, Oregon has long had a terrible problem with methamphetamines, and a real fighter there has been Ms. HOOLEY, and I yield 2 minutes to her.

Ms. HOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Chairman, thank you so much for all of your leadership on this issue. I applaud you.

In my three decades of public service, I don't think I have ever seen a problem as pervasive or as damaging as the methamphetamine epidemic that is sweeping our country. Meth is a serious threat to public health and safety, not only because of the highly addictive nature of the drug and what it does to the user, but also the ease of production and the danger of toxic chemicals used to manufacture it.

These toxic chemicals cause significant property damage from residue contamination in the floors and the walls of the house, to fires, even deadly explosions. Chemicals used to make meth are highly flammable and toxic. It is estimated, for every pound of meth produced, we have 6 to 7 pounds of toxic waste.

And meth addicts don't care where the toxic chemicals end up, often dumping the waste down the drain or onto the ground, leaving it to contaminate the community's water supply and their soil.

In conversations with local health officials in my district, they have stressed to me the harmful health effects that living not only in the former meth houses but even next door to one can have on people, particularly children and the elderly.

Because the meth epidemic began in the west coast before moving east, Oregon has long been a leader in the fight against meth and the destruction it brings to our communities. We have been a leader in developing standards for the cleanup of meth labs, setting standards for decontamination and certifying that a property has been cleaned by a State-licensed contractor before it is sold or rented. Oregon's standards have been seen as the highest in the Nation. I would encourage the EPA to look at Oregon as they develop national standards. But we need a consistent Federal standard that is based on research and best practices.

When the cost to clean up a small, single family home can easily reach $15,000, we need to make sure that we are spending our money wisely by using the best possible remediation methods. This bill will help us do this.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 365.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. HILL).

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman GORDON for introducing this important piece of legislation, the Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act.

In my home State of Indiana and throughout our country, meth labs are a growing problem, and we all know this. In Jackson County, Indiana, where I grew up and raised my family, 64 meth labs were found there in 2003. That was the fourth highest total in the State.

These meth labs pose a serious threat to the safety and physical well-being of communities and particularly our Nation's children. This bill will provide States with specific guidelines and advice on the most effective way to decontaminate a meth lab. In addition, this bill will also help keep our local law enforcement safe during a meth lab cleanup.

I would like to thank our law enforcement agents who I have had many, many conversations with about this growing problem in America and Indiana. I want to thank them for working to dramatically lower the number of meth labs in Indiana to fewer than 1,000 for the first time since 2002. We need to continue to support our local law enforcement and give them the knowledge and tools they need to make sure our communities stay safe.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve my time.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, no Member of this Congress has done more to fight this epidemic of methamphetamine than the cochairman of the Methamphetamine Caucus, Mr. LARSEN. I thank him for his good work and yield him 1 minute.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise in full support of H.R. 365, and I want to thank Chairman GORDON, Mr. HALL and my fellow cochairs of the Meth Caucus, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. BOSWELL and Mr. CANNON for their work in drafting this bill, getting it to the floor here today.

Meth is literally a chemical cocktail. It is made from hazardous caustic substances. In the process of cooking a batch of meth, those chemicals seep into the interior of a home, and often innocent families move into these houses and apartments completely unaware that their new home was once used to cook meth. It isn't until they become ill that they know something is terribly wrong.

The DEA reported over 12,000 meth lab busts in 2005 in 49 States. There are currently no Federal standards or health-based guidelines to determine when a former lab is safe to inhabit.

This bill will create the research both to know when a home is safe to reinhabit and the health impacts of exposure to a lab. We owe it the children

found in meth labs each year to know how their health has been affected and how best to treat them. This bill does that.

As a cochair of the Meth Caucus, I am very pleased to see an important meth bill like this one brought to the floor, and I urge all of my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, our final speaker is the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) and I yield him 1½ minutes.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, as an active member of the Congressional Caucus to Fight and Control Methamphetamines, and a sponsor of this bill, I am pleased that early in this Congress we are addressing a killer that strikes fear in the hearts of parents and exacts great cost from our communities.

Over 10 million Americans age 12 and older are reported to have tried methamphetamine. In 2005, in Texas alone, some 250-plus meth labs were seized. Their dangers are not limited to the criminal manufacturers of this wretched drug or the consumers of this poison. Rather, these highly toxic labs represent a much wider threat. Even the remains of the illicit production of a meth lab can, by themselves, produce life-threatening injuries, death, and destruction of property.

Our votes today supporting the Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act are votes to protect our families, our neighborhoods, and support our law enforcement organizations as they attack the destructive impact of meth labs. We must continue to work with local, State and Federal law enforcement to ensure that we are combating this scourge at every level—that our local officials have the technology, the funding, and the support they need to detect these labs, close them down and clean them up.

I applaud the leadership of Chairman GORDON and all those who have worked on this piece of legislation. We took some action last year and there is much more action which is necessary, but this is a very important next step in our efforts against meth.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

I just want to also thank the chairman of the Science and Technology Committee, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON), for putting this on the top of his agenda, at the top of his priorities. It is an important issue, and I want to thank him for doing that.

Mr. Speaker, we have no further requests for time, and so I would yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, it certainly is nice to see a good bipartisan piece of legislation pass through this House. It is a good way to start. I appreciate the cooperation of everybody involved.

In closing, I want to say that this targeted bill can help every community where a meth lab has been discovered. I would urge a ''yes'' vote on H.R. 365.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 365, the Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007. This critically important piece of legislation helps detect and safely dispose of Methamphetamine production sites across this nation.

The issue of illegal methamphetamines is a top health concern for me and my constituents in the 12th district of California. According to the National Drug Intelligence Center's February 2005 National Drug Threats Assessment Report, the level of methamphetamine consumption in San Francisco is critically high compared with that of most other cities in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, let me start by emphasizing the extreme danger that methamphetamines pose on today's youth. Methamphetamine is a drug concocted from a variety of household items including gasoline, paint thinner, battery acid, propane, and lighter fluid among other things, cooked together to form a powder or crystal like substance that is either smoked, ingested or injected.

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy methamphetamines are a highly addictive drug that can cause progressive social and occupational deterioration and lead to episodes of violent behavior, paranoia, anxiety, confusion, and insomnia. Habitual usage can lead to physical complications such as inflammation of the heart lining, damaged blood vessels, skin abscesses, as well as variety of cardiovascular problems that ultimately can lead to death. Doctors have equated damage to the brain caused by methamphetamine use with brain damage caused by Alzheimer's disease, stroke, and epilepsy. Psychotic symptoms can sometimes persist for months or years after drug use has ceased.

According to the 2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health an estimated 10.4 million Americans aged 12 or older used methamphetamine at least once in their lifetimes. The Drug Abuse Warning Network estimates that in 2004 methamphetamine was involved in 73,400 emergency room visits.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the horrific effects that methamphetamine has on the human body the caustic nature of the production of the drug has enormously detrimental effects on the environment. This horrendous drug is produced in what is often referred to as ''Meth Labs.'' These laboratories can exist virtually anywhere, in fact methamphetamine laboratories have been found in all 50 states. They are overwhelmingly hidden amongst residential communities and pose a detrimental risk to millions of Americans. It is estimated that methamphetamine production creates approximately six pounds of waste for every one pound of product. If not properly cleaned, this highly volatile waste product leaves a toxic residue that can threaten the health of whoever may come in contact with it.

According to the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) there were more then 47,000 reported Meth Lab incidents between the years 2003 and 2005. Nearly one in five of those were fires or explosions caused by the highly toxic and potentially flammable ingredients used to create the drug.

Even after these Meth Labs are discovered by authorities and shut down, and the criminals operating the labs are long incarcerated, the effects of their morally reprehensible action can continue to adversely affect the health and well-being of the innocent citizens living and working nearby.

While some states including my home State of California have taken the initiative to pass laws that outline methamphetamine laboratory cleanup procedures, there are currently no federal standards for cleaning up these potentially toxic sites. Mr. Speaker, the time is long overdue for us to take action to seek out and shut down these labs in a safe and healthy way. H.R. 365, The Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007 will do just that by creating a road map to assure the safety of our children and first responders.

The bill authorizes $1.75 million in funding for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to research best practices programs for detection and proper sanitation of methamphetamine labs. It will also specifically authorize $750,000 for the National Institute of Standards and Technology in collaboration with the EPA to research and develop methamphetamine detection equipment. Thirdly, the bill will direct the EPA to work with the National Academy of Sciences to study the long term health effects of methamphetamine laboratory exposure to children and first responders.

Mr. Speaker, the war against meth is being waged on many fronts. This bill is a critical step to ensuring that law enforcement agencies and first responders are provided with the best information and ability to mitigate the numerous detrimental effects caused by methamphetamine production. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation in an effort to rid our communities of this epidemic.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 365, the Methamphetamine Research Remediation Act. Methamphetamines represent a tremendous growing threat to the fabric of our society. Last year, I held more than 40 town hall meetings across Southern New Mexico, listening to law enforcement, health officials, recovering addicts, and other experts. Time and time again I heard horror stories about whole families in my district destroyed by methamphetamines. It is our duty as members of the United States Congress to protect America from all enemies foreign and domestic. Mr. Speaker, methamphetamines are one the greatest domestic threats that our nation faces. We must confront its production, its trafficking, its abuse, and its effect on the land itself.

Meth is a problem concentrated in the West and Southwest, but be aware that this great evil is moving across America, and soon no one will be able to say it is not their problem. As meth spreads across our nation it leaves a trail of destroyed lives, families, homes, communities, property and public lands in its wake. H.R. 365 the Methamphetamine Research Remediation Act of 2007 will set needed standards for the clean-up of property and public lands destroyed by methamphetamines. Unlike other drugs, the cooking of methamphetamines is hazardous to everything that it touches and can render houses and property uninhabitable. H.R. 365 will address the environmental impact of methamphetamines, and how to recover our properties and lands.

In the Second District of New Mexico half-million dollar homes have been left uninhabitable, and state parks have become unusable. This destruction occurs because of methamphetamine cooking and the dumping of meth related chemicals. I fear that unsuspecting New Mexicans will encounter these environmental hazards and endanger their lives. H.R. 365 The Methamphetamines Research Remediation Act of 2007, will provide communities across America with the proper information and procedures on how to clean up meth labs and reclaim the land they have poisoned.

This bill is the first in many steps we should take to track and fight Meth in our communities. I have introduced H.R. 304, the CLEAN TOWN Act to help in our battle against meth. As we talk about this bill, I hope my colleagues will examine my legislation that has tremendous promise to help change the way we fight drugs and drug dealers. I urge all my colleagues to join me in fighting Meth and help us save America's families.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, as Congress debates measures to clean up meth labs, I believe it is important to offer a physician's perspective to help some people understand why this drug is so dangerous. Also called crank, blue acid, speed, and ice, meth is a popular drug because it is cheap, easy to manufacture, and acts as a powerful stimulant. An investment of just a few hundred dollars in over-the-counter medications and chemicals can produce thousands of dollars worth of methamphetamine, which can be cooked in something as small as a suitcase.

The average meth ''cook'' annually teaches an average of ten people how to make the drug. Typical ingredients include over-the-counter cold and asthma medications containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine, in addition to red phosphorous, hydrochloric acid, drain cleaner, battery acid, lye, lantern fuel, and antifreeze.

In fact, users of this drug are often not aware that they are potentially ingesting toxic chemicals. The toxic fumes emitted during manufacturing are highly flammable, even explosive, and can suffocate plants, animals, and even people. For my colleagues concerned about the environment, each pound of meth produced leaves behind five or six pounds of toxic waste. Meth ''cooks'' often pour leftover chemicals and byproduct sludge down drains in nearby plumbing, storm drains, or directly onto the ground, creating long-term hazards: the chemical waste can remain in our soil and groundwater for years. The average cost to clean up a methamphetamine laboratory ranges between $2,000 and $3,000. However, this does not include the ancillary costs of cleaning up a former laboratory.

In February 2005, the Atlanta Police, U.S. Drug Enforcement, the MCS drug taskforce, and other law enforcement agencies discovered Georgia's first ''super lab'' at a house in Smyrna, Georgia, which is in the Congressional District I represent. With 39 pounds of meth-crystal and 250 gallons of the drug in liquid form, one mistake could have destroyed an entire neighborhood due to the explosive volatility of the materials.

No longer just the addictive scourge of 1970's biker gangs, meth is a very real problem that affects our children and neighbors in very real ways. The drug works directly on the brain and spinal cord by interacting with neurotransmitters—chemical substances produced in nerve cells—which communicate throughout the body. The foremost neurotransmitter affected by methamphetamine is dopamine, which is involved with our natural reward system. This is known as the automatic nervous system. For example, a pat on the back for a job well done, getting enjoyment from family and social interactions, and the feeling that our lives are meaningful, all rely on dopamine transmission.

With properties that target the nervous system, it should be no surprise that side affects of meth include extreme paranoia, violent behavior, rapid weight loss, tooth loss, hallucinations, unexplained voices, pale complexion, speech impediments, Parkinson's disease-like symptoms, depression, insomnia, suicide contemplation, and schizophrenia. It is important to mention these various symptoms and health problems because without proper clean-up unseen chemicals can spread from one home through entire neighborhoods, creating an unknown danger to current and future owners.

Considering the numerous dangers caused by methamphetamines, I believe it is more important than ever to make sure our law enforcement community has the laws, equipment, and training necessary to protect our communities from this drug. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the House of Representatives for the passage of today's Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007, which includes substantive legislation that will establish voluntary guidelines to assist state and local governments in the development and implementation of policies for the clean-up of former methamphetamine laboratories.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 365, the Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act to initiate standards for methamphetamine (meth) cleanup in our neighborhoods. As a cosponsor of H.R. 365, I believe this legislation is necessary in order to protect unsuspecting families from the dangers of illegal meth labs and provide the necessary tools for law enforcement to detect labs throughout our communities.

As a member of the Congressional Caucus to Fight and Control Methamphetamine and a former law enforcement official, I am actively working with my colleagues to decrease methamphetamine use. In my home state of Illinois, there were 1,189 methamphetamine laboratory seizures reported in 2005, many in my district in Southern Illinois. In order to combat meth, I believe we need a comprehensive plan to deal with the environmental, health, and law enforcement challenges facing our communities because of the growing use of this dangerous drug.

Mr. Speaker, the national guidelines this bill creates will help protect our communities by ensuring that dangerous meth labs are cleaned properly and efficiently. It is my continued hope that by raising national awareness about meth and providing increased federal resources to combat the drug problem, we can make significant progress to overcome methamphetamine use. This legislation is a critical step we can take toward this goal and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 365.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 365.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING THE WORK AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MR. BRITT ''MAX'' MAYFIELD, DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER'S TROPICAL PREDICTION CENTER UPON HIS RETIREMENT

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 72) recognizing the work and accomplishments of Mr. Britt ''Max'' Mayfield, Director of the National Hurricane Center's Tropical Prediction Center upon his retirement.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 72

Whereas Mr. Britt ''Max'' Mayfield is known as the ''Walter Cronkite of Weather'', trustworthy, calming, and always giving the facts straight;

Whereas Mr. Mayfield is a Fellow of the American Meteorological Society and a nationally and internationally recognized expert on hurricanes, and has presented papers at national and international scientific meetings, lectured in training sessions sponsored by the United Nations World Meteorological Organization, and provided numerous interviews to electronic and print media worldwide;

Whereas in 2006, Mr. Mayfield received the Government Communicator of the Year Award from the National Association of Government Communicators, a national not-for-profit professional network of government employees who disseminate information within and outside the government, as well as the prestigious Neil Frank Award from the National Hurricane Conference;

Whereas in 2005, Mr. Mayfield received a Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Service from President George W. Bush and was named ABC Television Network's ''Person of the Week'' after Hurricane Katrina;

Whereas in 2004, the Federal Coordinator for Meteorological Services and Supporting Research presented the Richard Hagemeyer Award to Mr. Mayfield at the Interdepartmental Hurricane Conference for his contributions to the hurricane warning program of the United States;

Whereas also in 2004, the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Suncoast Chapter recognized Mr. Mayfield with the Governor's Award, more commonly known as an ''Emmy'', for extraordinary contributions to television by an individual not otherwise eligible for an Emmy;

Whereas in 2000, Mr. Mayfield received an Outstanding Achievement Award at the National Hurricane Conference and in 1996 the American Meteorological Society honored him with the Francis W. Reichelderfer Award for exemplary performance as coordinator of the National Hurricane Center's

hurricane preparedness training for emergency preparedness officials and the general public;

Whereas Mr. Mayfield and his colleagues have been recognized by the Department of Commerce with Gold Medals for work during Hurricane Andrew in 1992 and Hurricane Isabel in 2003, and a Silver Medal during Hurricane Gilbert in 1988;

Whereas Mr. Mayfield was also awarded a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Bronze Medal for creating a public-private partnership to support the disaster preparedness of the United States; and

Whereas Mr. Mayfield is the current Chairman of the World Meteorological Organization Regional Association-IV, which supports 26 members from Atlantic and eastern Pacific countries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) honors Mr. Britt ''Max'' Mayfield's commitment to improving the accuracy of hurricane forecasting as Director of the National Hurricane Center's Tropical Prediction Center;

(2) thanks Mr. Mayfield for his service, which has undoubtedly helped to save countless lives and the property of citizens around the world;

(3) commends Mr. Mayfield's dedication to expanding educational opportunities for State and local emergency management officials;

(4) acknowledges the critical role that Mr. Mayfield has played in forecast and service improvements over his 34-year career;

(5) recognizes the unwavering support of Mr. Mayfield's family in supporting his career;

(6) wishes Mr. Mayfield continued success in his future endeavors; and

(7) recognizes the support and work of the staff of the National Hurricane Center's Tropical Prediction Center during Mr. Mayfield's tenure as Director of the Center.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Res. 72, the resolution now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAHONEY) be allowed to control the time on our side. Mr. MAHONEY has taken the lead on this bill, and I appreciate him doing so.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution honoring Max Mayfield, former director of NOAA's National Hurricane Center.

In less than 2 years, my home State of Florida suffered damage from four tropical storms and eight hurricanes. Likewise, on August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina made landfall near New Orleans, devastating the gulf coast region of the United States. In the days that followed, we learned that Katrina had left nearly 80 percent of the Crescent City under water, caused an immeasurable amount of damage, displaced thousands of families and resulted in the deaths of nearly 1,500 people.

While hurricanes cannot be prevented, accurate storm forecasting has helped millions of people prepare for them and prepare for evacuation. The individual responsible for providing the public with these accurate and easy-to-understand forecasts was Mr. Mayfield, who retired from the National Hurricane Center on January 3 of this year.

Born in Oklahoma, Mr. Mayfield began his forecasting career with the Air Force in 1970 after graduating from the University of Oklahoma with a degree in mathematics. In 1972, he received his master's degree in meteorology from Florida State University.

Mr. Mayfield joined the National Weather Service as a satellite meteorologist in Miami. During his 34-year career at the center, Mr. Mayfield served as a senior forecaster, deputy director and then director.

Mr. Mayfield has received numerous awards for his work in the field of meteorology. In 1996, the American Meteorological Society presented him with the Francis W. Reichelderfer Award for exemplary performance as coordinator of the National Hurricane Center's hurricane preparedness training for emergency preparedness officials and the general public.

He has also received an Outstanding Achievement Award at the 2000 National Hurricane Conference for developing and expanding educational opportunities for the State and local emergency management officials.

In addition, the U.S. Department of Commerce has recognized Mr. Mayfield with gold medals for his work during hurricanes Andrew, Isabel, and a silver medal during Hurricane Gilbert.

□ 1100

Maybe more important than the many awards, however, are the countless lives that have been saved by the work of Mr. Mayfield and his team at the National Hurricane Center. The Nation is truly grateful to Mr. Mayfield; his wife, Linda; for a lifetime of love and dedication to the National Hurricane Center, and the people in this great country are thankful for his service.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise also in support of House Resolution 72, recognizing the incredible work and the accomplishments of Mr. Max Mayfield, the director of the National Hurricane Center, the Tropical Protection Center, again, of the National Hurricane Center, which is located in Miami, Florida. He has recently retired. I want to also commend my colleague from Florida (Mr. MAHONEY) for introducing this timely and very good resolution.

As a Floridian, I am keenly aware, Mr. Speaker, of the wrath that Mother Nature can throw our way when she is so inclined to do so, especially when it comes to hurricanes. We all recall that, for example, in a time of just 2 years, 2 short years, Florida had eight hurricanes that actually hit and made landfall on the State of Florida.

Mr. Mayfield has worked and strived to improve the warning lead times, to increase the understanding of the track of where the hurricanes are going, and also particularly the intensity of those hurricanes.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that always struck me was that, as these storms were coming our way, coming towards the United States, Director Mayfield would actually personally get on the phone. This was not something that was required by his job. He would pick up the phone and call Governors and call mayors and tell them, Hey, this is a real storm. It is coming your way. Get ready. I don't see that you are ready enough. Get ready. And he would make sure that those governments were prepared and evacuating the people that they needed to evacuate to make sure that the people were safe.

He and his staff have helped protect the lives and the property of millions of people in our country and even of other countries, countries throughout the Caribbean.

He is the epitome of a dedicated public servant, Mr. Speaker. He has received many awards, including in 2005 he received the Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Service from President George W. Bush.

After more than 30 years of distinguished service to weather forecasting and hurricane forecasting, Mr. Max Mayfield retired in January of 2007. I know that the residents of south Florida and of the entire country and all the Caribbean will miss his calm, clear voice when those hurricanes are threatening our shores. His retirement marks the end of an exceptional career, and his successors at the National Hurricane Center will clearly have very large shoes to fill as Max and his wife Linda now prepare to spend a little bit of time, hopefully a lot of time, with their families, because, again, Max has been on call 24/7, and we are used to seeing him on TV, and one always wondered does that man ever sleep? The answer is, Mr. Speaker, that when there was a storm coming, no, he and his staff did not sleep. Well, now he is going to be spend a little more time with his wife Linda and his family.

I know that my colleagues will join this Congress in wishing both him and his wife and his family all the best. We know they will enjoy their time together.

But on a personal note I just want to say, Max, thank you for a life well

lived. Thank you for a job well done. Millions of people are grateful for your sacrifice, for your hard work. We are indebted to you. Thank you, my friend. Enjoy your retirement. But we will miss you.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I will now yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART).

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have got some very important visitors in my office at this time, but I mentioned to them, and I know they understand, that I wanted to come down to speak a minute on someone who has long been south Florida's treasure and really became the national treasure, Max Mayfield, who has saved countless lives.

And with his demeanor and professionalism even in those extraordinarily tense moments, Mr. Speaker, when storms are approaching or have arrived, Max was that great sea of tranquility that helped our communities wherever those storms were approaching through those tense moments. And he is really an extraordinary human being with a wonderful team. So my heart goes out to that team that he helped build and is still there doing great work.

And to Max, as he begins this new chapter in his life, Godspeed, with our profound gratitude for having helped so many for so many years with your very important work, Max Mayfield.

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would now like to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS).

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Britt ''Max'' Mayfield on an exemplary career of service to his fellow citizens, and to wish him well in his much-deserved retirement.

In his 34 years of service to the Nation, Max Mayfield has personified the dedication and excellence that make the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service one of the crown jewels of the Federal Government.

Since he began forecasting weather for the Air Force in 1970 and over more than three decades with the National Weather Service, Max has helped push forward the science of forecasting to help make our Nation a safer place. But just making better forecasts has never been enough for Max, because a forecast does no good if no one hears it. Mr. Mayfield has also dedicated his career to making sure that his always-improving forecasts got out quickly, as quickly as possible, to the people who need them. He understands not only the science of forecasting hurricanes, but the science of communication.

There is no doubt in my mind that Max Mayfield's exemplary efforts and those of his hardworking staff at the National Hurricane Center's Tropical Prediction Center have helped communities prepare for impending disasters and have saved lives in communities around the country and around the world.

I am not alone in my esteem for Mr. Mayfield. The American Meteorology Society, the National Association of Government Communicators, ABC Television, the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, the National Hurricane Conference, the Department of Commerce, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and President George W. Bush have all presented Max with formal awards for his outstanding achievements and service to his craft and to society. And those are just the formal awards. They do not include the many personal ''thank yous'' that he has received from the very people he has spent his life serving, and from the people whose lives he has helped save.

My colleagues, in Congress we think we are busy, and, indeed, we are. But I understand that in the thick of storm season, Mr. Mayfield sometimes did more than 100 interviews in 1 day. Now, that is busy. I am certain he is looking forward to retirement.

I am pleased to express my deepest gratitude to Max Mayfield and to his endlessly supportive family for sharing him with us for this time.

Max, God bless you and the work you have done. I wish you calm weather and smooth sailing in your retirement.

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

We do a lot of important work in Congress, and we pass a lot of good resolutions for good people, but rarely can you actually say that here is a person who has saved thousands upon thousands upon thousands of lives in his work. He is truly a fine, wonderful public servant, and it is wonderful to be able to have the opportunity to now support and vote on this fine resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman GORDON and his staff and my colleagues who have helped me put together this resolution and to honor Mr. Mayfield.

I would just like to conclude by saying that we wish Mr. Mayfield a wonderful retirement with his wife Linda and their three kids. And, again, I would like to congratulate him for his exemplary service and his distinguished career at the National Weather Service and National Hurricane Center. The Nation is going to miss him.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAHONEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 72.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN VOLLEYBALL TEAM FOR WINNING NCAA DIVISION I WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 99) commending the University of Nebraska-Lincoln volleyball team for winning the NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 99

Whereas the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Husker volleyball team won the 2006 NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball National Championship at the Qwest Center in Omaha, Nebraska, on December 16, 2006;

Whereas Husker junior Sarah Pavan was chosen as the Nation's top collegiate female volleyball player, winning the 2006-07 Honda Sports Award for volleyball;

Whereas Pavan was named the ESPN the Magazine Academic All-American of the Year, becoming Nebraska's 234th Academic All-American and the program's 29th Academic All-American in volleyball, totals that lead the Nation;

Whereas the Huskers completed the 2006 season with a record of 33–1;

Whereas Husker head coach John Cook has lead the team to 2 national championships;

Whereas the Husker volleyball team made its sixth appearance in the NCAA finals;

Whereas the 2006 Huskers are only the third team in the history of the NCAA to lead the American Volleyball Coaches Association poll for an entire season;

Whereas the entire Husker volleyball team should be commended for its determination, work ethic, attitude, and heart;

Whereas the University of Nebraska is building an impressive legacy of excellence in its volleyball program; and

Whereas the University of Nebraska volleyball players have brought great honor to themselves, their families, their university, and the State of Nebraska: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Husker volleyball team for winning the 2006 NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball National Championship; and

(2) recognizes the achievements of the players, coaches, students, and staff whose hard work and dedication made the Championship possible.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members may have 5 legislative days to insert material relevant to House Resolution 99 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for winning the NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship.

On December 16, 2006, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Huskers volleyball team won the 2006 NCAA Division I Championship by defeating the Stanford University Cardinals at the Qwest Center in Omaha, Nebraska.

I want to extend my congratulations to head coach John Cook, head assistant coach Lee Meas, assistant coach Charlene Johnson-Tagaloa, and the director of volleyball operations Lindsay Wischmeier. Also supporting the team was athletic director Steve Pederson and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln chancellor Harvey Perlman.

The Huskers, Mr. Speaker, had an exceptional record of 33–1 and had four All-Americans on their team. Junior Sarah Pavan also won the 2006–2007 Honda Sports Award. This award is given to the Nation's top collegiate female volleyball player. Pavan was also named the ESPN Magazine Academic All-American of the Year.

And I also want to extend my congratulations to the Stanford University Cardinals. The Cardinals had a record of 30–4. The Cardinals were the PAC–10 Conference champions and were honored by four women receiving All-American honors.

□ 1115

Student athletes, as we know, balance a rigorous school workload with the many practices and games in which they compete.

So I am proud of all the student athletes for their dedication to their school work and their sport. The NCAA promotes its 380,000 student athletes to work with numerous service organizations, including the American Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity and the American Cancer Society.

Winning the national championship and finishing the season with a 33–1 record has brought positive national recognition and attention to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and I know that the fans of the university will cherish this moment as they look forward to the 2007 season.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I congratulate the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for their success.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in support of House Resolution 99. This resolution honors the top-ranked University of Nebraska women's volleyball team for their victory over the second-ranked Stanford University Cardinals. The Huskers rallied to defeat Stanford 3–1 for their third NCAA Division I women's volleyball championship in front of a record crowd of 17,209 fans at the Quest Center in Omaha.

Led by four All-Americans, including national player of the year Sarah Pavan, the Huskers won the school's ninth Big 12 title in 11 years with a 19–1 Big 12 record, and a 33–1 overall record. This is the second national title that the team has won with head coach John Cook leading the team.

I extend my congratulations to Coach John Cook, all of the hard-working players, the fans and the University of Nebraska. I am happy to join my good friends and colleagues, Representatives SMITH, FORTENBERRY, and TERRY, in honoring this exceptional team and all of its accomplishments, and wish all involved success in the future.

My only regret, since I enjoy playing volleyball myself, is that I never had the opportunity to watch them play in person. But it would have been a real pleasure, had I been able to.

I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Mr. SMITH, the sponsor of this resolution, I apologize on his behalf that he is unable to be here, but he dearly wanted to be here to speak on this resolution. In his absence, I am next pleased to yield 3 minutes to another gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY).

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan for his time and his commendations of the University of Nebraska volleyball team.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to also thank Representative ADRIAN SMITH for originally sponsoring this resolution congratulating all the members of the volleyball team. I am pleased to cosponsor this resolution as well to bring attention to the national successes of this team out of Lincoln.

Just a month ago, as it was mentioned, the team won the 2006 NCAA Division I women's volleyball championship. I am very proud of the Husker team and particularly proud to say that this team represents all of Nebraska.

Mr. Speaker, success isn't something that just happens. It takes forethought, hard work, persistence and dedication, and the members of the Huskers women's volleyball team certainly earned it.

Every member of the team should be commended for her dedication, as well as Head Coach John Cook, who led the team with skill and discipline. Under Coach Cook's leadership, the team finished the season with an astounding record of 33–1. Not only did Coach Cook lead this team to a national championship, but this is his third time in that leadership seat.

The University of Nebraska women's volleyball team is a shining example of the best that Nebraska has to offer. Again, I would like to congratulate the team.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank the previous speaker for commending me for my support of Nebraska athletes. That is certainly true, except for one time when I was invited to speak to a conference at the University of Nebraska. At this conference, I was speaking on teaching better mathematics in elementary schools. Then I saw a huge billboard as I was driving into Lincoln to give the speech, and I saw how badly they needed my speech on mathematics, because there was a big billboard that announced ''Welcome to the University of Nebraska. Home of the number one football team in America.'' Well, that year, of course, Michigan was the number one team, but Nebraska refused to concede that.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to another gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY).

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, yes, we enjoy, ranking member, former chairman, Michigan Stater, having that 1997 national championship trophy prominently displayed when you walk into the athletic facilities. It is too bad that we weren't able to leave that game on the field back then, but I am sure that Nebraska would have won by 30 or 40 points.

Now, I have to defend the football team, Mr. Speaker, when challenged like that.

But I am so proud of our women's volleyball team and to be a cosponsor with ADRIAN SMITH of this resolution. What an incredible achievement. Our volleyball team started the season ranked number one with high expectations and ended the season number one in a hard-fought duel with Stanford, the number two rated team in the Nation. And some even had the audacity to think that Stanford was a better team. But, boy, it was the match of a century, two titans battling it out. And the University of Nebraska in the fifth game prevailed for the national championship.

Not only are we proud of the University of Nebraska women's volleyball team for their play on the court but also those in attendance. My hometown of Omaha hosted the national championship tournament, and we now hold the record for attendance for a women's volleyball match in America; 17,200 fans attended each session. I think that speaks well of the sports enthusiasm in Nebraska.

I also want to acknowledge one of the players on that team, Sarah Pavan, a junior, who has become the second player in NCAA history to be named the American Volleyball Coaches Association Player of the Year and Academic All-American of the year from ESPN Magazine. That is truly a student athlete.

I urge all of my colleagues to join the Nebraska delegation today in recognizing the outstanding play of our volleyball team, the coaching and the support that this volleyball team has from its fans in Nebraska.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, so I am pleased to yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I am just going to close on this resolution and thank my colleagues for bringing it to the floor. This is House Resolution 99, which commends the University of Nebraska-Lincoln volleyball team for winning the NCAA Division I women's volleyball championship. It has been fun for me to listen to my colleagues as they commend this spectacular team. And even though I am a Californian, I still want to let them know that this is a wonderful accomplishment, and particularly, I applaud the women athletes that were part of this contest.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 99, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING THE AFRICAN AMERICAN SPIRITUAL AS A NATIONAL TREASURE

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 120) recognizing the African American spiritual as a national treasure.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 120

Whereas beginning in 1619, when slavery was introduced into the European colonies, enslaved Africans remained in bondage until 1865, when the United States ratified the 13th amendment to the Constitution;

Whereas during that period of the history of the United States, the first expression of that unique American music was created by enslaved African Americans who—

(1) used their knowledge of the English language and the Christian religious faith, as it had been taught to them in the New World; and

(2) stealthily wove within the music their experience of coping with human servitude and their strong desire to be free;

Whereas, as a method of survival, enslaved African Americans who were forbidden to speak their native languages, play musical instruments they had used in Africa, or practice their traditional religious beliefs, relied on their strong African oral tradition of songs, stories, proverbs, and historical accounts to create this original music, now known as spirituals;

Whereas Calvin Earl, a noted performer and educator on African American spirituals, remarked that the Christian lyrics became a metaphor for freedom from slavery, a secret way for slaves to ''communicate with each other, teach their children, record their history, and heal their pain'';

Whereas the New Jersey Historical Commission found that ''some of those daring and artful runaway slaves who entered New Jersey by way of the Underground Railroad no doubt sang the words of old Negro spirituals like 'Steal Away' before embarking on their perilous journey north'';

Whereas African American spirituals spread all over the United States, and the songs we know of today may only represent a small portion of the total number of spirituals that once existed;

Whereas Frederick Douglass, a fugitive slave who would become one of the leading abolitionists of the United States, remarked that the spirituals ''told a tale of woe which was then altogether beyond my feeble comprehension; they were tones loud, long, and deep; they breathed the prayer and complaint of souls boiling over with the bitterest anguish. Every tone was a testimony against slavery and a prayer to God for deliverance from chains. . . .''; and

Whereas the American Folklife Preservation Act (Public Law 94–201; 20 U.S.C. 2101 note) finds that ''the diversity inherent in American folklife has contributed greatly to the cultural richness of the nation and has fostered a sense of individuality and identity among the American people'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes that African American spirituals are a poignant and powerful genre of music that have become one of the most significant segments of American music in existence;

(2) expresses the deepest gratitude, recognition, and honor to the former enslaved Africans in the United States for their gifts to our Nation, including their original music and oral history; and

(3) requests that the President issue a proclamation that reflects on the important contribution of African American spirituals to American history, and naming the African American spiritual a national treasure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may insert material relevant to H. Res. 120 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the African American spiritual as a national treasure. From 1619 to 1865, enslaved African Americans created their own unique form of expression known today as spirituals. As African Americans were not allowed to speak their native languages or play African musical instruments, spirituals were incorporated into the English language and the Christian religious faith. These spirituals were the strong African oral tradition of songs, stories, proverbs and historical accounts. Spirituals have been a part of American culture from times of slavery to today, and their legacy is clear in today's gospel music.

Spirituals were also sung during the civil rights movement in the 1960s. Songs that we are familiar with, such as ''We Shall Overcome'' and ''Marching 'Round Selma,'' were heard in the South to unite African Americans in the struggle for civil rights.

Some of the more commonly known songs, including ''Swing Low Sweet Chariot'' and ''The Gospel Train,'' used language which described religious activities but had a second meaning relating to the Underground Railroad.

Calvin Earl, a noted performer and educator of African American spirituals, stated that the lyrics used in spirituals became a metaphor for freedom from slavery, and they were a secret way for slaves to communicate with each other, teach their young, record their history and heal their pain.

Frederick Douglass, a fugitive slave who became one of the United States' leading abolitionists, stated that spirituals ''told a tale of woe which was then altogether beyond my feeble comprehension'' and that ''every tone was a testimony against slavery and a prayer to God for deliverance from chains.''

This resolution is endorsed by the NAACP and the National Council of Negro Women, and I want to add my voice to theirs in support of helping to preserve a treasured, a really treasured piece of American history.

I urge my colleagues to resoundingly pass this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 120, recognizing African American spirituals as a national treasure.

Simply defined, spirituals are the songs created and first sung by African Americans during the times of slavery. These songs should be celebrated as a part of the American culture today, for they are the source from which gospel, jazz and blues evolved. The lyrics of these songs are tightly linked with the lives of their authors and were inspired by the message of Jesus Christ and the Gospel of the Bible.

□ 1130

The most pervasive message conveyed by spirituals is that of an

enslaved people yearning to be set free. The slaves believed they understood better than anyone what freedom truly meant in both a spiritual and a physical sense, and I believe they were correct in believing that.

The Old Testament Scriptures that are referenced in their songs spoke of deliverance in this world, and they believed God would deliver them from bondage just as he had delivered the people of Israel.

These spirituals are different from hymns and psalms, because their creators used them as a way of sharing the hard condition of being a slave while also singing about their love and faith in God. They used the songs to teach their young, to record their history, and to heal their pain. These songs awakened possibilities in their lives and inspired so many to dream.

Because the slaves were forbidden to learn how to read and write, they had to find ways to communicate secretly. The spirituals were a medium for several layers of communication and meaning.

Throughout the 20th century the spirituals experienced a renaissance as African Americans documented their struggles for equality. During the 1950s and 1960s, before and during rallies for civil rights, demonstrators often sang spirituals such as, ''We Shall Overcome,'' and, believe it or not, ''This Little Light of Mine,'' one of my favorite songs in my childhood.

The lyrics of these new spirituals dealt with improvement and with a new kind of freedom. Many of them were inspired by social problems such as segregation, drug and alcohol abuse, and a basic lack of human equality. Today the congregation of my church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and so many other churches in our community and across the country, continues to sing these spirituals. They inspire in us the human struggle for freedom and remind us of the lessons of history.

I am honored to stand here today in support of House Resolution 120 to express the deepest gratitude and recognition to the former enslaved African Americans for their gifts to our Nation, including their spiritual music and oral history. I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of legislation that would recognize the African American spiritual as a national treasure, and would like to say thank you to my colleague from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) with whom I introduced this legislation in the Congress, as well as my colleagues on the floor this morning, the gentlewoman from California and the gentleman from Michigan, and also the chairman, Mr. MILLER, for bringing the bill to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, even though they sprang from one of the darkest periods of our Nation's history, a period of turmoil that Americans still live with to this day, as we all know, African American spirituals have inspired many of America's most remarkable and enduring musical accomplishments. Name the modern music form, and it owes a debt to the spiritual. Jazz, blues, rock and roll, gospel all trace their origins to this particular musical heritage. Today people around the world play, listen to, and find the deepest of inspiration in the music of Africans who lived their lives in slavery.

In so many ways this is a uniquely American music, one born of our uniquely American experience, reminding us who we are, where we come from, and all that we are capable of as a society and as a Nation.

The African American spiritual is as poignant and powerful a genre of music as any in history. And throughout history the African American spiritual has been kept alive through that oral tradition. For certain, this was so before the abolition of slavery in 1865 when these songs provided comfort and an outlet for spiritual yearning for so many, but also in the years immediately following abolition when few wished to sing African American spirituals, so acute was the pain and anguish they called to mind.

Thankfully there were some who recognized in the power of these songs the collective experiences from which they came and their intrinsic cultural and musical value. And by the late 19th and early 20th century, the spiritual was kept alive by churches and singing groups like the Fisk Jubilee Singers, who traveled and performed these remarkable pieces in the face of hostility and intolerance. Indeed, in 1872, the Jubilee Singers sang at the World Peace Festival in Boston and were invited to perform at the White House that year by no less than President Grant himself.

Today African American spirituals are not only performed in spirituals and concert halls across the world, they are also studied by sociologists and musicologists across the country. The University of Denver's Spirituals Project puts it aptly in its mission statement: ''Spirituals uplift in times of crisis, heal, comfort, inspire, and instill hopes and dreams, thereby transforming individuals, communities, and whole societies.''

And in much the same spirit of the Fisk Jubilee Singers, I want to say thank you to a good friend, a musicologist himself, for bringing to my attention the need for the Congress to honor this vital piece of our national heritage, Calvin Earl. As the youngest of nine children in North Carolina, Calvin taught himself the guitar at age 7, forming his first rhythm and blues group while serving in the Army before spending several decades performing jazz and big band music. Since 1989, Calvin has dedicated himself to preserving and sharing spirituals with a new generation of Americans. Traveling the country, he builds on the traditional words and melodies to illuminate the history and complexity of this unique art form.

It was from Calvin that I learned about this remarkable tradition, how spirituals enabled slaves to teach their children, record their history, and surreptitiously communicate with one another. Indeed, songs such as ''Wade in the Water,'' ''The Gospel Train,'' and ''Swing Low, Sweet Chariot'' all reference the Underground Railroad. Another, ''Follow the Drinking Gourd,'' even contained a coded map to the Underground Railroad. As these songs were spontaneous, their authors are not known, though they were the inspiration for the writers of the first gospel songs, from Charles Albert Tindley to Harry Thackert Burleigh to John Rosamond Johnson.

Mr. Speaker, no less than Frederick Douglass remarked that such spirituals ''told a tale of woe which was then altogether beyond my feeble comprehension. They were tones loud, long, and deep. They breathed the prayer and complaint of souls boiling over with the bitterest anguish. Every tone was a testimony against slavery and a prayer to God for deliverance from chains.''

Indeed, in so many ways the African American spiritual embodies who we are as Americans. The impact it has made on the cultural heritage of America, and indeed every American, is incalculable. I thank all who have allowed us to bring this resolution for consideration today. I urge my colleagues to support honoring this national treasure and this timeless reminder of the enduring human spirit.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SIRES) for 2 minutes.

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 120, which recognizes the African American spiritual as a national treasure. The slave Africans who came to the European colonies were forbidden to speak their native languages, use African musical instruments, or practice their spiritual beliefs. To keep their African traditions alive through songs and stories, the slaves created a new kind of music. Today these are known as spirituals.

Mr. Calvin Earl, my constituent from Jersey City, has devoted his entire life to educating people about the history and the importance of African American spirituals. He started a program called The Gifts from My Ancestors. Through songs, dances, and storytelling, this program has helped people experience the story of enslaved African Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Mr. Earl for his work, and I believe it is time to recognize the importance of these spirituals and preserve them for future generations by voting in favor of H. Res. 120.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) for 2 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from California for yielding. I rise in strong support of H. Res. 120, recognizing the African American spiritual as a national treasure.

Growing up in the rural South in the 1950s, we grew up on what was then called the Negro spiritual, and many of these songs, of course, had great meaning, especially the lyrics. I remember, ''Follow the Old Man'' that is ''Coming to Carry Me to Freedom'' if you ''Follow the Drinking Gourd.'' Well, gourds supposedly grew northward, and if you followed the direction of the gourd, you would get out of the slave South back during slavery and the abolitionist period, and you would be headed north. And so not only did these songs sound good, not only were they spiritually uplifting as one that I heard on this past Sunday at the Second Baptist Church in Maywood, Illinois, but they also were didactic; they were teaching and inspirational.

So I commend the gentlewoman from Connecticut for her introduction of this great resolution and urge its support.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COOPER) for 2 minutes.

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California for yielding.

I would like to lend my voice and praise of the African American spiritual and a group that I consider to be the leading practitioners of today and for the last 135 years, namely the Fisk Jubilee Singers.

As the Representative from Nashville, Tennessee, I have the honor of representing Fisk University, which, under the able leadership of President Hazel O'Leary, is achieving new heights and excellence. The Fisk Jubilee Singers have been there since 1871, singing some of the most beautiful music in the world and a music that is laden with a God-given message.

No other music that I am familiar with covers the range from agony to inspiration, from the depths of human misery and despair all the way up to religious bliss. This is remarkable music, and I would suggest to you if you haven't heard the Fisk Jubilee Singers sing it under the able direction of Dr. Paul Kwami, you have not fully lived. This is a truly remarkable group and a remarkable inspirational message.

So let's praise today the anonymous African American genius that has allowed these songs to flourish and survive some of the toughest conditions on our planet, and let's honor groups like the Fisk Jubilee Singers that keep that tradition alive and fresh for each new generation. Yes, Mr. Speaker, this is truly a national treasure. We need to honor and preserve it and spread its wonderful message all around the world. The African American spiritual is part of God's great heritage.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that today this House will honor one of America's oldest and most unique cultural treasures, the African American spiritual. No music in the world communicates as much as the African American spiritual. It is music borne of suffering. Music that expresses anguish, unity, and hopeful transcendence. Our reverence and deep gratitude for this music is only surpassed by our shame over the conditions that gave it rise. What we are doing today is wholly appropriate—and long overdue.

Mr. Speaker, I am particularly proud to represent Fisk University, a fine American college with a tremendous sense of history and purpose. Fisk was founded in the wake of the Civil War to educate all students, regardless of color. It was a costly and controversial mission, and in order to keep the school's doors open, a group of students embarked on a fundraising tour in October 1871. This choral ensemble soon became known as the Fisk Jubilee Singers. They earned renown all over the world, singing for U.S. presidents and poets, European royals and American intellectuals alike.

But most of all, Mr. Speaker, in their 135 years of existence, the Fisk Jubilee Singers have exposed people across the globe to the African American spiritual. They have reminded us all of our country's shared history, and they have told, in vivid word and tune, the story of a People. From ''Wade in the Water'' to ''Go Down, Moses,'' and many songs between and since, the African American spiritual is a vital piece of American culture. Today we honor that tradition and those groups who keep it alive—groups like the Fisk Jubilee Singers.

The word ''jublilee,'' Mr. Speaker, rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures, came to signify the proclamation of freedom from slavery. Today let this House rededicate itself to that powerful message and to those who have lifted their voices to express the pain of bondage and redemptive promise of freedom—of jubilee—throughout our Nation's history.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, we have no further speakers.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It always amazes me how the Lord manages to turn evil to good. And this is a good example of that; how under the terrible abuse and sin of slavery came the beautiful spirituals that we are honoring in this particular resolution. It is a real national treasure. It is something that I grew up with.

I recall my family, in which we had a number of musicians. Very frequently we were singing Negro spirituals, and in groups at church we would sing Negro spirituals, and yet look where this music came from, out of the terrible black mark on the history of this country when we had slavery over half the Nation. And yet the human response guided by God came out of these people and produced this beautiful, beautiful music. It is a heritage we all have, it is a heritage we must enjoy and, above all, a heritage that we must honor, as we are honoring in this resolution today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to close on House Resolution 120.

□ 1145

I want to thank my colleagues for their eloquence in speaking to this resolution. Truly, the African American spiritual is a national treasure. It must be embraced as such, enjoyed and enhanced, always in our thoughts and in our history because it has played such a critical part to so many thousands and thousands and thousands of people. And so I thank everyone for being here today and for presenting that to us.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this resolution to recognize the African American spiritual as a national treasure.

Till the passage of the 13th Amendment, African Americn slaves were prevented from speaking their native languages, playing musical instruments they had used in Africa, and practicing their traditional religious beliefs. Despite attempts to strip away the history and identity of these individuals, they relied on a strong oral tradition to pass down stories and family narratives in the form of original songs, now known as spirituals.

These African American spirituals came to represent a part of history that many tried to silence through oppression and slavery. These songs are a part of the spirit that could not be destroyed by the institution of slavery. And while the spirituals we know today likely represent only a small portion of the total number, they remain an important link to the past as we teach new generations the meaning of our roots.

For African Americans, identifying their history and researching genealogy becomes challenging due to a lack of organized records. Many are left with piecing together records of their ancestors left from former slave owners. Through song we can identify with our past, and the African American spiritual is oe of the few remaining bastions of African American tradition and history though art.

I urge my colleagues to honor our history by voting for this importance piece of legislation.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 120, to recognize the African American spiritual as a national treasure.

When slavery was introduced into the European colonies in 1619, the dark days that followed ignited the faith and hope of our ancestors that one day their descendants would live in freedom and helped them bear the unbearable burden of bondage.

To help our ancestors tolerate the incorrigible injustices they suffered as slaves, they gathered together in unity and sang spiritual songs. Their strong faith in God was displayed through song and gave them hope that they would one day be free from the bondage of slavery. There was a transportation that took place when those songs were sung, for that moment they were carried away with their tunes from the problems and injustices they faced in their daily lives and could sing aloud to God who they depended on for help.

Frederick Douglass, a fugitive slave who would become one of the leading abolitionists

of the United States, remarked that the spirituals, ''told a tale of woe which was then altogether beyond my feeble comprehension; they were tones loud, long, and deep; they breathed the prayer and complaint of souls boiling over with the bitterest anguish. Every tone was a testimony against slavery and a prayer to God for deliverance from chains. . . .''

Unfortunately their plight for freedom from slavery would not end until 1865 when the United States ratified the 13th amendment to the constitution, but our fight for equality against injustices, though easier today, still tarries on. The singing of these African American spirituals is just as much a part of America as our flag and should be celebrated and seen as a thread in the fabric of our rich and diverse nation.

Many slaves were not allowed to learn to read and write but they were allowed to have their faith and their song. It was these two things that became a foundation in the African American community and intertwined, was used as a method of survival, as a means to cope with human servitude and echoed their strong desire to be free. It was in these songs that an oral history of their plight was communicated to each other, taught to their children, recorded their sad history and healed their broken hearts.

The Old Negro spiritual is still alive today. The influence of these songs is felt in gospel and the many popular genres of music that evolved from gospel. African American spirituals spread all over the United States, and the songs we know of today may only represent a small portion of the total number of the spirituals that once existed.

I thank my colleague, Ms. DELAURO, for introducing this important legislation, to ensure that we celebrate, treasure and recognize the African American spiritual as a national treasure and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for H. Res. 120, which recognizes the African American spiritual as a national treasure. The African American spiritual is both an expression of culture and faith, and a symbol of the path to triumph in our democracy.

The African American spiritual originated with many cultures in Africa, and became one of the few forms of expression that the African slaves were able to maintain while held in bondage in America. The spirituals not only served to uplift, but also served as a secret code to direct those enslaved to freedom. Lyrics from songs like ''Steal Away (to Jesus)'' and ''Wade in the Water'' were guides for those who planned to escape and served as instructions to allow those escaping to avoid being traced by slave catchers. Spirituals such as ''Follow the Drinking Gourd'' were also means of secretly communicating maps and directions for escaping slaves to reach the network of the Underground Railroad. After the abolition of slavery in the United States in 1865, the African American spiritual remained an important expression of culture, faith, and social justice, especially during the Civil Rights movements across the Nation in the 1950s and 1960s.

And so today, also in honor of Black History Month, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the African American spiritual and the legacy left to us by those who fought for freedom and rights in this country for all citizens. The African American spiritual is not only testimony of history, but is a part of our national heritage.

Mr. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield back my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 120.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION OF PROGRAMS UNDER SMALL BUSINESS ACT AND SMALL BUSINESS INVESTMENT ACT OF 1958

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 434) to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 through December 31, 2007, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendments:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION OF PROGRAMS UNDER THE SMALL BUSINESS ACT AND THE SMALL BUSINESS INVESTMENT ACT OF 1958.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1 of the Act entitled ''An Act to extend temporarily certain authorities of the Small Business Administration'', approved October 10, 2006 (Public Law 109–316; 120 Stat. 1742), is amended by striking ''February 2, 2007'' each place it appears and inserting ''July 31, 2007''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on February 2, 2007.

Amend the title so as to read: ''An Act to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 through July 31, 2007, and for other purposes''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today we will consider H.R. 434 as it came back to us from the Senate. This bill extends the authorization of the Small Business Administration and its programs through July 31, 2007. This short-term extension will ensure entrepreneurs continue to have access to the programs at the SBA that are designed to stimulate job creation and economic development throughout the United States.

Small businesses rely heavily on the SBA and its programs to start and run their ventures. As the sole Federal agency charged with assisting this Nation's 26 million small businesses, it is critical that the SBA is able to meet their needs.

While the original bill would have extended the agency until December 31, 2007, we will support this bill in order to ensure the agency's programs can operate through the end of July with no disruptions. As such, we move to pass H.R. 434 today.

I look forward to working with Ranking Member Steve Chabot to draft a bipartisan bill that will ensure the SBA can adequately and efficiently respond to the needs of entrepreneurs. Our Nation's main job creators, small businesses, deserve nothing less.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

This bill simply, as the chairwoman indicated, extends all the programs, including pilot programs, the authorities or provisions of the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act as they are presently constituted until July 31 of this year. The programs and authorities of the Small Business Administration expired on February 2. We would have preferred a longer extension, but the other body insisted on a shorter extension date of July 31.

Passage of this bill will hopefully give the Small Business Committees in both the House and the Senate the time necessary to work in a bipartisan manner on a more comprehensive SBA reauthorization bill.

Many of the programs of the SBA do not operate under a direct appropriation. This legislation will reaffirm their legality to operate, including the Advisory Committee on Veterans Business Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is quite simple. It contains the exact same language, with only the date changed, that passed the House last month by an overwhelming vote of 413–2.

Again, I look forward to working in a bipartisan manner with Chairwoman VELÁZQUEZ and other committee members to produce a good, fiscally responsible SBA reauthorization bill that can eventually be signed into law by the President. I especially want to thank Chairwoman VELÁZQUEZ for her graciousness in agreeing to bring up this bill in such a quick manner.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 434 with the Senate amendments so that our Nation's small businesses will see no interruption of service from the SBA over the next 5 months while we work to adopt a comprehensive reauthorization bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers at this time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. We also have no further speakers, and we yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the bill, H.R. 434.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendments were concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING THE LIFE OF BENNY PARSONS

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 69) recognizing and honoring Benny Parsons and expressing the condolences of the House of Representatives to his family on his death.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 69

Whereas Benny Parsons was born in Wilkes County, North Carolina, on July 12, 1941, and resided in the towns of Ellerbe and Concord, North Carolina in the Eighth Congressional District;

Whereas Benny Parsons was the son of Hazel and the late Harold Parsons and the brother of Steve, Phil and Patty;

Whereas Benny Parsons started racing in 1963 at the Mt. Clemens Speedway in Mt. Clemens, Michigan;

Whereas Benny Parsons was the Automobile Racing Club of America (ARCA) Rookie of the Year in 1965 and ARCA Champion in 1968 and 1969;

Whereas Benny Parsons was the first ARCA Champion inducted into the International Sports Hall of Fame;

Whereas Benny Parsons made his Winston Cup debut in 1970 and had his first Winston Cup victory at South Boston Virginia Speedway in 1971;

Whereas Benny Parsons was Winston Cup Champion in 1973;

Whereas Benny Parsons had an extraordinary career as a National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) driver, winning 21 races, including the 1975 Daytona 500;

Whereas in 1982 Benny Parsons qualified for the NASCAR Winston 500 at Talladega Superspeedway at 200.175 miles per hour, the first NASCAR qualification run over 200 mph;

Whereas in 1998 Benny Parsons was named one of the 50 Greatest Drivers in NASCAR History;

Whereas after a successful career as a driver, Benny Parsons developed a successful career in broadcasting, further expanding his sport through his insight and commentary;

Whereas Benny Parsons was known for his kindness by all who had the good fortune to meet him;

Whereas Benny Parsons was a loving husband to his wife Terri and an exceptional father to his sons Kevin and Keith;

Whereas Benny Parsons was a man of strong faith and character; and

Whereas Benny Parsons passed away on January 16, 2007, prompting friend and former competitor Darrell Waltrip to state that ''Benny Parsons was the kindest, sweetest, most considerate person I have ever known. He was a great champion, a great ambassador for our sport but more than that, he was a great person. He exemplified that good guys can be winners too.'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes Benny Parsons as one of the greatest race car drivers ever to participate in the sport of auto racing and recognizes his many contributions to the Nation throughout his lifetime;

(2) honors Benny Parsons for transcending the sport of auto racing to become a role model as both a talented competitor and mentor and as a loving husband and father; and

(3) extends its deepest condolences to the family of Benny Parsons.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today we honor and remember the life of Benny Parsons and his contribution to the racing community. Mr. Parsons was a legendary NASCAR driver and TV analyst. His thoughtful insights as an announcer earned him the nickname The Professor, and his achievements as a driver include a Winston Cup NASCAR championship.

Born in Wilkes County, North Carolina, he developed a penchant for cars and racing with his father. At the age of 18, he moved to Detroit where he drove taxis and worked at a service station. Soon thereafter he started his NASCAR career. In 1971, he won his first race, and in 1973 won the NASCAR championship. Mr. Parsons battled with drivers like Richard Petty and Carl Yarborough throughout his racing career that stretched over 20 years.

After Parsons retired from racing in 1988, he became a commentator and a recognized voice for NASCAR. His work helped NASCAR become one of the most widely watched sports in America and taught many newcomers to understand and enjoy racing. Earlier this year Mr. Parsons succumbed to complications from lung cancer.

So I urge my colleagues to rise in support of H. Res. 69.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We are very sorry to hear about Benny Parsons losing his life and his battle with lung cancer. He was a great race car driver, known to his friends as BP. He spent his early years in North Carolina, where he began his career in sports playing high school football.

Shortly after high school, his family moved to Detroit where his father ran a taxicab company. He helped his father and drove cabs and also worked at a local gas station.

In a town known as Motor City, Benny's interest and experience in automobiles and racing thrived. He quickly became a real huge race fan.

As the story goes, he lucked out when a truck towing a race car pulled into the station for a fill-up, and after talking with the truck driver, he was invited to join him on his way to nearby Mount Clemens Speedway. Once they arrived at the track, the race car driver who was supposed to drive the car did not show up, and so BP offered to drive the car, and that was his first race.

It is hard to believe that somebody would go from a gas station to a race car and get in it right away. I am from Indianapolis, Indiana. The Indianapolis 500 is driven there, and I cannot imagine anybody without any past experience getting into a race car and driving it and doing well, but BP did.

□ 1200

In 1964, Benny Parsons drove in his first official NASCAR race. Only a year later, he received the Rookie of the Year award from the Auto Racing Club of America, in one year. He would go on to win the ARCA championship in both 1968 and 1969. He had an impressive record in racing during 1971 and 1972, and his points earned him the NASCAR championship in 1973.

He also won the Daytona 500 in 1975 and the 1980 World 600 championship at Charlotte, and he continued on to win the National Speedway USA, the Texas World Speedway and his career final victory at the Coca-Cola 500 in Atlanta, Georgia. Overall, he had 283 top-10 finishes and won 21 major races.

After he finished his last race in 1988, he switched gears from driving to commentating. He started out reporting from the pits during his final years of racing but began full time for both ESPN and TBS in 1988. His firsthand knowledge of the sport captivated his audiences. He could talk from the prospective of both a fan and a driver, and was skilled at sharing his insights through his broadcasts.

As the NASCAR industry grew more popular and was televised more frequently, he commentated for both NBC and TNT. Parsons received an ACE award in 1989 and an ESPN Emmy award in 1986. His talent as an announcer earned him the new nickname, The Professor. It is a long way from race car driver to professor, but he earned it.

When he spoke, audiences listened and learned from him. In the summer of 2006, Parsons began to have trouble breathing. His doctors diagnosed him

with lung cancer, even though he had quit smoking over 25 years ago.

After a successful treatment, he noticed more trouble breathing. Doctors found that his left lung had not fully recovered from the radiation. This past December, he reentered the hospital for treatment and passed away on January 16 of this year from complications from lung cancer.

His career encompassed four decades of racing, followed by nearly two decades of announcing. Among other awards, he was inducted into the International Motor Sports Hall of Fame in 1994, the Court of Legends at Lowe's Motor Speedway in 1994, and the Motor Sports Hall of Fame of America in 2005. In 1998, he was named one of NASCAR's 50 greatest drivers.

Benny Parsons, known for his lovable personality and his positive attitude, will be greatly missed by all of those in the NASCAR community and family.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all Members to join me by supporting this resolution. We have a NASCAR race, the Brickyard 400, in Indianapolis, and we are going to miss Benny Parsons there. We wish his family well.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers and would ask if the gentleman would want to yield back his time.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, we have one more speaker who is not yet here, but since he is not here, we would like to have permission to have his remarks put in the RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, we yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I thank the gentleman from Indiana. This seems to be the day for Indiana and Indianapolis.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I would just ask my colleague from Illinois, isn't every day the day for Indiana?

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I would urge support for this resolution.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, may I reclaim my time? Mr. HAYES just arrived.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Indiana reclaims his time.

There was no objection.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HAYES).

Mr. HAYES. I thank my friends DANNY DAVIS and DAN BURTON.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Benny Parsons, a friend, a true friend and a legend in the racing community. Benny passed away in January; a great loss to all our community.

Benny was born and raised in the foothills of North Carolina. After literally stumbling into the racing industry while working for his dad's service station in Detroit, Michigan, Parsons returned to Ellerbe, North Carolina in Richmond County to drive for car owner L.G. DeWitt, a local businessman who also just happened to own the Rockingham race track.

Benny Parsons led a legendary career as a NASCAR driver, and he helped make the sport what it is today. From 1964 until his retirement in 1988, Benny made 526 starts. Benny Parsons was the first stockcar driver to go over 200 miles an hour, and he turned that speed into incredible success on the track. Benny won 21 major races, including the Daytona 500 and, in 1973, earned the highest honor in NASCAR, the Winston Cup.

Benny's work and contribution did not end on the race track. Upon his retirement from racing, Benny Parsons entered broadcasting, where he further expanded the sport through his insight and his down-home commentary. Benny was a fan favorite and became known as The Professor for his relaxed and uncanny style of commentary.

Besides being a champion and Hall of Famer, Benny Parsons was most revered by his colleagues and fans for his generous nature and lovable personality.

Benny told me he was always grateful for the support the people of Richmond County gave him. Despite his fame, my conversations with Benny seemed to flow around eating at the Dixie Burger and talking Raider football in Richmond County. He maintained a home there even after settling in my hometown of Concord.

To the people of North Carolina's Eighth District, Benny Parsons will always be a hometown boy as well as a champion. I ask that you join me today in extending your sympathy to Benny's wife, Terri; his sons, Kevin and Keith; and his entire family in the racing community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask to observe a moment of silence in honor of Benny Parsons' legacy of giving.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back for a life well lived.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from North Carolina. We have no further speakers.

As I indicated earlier, NASCAR racing is one of the most watched sports in America, and I am amazed at the number of people who participate. I would urge passage of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 69.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONGRATULATING THE INDIANAPOLIS COLTS FOR WINNING SUPER BOWL XLI

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 130) congratulating the National Football League champion Indianapolis Colts for winning Super Bowl XLI and for bringing the City of Indianapolis and the State of Indiana their first Lombardi Trophy.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 130

Whereas on February 4, 2007, in Miami, Florida, the Indianapolis Colts defeated the Chicago Bears by a score of 29 to 17 in Super Bowl XLI to win the National Football League (NFL) Championship;

Whereas this is the first Super Bowl win for the Indianapolis Colts following an overall season record of 16–4 and a regular season record of 12–4;

Whereas the Colts won their fourth American Football Conference (AFC) South Title this year and the AFC championship title with a stunning come-from-behind 38–34 victory over the New England Patriots on January 21, 2007;

Whereas Tony Dungy, in his fifth season with the Colts, is the first African-American head coach to win the Super Bowl and is one of the most respected coaches in the league, cultivating Championship success for the team and boasting 10-plus victories and playoff appearances in his first four seasons with the Colts;

Whereas Colts Owner and Chief Executive Officer Jim Irsay, who assumed ownership of the Colts in 1997, has helped revitalize the Colts franchise along with Colts President Bill Polian whose name is synonymous with pro football success;

Whereas quarterback Peyton Manning, who had 25 completions for 247 yards, was selected as the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of Super Bowl XLI; and

Whereas the entire Colts franchise has become a model of professionalism, goodwill, and community service in representing the City of Indianapolis and the State of Indiana and brings pride to Hoosiers and Colts fans everywhere: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives congratulates the National Football League champion Indianapolis Colts for winning Super Bowl XLI and for bringing the City of Indianapolis and the State of Indiana their first Lombardi Trophy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I will defer my opening remarks, and first shall be first. And I am going to yield such time as she might consume to the first lady of Indiana, Representative JULIA CARSON, who is the sponsor of this resolution.

Ms. CARSON. I do thank you very much, Representative DAVIS, for your courtesy and your indulgence, especially being from Illinois, the Chicago Bears. And the Bears have been overcome by the Colts. If you watch the Animal Planet channel, you can see that the Colts are not to be pushed around. So I want to thank you very much for your courtesy.

I come to the floor today to join my colleague, DANNY BURTON. We have contiguous districts. I am fighting over mine because the Colts' headquarters and the team is in my district, but I am sure he doesn't mind that at all. I heard the wonderful remarks that he made yesterday about the Colts, about Tony Dungy and Bill Polian and Jim Irsay. I want to thank him for it.

I come today to congratulate the Indianapolis Colts, who are in my district. See, we have good things in my district. They are not all drive-by shootings. The Indianapolis Colts have made us extremely proud. Here is a man, Tony Dungy, who incurred major tragedy, who hung out about a week or two, and then he came back and got back on the plate. I admired him for that. He sets an example for a lot of our young kids to follow that your setbacks can be your setups and your stumbling blocks can be your stepping stones.

Tony Dungy was determined to lead. He lead in a very positive way. He could have stayed out, moaned and groaned about what had happened, but he didn't do that. He incurred his spirituality and kept on moving.

I heard somebody mention the NASCAR a few minutes ago. We lost Paul Dana in NASCAR out in Indianapolis, and he fought successfully to get race cars to use ethanol. In 2008, all the race cars of NASCAR will be fired up and fueled up by ethanol. I want to be sure and mention that.

I rise today to recognize the Indianapolis Colts, the Super Bowl champions. The path they took was not easy, but they made it look easy because they operated as a team. I think that is an illustration of what we can become if we operate in unison as a team. When one member faltered, two others would be there to fill the gap. And after a long season, they filled the gap on a rain-soaked field in Miami to claim the title of world champions. Tony Dungy, game MVP Peyton Manning and Robert Sanders have all earned the title of champions.

I am proud that Indianapolis was represented by a very classy team with character. In a day when so many athletes are questionable examples, this team shows that you can be an active citizen and a winner at the same time.

This is a championship of firsts. This is the first Super Bowl win for the Indianapolis Colts, and the first time an African American head coach led the team to an NFL title.

Congratulations, Indianapolis Colts, and team owner Jim Irsay and President Bill Polian and all those who have supported this team through the years. I want to thank Lovie Smith, class act; Chicago Bears; and all my friends in Chicago for a wonderful Super Bowl.

You go, Colts.

I yield back to DANNY, and I won't take my district away from him right now.

Thank you, Mr. BURTON.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

You know, there are a lot of reasons to thank Tony Dungy and Peyton Manning and the whole team for the great victory they had last Sunday. I sat in the rain for about 5 hours and watched them, and I didn't feel a drop of rain because they did such a great job.

I might have felt a drop of rain in the first part when Devin Hester ran 92 yards for the opening kickoff touchdown. It kind of scared everybody to death who were Colts fans, but we all had faith in Peyton Manning and the Colts, and we knew that they wouldn't give up, especially after watching them coming back from the biggest deficit in championship history to defeat New England 2 weeks before.

But the reason I want to thank them today is for my Illinois colleagues. I want Coach Dungy and Peyton Manning and the whole team to know, from my colleagues in Illinois, I want a deep-dish pizza, a pound of cheese cake and a bunch of DVDs for our troops over in Iraq. So I want to thank them very much for making sure I didn't have to pay for all that other stuff, but my colleague on the other side of the aisle does.

Let me be serious for just a moment. We are very, very thrilled to have a Super Bowl champion in Indianapolis, we waited for a long, long time. And it came at a time when we had some of the finest people that have ever been on a football team playing in Indianapolis. It came at a time when we had one of the finest coaches who ever coached football in Indianapolis. And not only is Tony Dungy a great coach, but he is a great American and a very patriotic man and a good Christian fellow. And everybody in Indianapolis really respects him.

Peyton Manning has been a gentleman on and off the field. The whole team has. I can name everybody on the team. And I just want to say, on behalf of the Congress, me and JULIA CARSON, my colleague who represents Indianapolis, and STEVE BUYER and others, that we are very, very proud of the Colts. We hope they bring us another Super Bowl next year, but even if they don't, we are very, very thrilled. They have done Indianapolis proud, and we are very proud to talk about them here today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1215

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is obviously a bitter pill to swallow, especially given the fact that I represent the Chicago Bears, who happen to be in my district, the stadium that they use. We were anticipating great thrills and great delights, and for a brief moment we did, in fact, have that. But then someone said to me that we came in like lions and went out like lambs.

I guess that is exactly what happened. This past Sunday, Tony Dungy and the Indianapolis Colts beat Lovie Smith and his Chicago Bears 29–17 in a wet Super Bowl XLI.

The slippery conditions made for several muffs and miscues throughout the game, including a Romo-like botched hold during the extra point after the Colts' first touchdown.

The Bears got off to a quick start with Devin Hester returning the opening kickoff for a TD, and Rex Grossman hitting Muhsin Muhammad with a 4-yard pass in the first quarter for another seven points.

After this the Bears' offense sort of fizzled, and the Colts took advantage with Peyton Manning leading several drives that ended in Adam Vinatieri's field goals and a TD pass to Reggie Wayne. Joseph Addai and Dominic Rhodes also both contributed some hard runs with a combined rushing total of 190 yards and a touchdown. On the other side of the ball, the Colts were the better defense, causing five turnovers.

As noted last week, this game made history with two African American coaches facing each other for the title, and Tony Dungy being the first black coach to win a Super Bowl.

Of course, I want to congratulate Coach Dungy on a job well done, and adding to the celebration of Black History Month. I also want to commend Peyton Manning for his leadership of the team. I want to thank Representative CARSON's staff for their hard work, especially Kathleen Taylor, who did such a quick job of putting all of this together so that we did not have to delay.

And so with serious regret on the part of the Chicago Bears, I commend and congratulate the Indianapolis Colts and urge support for this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, it sure is nice to hear the gentleman from Illinois extol the virtues of the Indianapolis Colts. I really appreciate that, DANNY.

I am very happy to yield to my colleague from Indiana, another great Colts fan, Congressman STEVE BUYER, 2 minutes.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand here to honor the Indianapolis Colts and Super Bowl champions. The Colts are a team that I believe represent the best of professionalism and goodwill.

My congratulations to Tony Dungy for his accomplishments in leading the

Colts to an overall season record of 16–4 and for becoming the first African American head coach to win a Super Bowl. I am most hopeful that such reference does not have to be made in the future. That is the goodness of America. Coach, you have also demonstrated that nice guys can win.

I also commend the passionate Indianapolis Colts who braved single-digit temperatures to welcome back home for the first time to the city of Indianapolis and the State of Indiana the Vince Lombardi Trophy.

Mr. Speaker, I also learned something, though, that I think America should know about the Super Bowl. You see, the teams that actually play the Super Bowl actually get 17 percent of the tickets. Those tickets go to those fans of the two teams, and they are upper deck, end zone seats, which means that all of the prime seats of the Super Bowl go to all of the other owners. So what I am most hopeful is that America takes note here that actually the fans of the teams that get to play the Super Bowl really do not get to see much of their team in a Super Bowl. And so what happens here is the city who wants a Super Bowl in their city, they trade seats for votes. And so it is like, hey, if I want the Super Bowl in Detroit, and you are the team owner in Detroit, I will give you 1,500 seats at the 35-yard line.

By the end of the first quarter with all of the rain, you had over 10,000 empty seats. You say, what happened to the fans? Well, those are people there who wanted to see a football game, but do not necessarily like to sit in the rain because they didn't like either team.

So we need to redo how they do the Super Bowl and actually sit the fans where they can enjoy the game. So hopefully that is taken into account.

To Coach Dungy, the entire team, the owner Jim Irsay, the dedicated staff of the Colts organization and thousands of Colts fans, I offer my congratulations to the Colts for the Super Bowl victory over my father's beloved Chicago Bears. Go Colts.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, of course maybe the NFL could learn from the House and realize that there should be no trading of seats for votes, and that would make the disposition a bit different.

I yield 3 minutes to Representative BRAD ELLSWORTH from Indiana.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my congratulations to the Super Bowl champions, the Indianapolis Colts. The NFL season came to a triumphant close Sunday night in Miami. But I am most proud that the Colts began their history run to this Super Bowl in Indiana's Eighth District last August on the training fields of Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Terre Haute, Indiana.

On Sunday, Coach Dungy, along with Lovie Smith of the Bears, became the first African American head coaches to walk the sidelines on the Super Bowl. As the clock expired and the scoreboard read 29 for the Colts and 17 for the Bears, a rain- and Gatorade-soaked Dungy made NFL history again by becoming the first African American to win the Lombardi Trophy.

After a sloppy start in a rainy Miami that included a kickoff returned for a touchdown and an interception by the Bears, the Colts found themselves in an early hole. But the Dungy-led team refused to give up and charged back to take a 16–14 halftime lead, with Reggie Wayne and Dominic Rhodes providing touchdowns.

The Colts dominated the second half of the game on both sides of the ball, surrendering only three points while bolstering their lead. Cornerback Kelvin Hayden, who was playing in place of injured starter Nick Harper, put the game nearly out of reach in the fourth quarter when he intercepted Rex Grossman's pass and returned it for 56 yards for a touchdown.

Safety Bob Sanders, who forced a fumble earlier in the game, clinched it on the ensuing drive with an interception of his own, and Colts kicker Adam Vinatieri, the NFL's all-time leader in career Super Bowl field goals, contributed the remainder of the team's scoring.

I am proud to congratulate the Super Bowl MVP Peyton Manning. With his performance, Manning silenced all of the critics who throughout his career claimed that he could not win the big game. They do not get any bigger than this.

Manning threw for 247 yards and a touchdown, while leading his team to victory. Manning was aided in the backfield by the two-pronged running attack of Rhodes and rookie Joe Addai, who combined to rush for 190 yards.

The Colts excelled on the field at the Super Bowl, but what makes it truly a pleasure to cheer for is the dignity and class the team displayed throughout the season. I believe that this starts at the top with Coach Dungy. Karen Crouse of the New York Times summed up the Colts' coach best when she wrote, and I quote, ''Dungy has the most victories of any NFL coach since 1999 with a record of 90–38. But the bottom line is not what defines him. His life has been about opening people's eyes so they may see talent and not skin color; spirituality and not celebrity; integrity and not self-interest. He has helped a lot of people see more clearly,'' and I could not agree more. Go Colts.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to another great Colts fan, Congressman MIKE PENCE.

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in this bipartisan gathering with thanks to the leadership of Congresswoman JULIA CARSON to congratulate the world champion Indianapolis Colts. I congratulate the gentlewoman from Indianapolis for her leadership on this resolution and its eloquent drafting.

As others of my colleagues have suggested, the Colts' victory was not just a demonstration of athletic prowess, but it was a moment where I think the world got to see a little bit of Indiana on the world stage. They got to see the kind of serious work ethic, humility, commitment to getting the job done without a lot of flash and a lot of fanfare that really characterizes the people of Indiana.

As Congressman BURTON said, I also had the privilege, along with my wife Karen, of witnessing some history, not only the first world championship to come to Indianapolis, but also I saw the first African American coach lead a team to the Super Bowl, and to see two great teams led by two African American coaches shatter that glass ceiling, that for reasons of culture and habit had somehow been long established, in that stadium for that great championship game.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it is said that attitude reflects leadership, and I believe that Coach Tony Dungy really personifies just the type of leadership that deserves rewarding in the NFL and is heralded in the State of Indiana.

Let me say that Coach Dungy should be admired not only for that calm, steady leadership on the sidelines, but also his career off the field is equally impressive. Since his time in Tampa Bay, he brought his commitment to Christian values to young people through the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He launched Mentors for Life, a program that provided tickets to young people for home games and their mentors. And I was there about a year ago when Coach Dungy, one of many such occasions around the country, spoke in Anderson, Indiana, to a stadium full of young people about his profound faith in Christ and about his belief in the relationship of character to success.

But we also celebrate Peyton Manning, the man awarded with Most Valuable Player in the Super Bowl, and of course now a man who others have said has minted his reputation as one of the greatest quarterbacks of all time. He personifies a humility and a work ethic that I believe are rightly celebrated.

Let me close by saying, as Peyton Manning remarked on being selected MVP, he said, ''I am excited, but I am proud to be on this team.''

I would like to close my remarks today by asking unanimous consent to add to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the names of all of the members of the Colts' offense, defense, substitutions and the coaching staff, because this truly was a team effort. It was men and women in the head offices, and on the fields, on the training staff, and the catching staff that brought this world championship home to our capital city.

They have our praise, our congratulations.

Offense: Reggie Wayne—Wide Receiver, Tarik Glenn—Offensive Tackle, Ryan Lilja—Offensive Guard, Jeff Saturday—Center, Jake Scott—Offensive Guard, Ryan Diem—

Offensive Tackle, Dallas Clark—Tight End, Marvin Harrison—Wide Receiver, Peyton Manning—Quarterback, Joseph Addai—Running Back, and Ben Utecht—Tight End.

Defense: Robert Mathis—Defensive End, Anthony McFarland—Defensive Tackle, Raheem Brock—Defensive Tackle, Dwight Freeney—Defensive End, Cato June—Linebacker, Gary Brackett—Linebacker, Rob Morris—Linebacker, Nick Harper—Defensive Back, Jason David—Defensive Back, Antoine Bethea—Defensive Back, and Bob Sanders—Defensive Back.

Substitutions: Adam Vinatieri—Kicker, Terrance Wilkins—Wide Receiver, Hunter Smith—Punter, Kelvin Hayden—Defensive Back, Marlin Jackson—Defensive Back, DeDe Dorsey—Running Back, Dominic Rhodes—Running Back, Dexter Reid—Defensive Back, Matt Giordano—Defensive Back, Justin Snow—Tight End, Rocky Boiman—Linebacker, Keith O'Neil—Linebacker, Freddy Keiaho—Linebacker, Tyjuan Hagler—Linebacker, Dylan Gandy—Offensive Guard, Dan Klecko—Defensive Tackle, Bo Schobel—Defensive End, Charlie Johnson—Offensive Tackle, Bryan Fletcher—Tight End, Aaron Moorehead—Wide Receiver, Josh Thomas—Defensive End, and Darrell Reid—Defensive Tackle.

Coaching Staff: Tony Dungy—Head Coach, Jim Caldwell—Assistant Head Coach/Quarterbacks, Clyde Christensen—Receivers Coach, Leslie Frazier—Special Assistant to Head Coach/Defensive Backs, Richard Howell—Assistant Strength Coach, Gene Huey—Running Backs Coach, Ron Meeks—Defensive Coordinator, Pete Metzelaars—Offensive Quality Control, Tom Moore—Offensive Coordinator, Howard Mudd—Offensive Line Coach, Mike Murphy—Linebacker Coach, Russ Purnell—Special Teams Coach, Diron Reynolds—Defensive Quality Coach, John Teerlinck—Defensive Line Coach, Ricky Thomas—Tight End Coach, Jon Torine—Strength and Conditioning Coach, and Alan Williams—Defensive Backs Coach.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY).

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Congresswoman CARSON on her resolution, to add my name to it, and to also say I come from a unique place, and that my district is not far from Chicago. Our beautiful district has numbers of Bears fans in it as well as Colts fans. And so to the Bears fans from Michigan City, Laporte, and South Bend, I say a season well done; one step short is still a heck of a year. We are incredibly proud of the Bears, but we are also beaming about our world champion Indianapolis Colts who did it in a way to reflect what our State's values are: dignity, hard work, class, and a never-give-up attitude.

To Peyton Manning, to Joseph Addai, to all of the outstanding players, and especially to Coach Tony Dungy, Tony Dungy and Lovie Smith come from a long tradition of fine men like Sherm Lewis, men like Eddie Robinson, and to see Tony Dungy as the first African American coach to win the Super Bowl was a tremendous moment. But he will not be the last. There will be many, many more. But his name will be etched in history forever. And as a man, we can only look at Tony and hope that we can be as fine in image and in value to our sons and daughters as he has been to all of us.

Hard work, nonstop class, I am proud to be from our beloved State and proud of our world championship Super Bowl champion Indianapolis Colts.

□ 1230

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to yield 3 minutes to another Colts fan who is a friend of Peyton Manning from Tennessee, the great Congressman from that State (ZACH WAMP).

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and everyone from Illinois and Indiana for bringing us to this moment.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to represent the State of Tennessee in coming to congratulate the Indianapolis Colts. Few people would know this, but last Thursday here in Washington was our annual prayer breakfast, where we bring people from all around the world for our prayer breakfast. And Dr. Francis Collins of the Human Genome Project was the speaker, and he just did an extraordinary job.

But what people wouldn't know was that before we invited Dr. Francis Collins, we actually extended an invitation to Tony Dungy. But Tony Dungy knew when we extended that invitation where he was going to be the following Sunday, and he told us. Sorry, I can't come speak at the National Prayer Breakfast because I will be preparing to play in the Super Bowl. And boy, was he preparing.

Many people know the connections to Tennessee here with this Super Bowl because of Peyton Manning, because he played his college football at the University of Tennessee. And I dare say, other than the State of Indiana, and maybe Mississippi, the State of Tennessee was cheering for the Indianapolis Colts in greater numbers than any State in the Union because of Peyton Manning, because he is our favorite son because of where he played his college football.

To this very day, he owns real estate in Chattanooga. He plays his golf in Chattanooga. We see him a lot. He is married to a Chattanooga girl. We are very proud of that.

You wouldn't know also that R.V. Brown, who was the chaplain for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, is one of Coach Dungy's closest friends and the person to whom we extended the invitation. We are so very proud of these relationships.

What about Lovie Smith? He coached at the University of Tennessee as well. So all of these great players and coaches that really represented the goodness of America on Sunday and in the days leading into Sunday have some kind of Tennessee connections.

But I just want to close with this thought. Proverbs 16:15 says this: Good-tempered leaders invigorate lives. They are like spring rain and sunshine.

And I have got to tell you that Tony Dungy and Lovie Smith are good-tempered leaders straight from that scripture. They have invigorated lives, and they refresh and give life to this great Nation. We honor them today because of their leadership. We honor this team because of what they stood for. And we are grateful, frankly, that this brings the country together and lifts us to a new level.

Congratulations, Indianapolis Colts.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, now it is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Indiana (Mr. HILL).

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I was in my office just a few minutes ago watching, doing my work in my office, but I caught my colleagues talking about the victorious Indianapolis Colts, and I couldn't resist coming down here. I don't have any prepared remarks, but I want to come to the floor today to also extend my congratulations to the Indianapolis Colts.

My wife and my three daughters had the opportunity to see the Colts win the AFC championship at Indianapolis. And at the time, I thought it was good enough that we just made it to the Super Bowl. But that wasn't good enough for Peyton Manning and Marvin Harrison and the rest of the Colts and Tony Dungy. They wanted the ring. And they stepped up to the plate and took it to another level. And I watched in amazement how they held steady when the chips were down, especially when they were playing against the Patriots, and how they held steady when the Chicago Bears scored that touchdown right off the bat. They didn't panic. They showed true leadership, and I am so proud of the Colts, and I am proud of the fact that I had the opportunity to extend congratulations to them.

I think Marvin Harrison and Peyton Manning are the best one-two punch in the history of the NFL. These two players are magnificent athletes, but they are also magnificent human beings in who they are and how they lead. And I couldn't be more happy.

I also have to say something about the Chicago Bears. They are a great football team. We beat a great football team. And Rex Grossman, who is the quarterback of that team, has caught a lot of heat recently for what he did. But he took the Chicago Bears to the Super Bowl, and that is a feat in itself.

And I single him out because I believe it was his dad or his uncle that I actually played football against in Bloomington, Indiana, where Rex Grossman actually is. So I consider him a constituent. Bloomington is in my district. It is great to applaud him for his accomplishments. I applaud the Chicago Bears, and I applaud the Indianapolis Colts for all the good things that they have done for the State of Indiana.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, might I inquire of my colleague, do you have any more speakers?

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. No, I don't believe we do.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Well, if he has no more speakers, I am prepared to

yield back the balance of my time. But I just want to say to my colleagues from Illinois, and I say this in a good-natured way, if you need a Colts hat, I just happen to have a few in my office. I will be very happy to buy you one.

But I still want my deep-dish pizza, my cheesecake, and I want to make sure those DVDs get to the troops in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, to close, I will just simply say that, of course, Eli's has the best cheesecake in the world, and Representative BURTON, you shall be able to partake of that.

But also, let me say that we will congratulate all of the players, all of the owners, all of those who made these two great teams. I have never seen two men who have given more to a sport than Tony Dungy and Lovie Smith. Not only are they masters of the game, not only are they great coaches and leaders, but they exemplify the best of human beings, the best that you could possibly be, and that is what they have done for the game of football. That is what they have done for America. And I am sure that Americans all over the Nation will be cheering them on for years and years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to Representative JULIA CARSON for the last word.

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that all of the delegation of Indiana has come to the floor to speak on behalf of this worthy resolution.

Tony Dungy, if you don't mind, I will single him out, exhibits the kind of character that we would all like our men to exhibit. Young men, who were jumping up and down at the Colts Super Bowl, can learn so much about how far you get in this world by displaying strength, by displaying honesty and integrity and loving the Lord. That is what Tony Dungy does.

He belongs to Northside New Era Church in Indianapolis, which is a little church on a hill. It is not a big, palatial church that swings around city blocks; just a little church on a hill. And the members there love him.

And I notice that he took many of the young people from Northside New Era to Miami, which was an experience that they will never replicate.

So I want to thank the Dungy family. His wife, when the church has an event, she is right there with her little apron on cooking, too.

So it shows you that you can't think too highly of yourself. And Tony Dungy certainly doesn't do that. He thinks highly of the Lord and of all the people that he serves. And I am just happy that I lived long enough to see this major event happen on behalf of the district that I represent.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 130.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANTITRUST MODERNIZATION COMMISSION EXTENSION ACT OF 2007

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 742) to amend the Antitrust Modernization Commission Act of 2002, to extend the term of the Antitrust Modernization Commission and to make a technical correction.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 742

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 ''Antitrust Modernization Commission Extension Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF TERMINATION.

Section 11059 of the Antitrust Modernization Commission Act of 2002 (15 U.S.C. 1 note) is amended—

(1) by striking ''30 days'' and inserting ''60 days''; and

(2) by striking ''section 8'' and inserting ''section 11058''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure cosponsored with me by the distinguished ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, Mr. LAMAR SMITH, to extend the Antitrust Modernization Commission by 30 days so that it may have time to wrap up and finalize its report and shut down its operations.

This modernization commission dealing with antitrust has been in existence since 2002 and was created with the purpose of examining whether the need exists to modernize the antitrust laws. It began meeting in 2004 and for the past 3 years has been studying many aspects of antitrust law, including how these laws operate in a modern, information-driven economy.

Also, they were charged with examining the intersection between antitrust law and intellectual property law; about immunities and exemptions that are enjoyed under our current antitrust law; the relationship between the Federal and State antitrust law enforcement; the application of antitrust laws in regulated industries; and the merger review process. I look forward to reviewing the commission's final report, which is due in April of this year.

I anticipate that the Judiciary Committee will take a close look at the recommendations contained in the report and will continue to work with the commissioners even after the report is completed.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 742, the Antitrust Modernization Commission Extension Act of 2007.

Our Nation's first antitrust laws were enacted at the turn of the 20th century. The Antitrust Modernization Commission Act of 2002 created a commission to examine how to update our antitrust laws in light of the new technologies that have developed in recent years.

The Antitrust Modernization Commission, or AMC, was required to produce a report 3 years after the date of its first meeting on April 2, 2004.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to report that the AMC will submit its recommendations to Congress and the President by the statutory deadline of April 2, 2007.

The AMC is required to terminate 30 days after submitting its report. However, the commission has requested an extension of its authorization by an additional 30 days so that it can effectively conclude its operations. This additional 30 days will allow the AMC to properly archive its records and transfer property to other agencies.

Pursuant to that request, H.R. 742 extends the authorization of the AMC by 30 days and also makes a small technical correction to the original authorization statute. This bill will not delay the submission of the AMC's report to Congress nor will it require the appropriation of any additional funds.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to cosponsor this bill, along with the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, to allow the AMC to wrap up its important work without imposing any additional cost on the American taxpayer.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe I have any others who want to comment on this legislation, and so, because of that, I will yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I continue to yield myself as much time as I may consume.

The reason we have this commission is because there are acknowledged to be some serious considerations, some problems that we need to examine in the area of antitrust law.

□ 1245

The antitrust laws were derived from the Sherman Act of over a century ago, and they are very important, and they have helped us in terms of developing an economy that is in some respects the envy of the entire planet.

But there has been so much activity in the antitrust area that there has been some concern whether or not we have gone overboard. This past year is the fourth largest in the history for

mergers. Since the Oracle merger, which the Department of Justice sued on and lost, the Department of Justice itself hasn't gone to trial to block a proposed merger in memory.

And we are having larger and larger mergers and acquisitions. They are troubling: SBC and AT&T, a $16 billion-valued merger; AT&T and BellSouth, an $86 billion merger; Verizon and MCI, an $8.5 billion merger; Sprint and Nextel, $36 billion; Cingular and AT&T Wireless, about $47 billion worth of coming together; Kmart with Sears, Roebuck; Hewlett-Packard and Compaq; NBC Universal and NBC and Vivendi; Morgan Chase and Bank One; Procter & Gamble buys $54 billion in new acquisition; the Bank of America with FleetBoston. We have got something that needs far more consideration.

And I want to praise the former chairman of the Judiciary Committee, the gentleman from Wisconsin, who helped us create the special outside committee to aid us, and we look forward to their reports. And I join the gentleman from Texas in helping to develop the time needed for us to get the report.

We on the Judiciary Committee feel this is a hugely important subject. And we want to particularly praise the vice chairman of the commission, Attorney Jon Yarowsky, who himself was a former member of the House Judiciary staff for a considerable number of years.

Mr. Speaker, the bill we are considering today is a modest one, but I want to emphasize that the issue it relates to is of utmost importance.

For over a century, the antitrust laws have provided the ground rules for fair competition. They are our economic bill of rights. Antitrust principles are necessary to preserve competition and to prevent monopolies from stifling innovation. Competition produces better products, lower prices, and wider choices—all to the benefit of consumers.

The cornerstone premise of our antitrust laws is essentially a conservative notion: that free and unfettered competition will produce the best results for consumers. To the extent that anticompetitive conduct or conditions have hindered this healthy process, the antitrust laws are there to arrest those violations and remedy the competitive harms.

In the Sherman Act, we prohibit contracts or conspiracies that restrain trade, and exclusionary or predatory conduct that sabotages the efforts of rivals. For egregious violations, there are high fines and prison terms. There are also treble damages for victims.

And we have supplemented those protections in the Clayton Act, by giving the antitrust enforcement agencies the power to challenge anticompetitive mergers in their incipiency, to prevent their harmful effects from ever taking place.

The competitive landscape in the United States has been undergoing dramatic change in recent years. Technological and market innovation has come at us at breakneck speed. We have witnessed a wave of consolidation in some of our key industries. According to Thomson Financial, this past year was the fourth largest in history for mergers and acquisitions.

At the same time, we have also seen familiar and novel forms of exclusionary conduct that interferes with the enterprising efforts of competitive businesses to cultivate and serve customers.

The telecommunications industry is one key industry that has experienced significant consolidation. This year, AT&T acquired BellSouth Corp.—after just last year acquiring SBC—in a deal that creates a telecom behemoth with $117 billion in revenue.

This has particular consequences in the area of net neutrality. For people who innovate in the area of technology, and for those who enjoy those innovations, this free and open access to the Internet has been a boon. New applications are being developed every hour and are able to be instantly distributed on the Web. These new applications—coupled with new content, such as broadband television—have the potential to offer a new array of choices to consumers.

Unfortunately, some telecommunications companies have a different vision for the Internet. They have floated the idea of charging websites for access. Those who pay will get faster and more reliable delivery of their content to web surfers. Those who do not will see the delivery of their content degraded.

The antitrust laws can help ensure that network neutrality, the bedrock of the growth of the Internet, remains in place.

In the media, the FCC's relaxed cap on ownership in national and local broadcast markets, and relaxed cross-ownership restrictions between broadcasters and newspapers, has enabled concentrated wealthy interests to control a large portion of the media in some areas. Consumers are thereby often deprived of a diversity of viewpoints and voices in news and entertainment.

Imagine a world where you wake up, read the local newspaper, turn on the television to watch the news, drive to work and listen to the radio, pass a few billboards containing advertisements, return home later at night and turn on your cable to watch a movie or some sports—only to find that each of those media outlets is owned by the same company. It may sound farfetched, but it is not. This is the world we are evolving into. In this world, instead of ten voices with ten different viewpoints, there may only be three. The antitrust laws may be our only hope of preventing this.

The story is even bleaker for independent broadcasters, and for minority participation in the media industry. As of 2001, minorities owned only 3.8 percent of the full-power commercial radio and television stations in the nation, and only 1.9 percent of TV stations. If ownership of the media is controlled by four or five conglomerates, minority-owned stations and programming that appeals to minority interests could become a thing of the past.

In the home appliance industry, Whirlpool Corp., the largest maker of home appliances, merged with Maytag Inc., the third largest. The deal cost $1.8 billion and produced a company that manufactures much of Sears' Kenmore line as well as the brands Jenn Air, KitchenAid, Amana, and Magic Chef, and controls as much as 70 percent of the U.S. market for large home appliances such as washers and dryers.

In the oil industry, we've seen massive increases in gasoline prices. After Hurricane Katrina, the Washington Post reported price increases of as much as 88 cents per gallon in a single day. Some stations in Georgia were reported to be charging as much as $6 a gallon. In Illinois, prices reportedly shot up 50 cents per gallon overnight, and the state attorney general received more than 500 reports of price gouging. At first blush, it would seem that these increases go far beyond anything justified or relating to the market disruptions caused by Hurricane Katrina. The FTC's report on this phenomenon was less than satisfactory.

We have also seen significant consolidation in the health insurance industry. In recent years, Aetna agreed to acquire Prudential Health Care, the fifth largest for-profit health care company, at the same time it was in the midst of completing its purchase of New York Life. In 1996 Aetna was also permitted to acquire U.S. Health Care. As a result of these acquisitions, Aetna became the largest health care provider in the nation.

Recent years have seen more than a dozen health insurance competitors eliminated through mergers and acquisitions. A study of market concentration by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation found that ''both the group and individual [health insurance] markets are heavily dominated by a relatively few large insurers.'' Business consumers of health care have become increasingly alarmed by this concentration, with Charles Blankenstein, a health expert at William Mercer Consulting, warning that employers are ''bear[ing] the cost of these acquisitions'' as ''choice in the marketplace is rapidly diminishing.''

In the airline industry, lagging profits have led to a marked trend toward further consolidation. Because air travel is a vital portion of the nation's transportation infrastructure, we can't simply turn a blind eye and chalk this up to economic bad times. Often these mergers have the potential to reduce the flight options available to consumers, and ultimately may lead to higher ticket prices.

In this environment, vigorous antitrust enforcement is particularly important. We need to be able to rely on the federal antitrust enforcement agencies—the Antitrust Division in the Department of Justice, and the Federal Trade Commission. We need to be able to have confidence that they are doing everything they should to protect competition in our economy and the benefits it brings to us all.

That is why active oversight of antitrust must and will be an important part of the work of the Judiciary Committee. We will ask these agencies about merger enforcement, and why they do not seem to be challenging an mergers. We will ask them about their policy on civil non-merger enforcement against monopolization and other anticompetitive business arrangements. And we will ask them about their commitment to prosecute criminal antitrust violations.

The Committee will also create a task force, as we did in the last Congress, so that we can more closely examine competitive developments in important industries, including telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, and insurance, as well as topics such as interoperability of new technologies, credit card interchange fees, and transparency in standard setting.

As we prepare for the work ahead in this vital area, we will look forward to reading the Antitrust Modernization Commission's final report, and reviewing its assessment of the state

of health of the laws we rely upon to preserve our economic liberty.

I thank the Antitrust Modernization Commission for all its work over the past few years. I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 742.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1334

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. POMEROY) at 1 o'clock and 34 minutes p.m.

GERALD W. HEANEY FEDERAL BUILDING AND UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE AND CUSTOMHOUSE

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 187) to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse and customhouse located at 515 West First Street in Duluth, Minnesota, as the ''Gerald W. Heaney Federal Building and United States Courthouse and Customhouse''.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 187

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION.

The Federal building and United States courthouse and customhouse located at 515 West First Street in Duluth, Minnesota, shall be known and designated as the ''Gerald W. Heaney Federal Building and United States Courthouse and Customhouse''.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Federal building and United States courthouse and customhouse referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Gerald W. Heaney Federal Building and United States Courthouse and Customhouse''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume

For me, today is a very fulfilling, as well as nostalgic, moment to move this bill to designate the Federal building and the U.S. courthouse and customhouse in Duluth for Judge Gerald W. Heaney.

He was appointed judge of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit on November 3, 1966. He took senior status in December 31, 1988; finally retired last August after 40 years on the bench. But that is only part of the story.

Gerald Heaney was born January 29, 1918, in Goodhue, a rural community in southeastern Minnesota. He grew up in a farming community, learned the values of rural America, went to my college which I attended many years later, College of St. Thomas, where he graduated and went on to the University of Minnesota where he got his law degree in 1941, but then started a new chapter in the life of Gerald Heaney.

He enlisted in the Army in World War II. He was trained as a United States Army Ranger, and he was on the landing craft at 6:30 in the morning on Omaha Beach in Normandy.

I interviewed Judge Heaney for the Library of Congress project on World War II veterans. They are attempting at the Library to get the personal views of those who participated in World War II, and he told this story:

''We were all herded into the landing craft. At 6:30 we arrived close to the beach. We could not quite get into the beach because of the obstacles that the Germans had placed under water and also had proximity bombs that would blow up ships. They were having trouble getting the vessels in, so they could not get to the beach, but they got into relatively shallow water. And the door went down on the landing craft, and the captain stood up and said, everyone ashore, and he was cut down by gunfire. And the first lieutenant stood up and said, everyone ashore, and he was cut down by gunfire. And then,'' said Judge Heaney, ''that left me, Second Lieutenant Gerald Heaney, in charge, and I looked up and said, we are not going out that door; everybody over the side.''

How many lives he saved we will never know, but they got into water that was too deep for them to touch the bottom. They tried to swim. They were sinking. They all cut off their backpacks loaded with their food and supplemental ammunition and made it to the shore.

I was privileged to be in the group of Speaker HASTERT on the 60th anniversary of D-Day and stood at that beach, at that shoreline, and looked up at where the German gun implacements were located. It is an awesome crossfire site, fearsome.

Men were cut down right and left as they crawled and inched their way up. By 3:30 in the afternoon, they had made progress of just about a mile, circled around the German guns, which was their objective, and with hand grenades and other explosives, explosive packs, took out the German gun implacements, making that segment of the beach safer for more landings.

By then they were out of ammunition. Judge Heaney said, I said to my men, and there were only a few of us left, we will go back to the beach; they will have landed supplies, and we can be replenished. So they turned around, and he stopped and choked and said, and that is when I saw the carnage, thousands killed.

But they returned, got supplemental ammunition, went back up that beachhead, and their job was to then circle around La Pointe du Hoc, which is a straight, rocky cliff. Rangers are going to scale La Pointe du Hoc from below, and Heaney and his Ranger group were to distract the Germans, take out the gunnery and make it safe, and they did. They attacked. They took out powerful German machine gun implacements and long-range artillery.

For that heroism at La Pointe du Hoc, Judge Heaney was awarded the Silver Star, the second highest award our Government gives to our military personnel, but that was not the end. They continued all across France and into Germany.

By 1945, they had gotten to the Elbe, and there the British units, Russian units and American units met, but they postponed the formal meeting until the following morning where they would have a flag-raising ceremony. And as Judge Heaney said, he looked over, and the Russians had a flag, the British had a flag; he said, where is ours? They did not have a flag. No one had thought to bring a flag. They just fought their way courageously across Europe.

So Judge Heaney, Gerald Heaney, by then Captain Heaney, went into the village nearby and bought red, white and blue cloth and found seamstresses in the village who could sew that into an American flag with 48 stars at the time. He still has that flag. He brought it with him for the Labor Day celebration this year at Park Point in Duluth, and there was not a dry eye in the crowd.

That is the man, that is the courage, that is the strength. He went on to be appointed a U.S. circuit court judge by Lyndon Johnson, and displaying the same courage that he showed for his country in defense of liberty and freedom, he presided over the case to desegregate the St. Louis school system. He wrote the opinion and has written a book about not only the opinion, but the 20 years that he presided over the continuing desegregation of the St. Louis schools in his capacity as circuit court judge. It is entitled, ''Unending Struggle. The Long Road to an Equal Education in St. Louis,'' with Dr. Susan Uchitelle, who was a law clerk for Judge Heaney.

He writes, Our involvement in the St. Louis public school case over a period of 18 years convinced us that, after

having recused ourselves from further participation in the case, that we should write a history of education in St. Louis. Much has been written about education during the slave years, 1820 to 1865. No one has attempted to pull together the rich material written over the period from 1820 to the 1980s.

It is all compiled in this remarkable document of how one court case changed the lives of children, of generations of children, of an entire community, made life better for not only African Americans but all citizens living in St. Louis.

□ 1345

I know that as I have traveled to that city from time to time to meet people, Gerald Heaney is nearly revered. He is enormously respected. His courage and standing and his steadfastness, just as he pursued the German forces across France and Germany, he pursued justice in the name of all of our fellow citizens as a sitting judge.

It is most fitting that we should designate the courthouse where he spent a great deal of his office hours. Although his cases were heard in St. Louis, in the courthouse there, his office hours were in the Federal building and the courthouse and customhouse in Duluth, a venerable facility that was built during the Depression years and, like Judge Heaney's work, will withstand the test of time for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Though many have made light of the schedule we have had for the past few weeks, the grueling schedule of naming a lot of Federal buildings, it doesn't mean that any of these individuals are any less deserving or should not be honored.

Today in committee in the Transportation Committee, we named a courthouse in Missouri, my home State, after Rush Hudson Limbaugh, Sr., who practiced law in the State of Missouri for over 80 years and was highly revered. Today on the floor, we are honoring somebody that, going through his accomplishments and what he has done in life, is somebody that truly should be recognized.

H.R. 187, which was introduced by Representative OBERSTAR of Minnesota, chairman of the Transportation Committee, designates the Federal building and the United States courthouse and customhouse at 515 West First Street in Duluth, Minnesota, as the Gerald W. Heaney Federal Building and United States Courthouse and Customhouse. The building honors Judge Heaney's dedication to public service.

As the gentleman from Minnesota pointed out, he served with great distinction during the Army in World War II and acquired a law degree from the University of Minnesota law school after his time. Judge Gerald W. Heaney engaged in private practice then just after the war, from 1946 to 1966.

Judge Heaney's career as a judge began then in 1966 with an appointment to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Judge Heaney had a reputation for championing equal justice for underprivileged and vulnerable citizens. Judge Heaney retired after 40 years of service on August 31, 2006.

I support this legislation, Mr. Speaker, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I want to say, once again, what a great privilege this is to author this legislation, bring it from the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which I have the honor to chair, and bring it to the House floor and pay tribute to a truly great heroic American who served his country in war, in peace, on the bench and in the hearts of our fellow citizens.

In addition to my statement on the Floor today, I want to include in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD this passage from "Unending Struggle: The Long Road to an Equal Education in St. Louis" by Judge Gerald W. Heaney and Dr. Susan Uchitelle:

> Unless additional resources are provided to the St. Louis public schools, they will fail, leading to a demand by some parents for alternative educational opportunities. . .
>
> Excellent public schools are essential in a democracy. Experience has demonstrated that urban city schools educate and will continue to educate most school-age children. Moreover, public schools have an obligation to educate all children—rich and poor, black, brown, and white, gifted or special. Unless children are well educated and well trained, they will be unable to take their place as full participants in our vibrant democracy.
>
> Segregated housing, a long history of discrimination in education and employment, and the historic lack of opportunity for African Americans to participate fully and equally in all aspects of life make the task ahead a challenging one.

This is but one simple passage from the works of Judge Heaney. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 187.

H.R. 187 is a bill to designate the federal building and United States Courthouse located at 515 West First St., Duluth, Minnesota as Judge "Gerald W. Heaney Federal Building and United States Courthouse and Customhouse." Gerald Heaney was appointed Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit on November 3, 1966. He took senior status on December 31, 1988, and retired on August 31, 2006, after over 40 years of distinguished service to his country and the citizens of Minnesota. I rise in strong support of this bill.

Judge Heaney was born on January 29, 1918 in Goodhue, a rural community in the southeastern part of Minnesota. As a child growing up in a farming community Judge Heaney learned the value of a close family, honesty, and hard work. These qualities have marked not only his personal life but also his life as a public servant. He was educated at the College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, and received his law degree from the University of Minnesota in 1941.

Gerry Heaney is a decorated World War II veteran. He was a member of the distinguished Army Ranger Battalion and participated in the historic D-Day landing at Normandy. He was awarded the Silver Star for extraordinary bravery in the battle of La Pointe du Hoc in Normandy. He also received a Bronze Star and five battle stars.

At the end of the war Judge Heaney returned home and entered private practice in Duluth. During that time he was instrumental in improving the state education system, and served on the board of regents for the University of Minnesota. He was instrumental in helping develop for the Duluth school system the same pay scale for both men and women.

In 1966 he was appointed by President Johnson to the Eight Circuit Court of Appeals. In that capacity he has been a champion in protecting the rights of the disadvantaged. He was devoted to making sure that every person had an equal opportunity for an education, a job, and a home. He firmly believes the poor, the less educated, and less advantaged deserve the protection of the Constitution.

As a hard working, well prepared, and fair minded jurist he left his legal imprimatur on school desegregation cases, bankruptcy law, prisoner treatment, and social security law.

His public service is discerned by industry, brilliance, and scholarly excellence. His compassion and dedication to those of us who are the most disadvantaged is unparalled.

Judge Heaney is most deserving of this honor. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 187.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the bill just passed.

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

There was no objection.

REPEALING PROHIBITION ON USE OF CERTAIN FUNDS WITH RESPECT TO LOS ANGELES TO SAN FERNANDO VALLEY METRO RAIL PROJECT, CALIFORNIA

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 238) to repeal a prohibition on the use of certain funds for tunneling in certain areas with respect to the Los Angeles to San Fernando Valley Metro Rail project, California.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 238

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. REPEAL OF PROHIBITION.

The second sentence of section 321 of the Department of Transportation and Related

Agencies Appropriations Act, 1986 (99 Stat. 1287) is repealed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill will repeal a prohibition on the use of Federal transit funds for tunneling in certain areas for construction of the San Fernando Valley Metro Rail project in Southern California.

Many of us can remember the tragedy over 20 years ago caused by an explosion due to the buildup of methane gas, which ignited after accumulating over a long period of time, on the Third Street Corridor in the Wilshire-Fairfax District of Los Angeles. It just rocked the entire area. The explosion damaged a building structure, injured 22 people. A preliminary investigation pointed to the ignition of underground pockets of pressurized gas.

The incident raised a great many safety concerns related to tunneling in the area to build the Metro Rail system. The Los Angeles City Council created a task force at the time to investigate the explosion to determine the cause of the accident, to make recommendations to avoid further incidents.

The results of the investigation identified two methane risk zones to assure that the safety concerns on construction of that segment of the Metro Rail were fully addressed. A provision was included in the fiscal year 1986 transportation appropriations bill to prohibit the use of Federal funds until safety concerns had been properly addressed.

The gentleman who took that cause to the committee, to the House, the gentleman from California, my colleague, we were elected in the same year, 1974, Mr. WAXMAN, has been vigilant on this issue and vigorous in his pursuit of safety for the people of Los Angeles County.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN).

Mr. WAXMAN. Thank you very much for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is noncontroversial. It relates to a situation in Los Angeles where prohibition was put in place to prevent tunneling in an area that has been designated as a high risk for methane gas explosions. The bill before us would repeal that prohibition about tunneling, because, at the request of Mayor Villaraigosa, we agreed to convene a panel of experts to assure us that it is technically feasible to handle the tunneling in a very safe manner, that the technology is there and that we need not fear the tunneling as we might have, appropriately so, in the mid-1980s.

In 2004, the L.A. City Council passed a motion urging reversal of this 1985 law, and in February of 2005, the LAMTA board renewed discussions of the subway expansion in this area.

I strongly support this legislation. There is no opposition to it. I appreciate the committee having reported out unanimously, and I would urge my colleagues in the House to agree with the proposal coming from the committee.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 238 is noncontroversial legislation. In the last Congress, it was reported unanimously by the House Transportation Committee and passed the House by voice vote.

H.R. 238 would repeal a law enacted in 1985 that prohibits subway tunneling in a part of Los Angeles I represent. I authored the 1985 legislation after a methane gas explosion demolished a Ross Dress-for-Less store in the Third and Fairfax area of Los Angeles.

After the explosion, serious safety concerns were raised about the city's plans to extend the subway in this area due to underground pockets of methane gas. In recent years, experts have indicated that technologies have been developed that could make tunneling in the area safe.

In 2004, the Los Angeles City Council passed a motion urging a reversal of the 1985 law, and in February 2005 the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority's board voted to renew discussions of the subway's expansion in this area.

As a result, I worked with Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa to select a panel of scientific experts to conduct an independent safety review. These experts made a unanimous determination in a November 2005 report that tunneling in the methane gas area can be done safely if proper procedures and appropriate technologies are used.

H.R. 238 simply lifts the Federal tunneling prohibition that has been in place since 1985. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 238 repeals a 21-year-old prohibition on the use of Federal transit funds to tunnel in the San Fernando Valley area west of Los Angeles.

In 1985, an explosion of naturally occurring methane gas blew up a department store in the Wilshire Boulevard Corridor in Los Angeles, injuring 22 people. As the gentleman from Minnesota aptly pointed out, concerned about the safety of tunneling in the area of Los Angeles, the city council created a task force to investigate the explosion. The task force identified methane risk zones along the Wilshire Boulevard Corridor.

The fiscal year 1986 transportation appropriations bill included a legislative provision that prohibits the use of Federal transit funds associated with the Los Angeles project for tunneling in or through an identified methane risk zone. The appropriations provision was written very broadly, binding future funds provided by Congress and affecting all parts of the Metro Rail subway project, including future extensions. The prohibition prevented any transportation planners in the Los Angeles area from considering any transportation improvements that might involve tunneling in the very broadly congested Wilshire Boulevard Corridor.

For me, Mr. Speaker, the need for this bill to be passed simply highlights the dangers of legislating an appropriations bill. H.R. 238 undoes something that should never have been done in the first place. In November 2005, a panel of engineering experts reported that tunneling along the Wilshire Boulevard Corridor can be done safely if proper procedures and appropriate techniques are used.

This bill, H.R. 238, will repeal the current prohibition on tunneling in that corridor. This legislation was first introduced by Congressman WAXMAN in December of 2005 as H.R. 4653 and was passed by the House in September of 2006. However, the Senate failed to act on the legislation, which is the reason we are back here on the floor today.

I do support H.R. 238, and I urge its passage.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I want to supplement the remarks of the gentleman from California, my colleague from Missouri, the ranking member on the subcommittee, that we now believe that the city council has resolved the issues. The mayor has put in place the process by which the tunneling can continue in all safety to both those doing the tunneling and those above ground and now advance the urgently needed transit project in Los Angeles into the San Fernando Valley area. So I urge the passage of H.R. 238.

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 238.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 365, by the yeas and nays;

H. Res. 120, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 482, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

METHAMPHETAMINE REMEDIATION RESEARCH ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 365.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 365, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 426, nays 2, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 78]

YEAS—426

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—2

Flake
Paul

NOT VOTING—7

Davis, Jo Ann
Hastert
Murtha
Norwood
Pryce (OH)
Rothman
Royce

□ 1423

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING THE AFRICAN AMERICAN SPIRITUAL AS A NATIONAL TREASURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 120.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 120, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 426, nays 0, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 79]

YEAS—426

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)

Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—9

Bishop (UT)
Davis, Jo Ann
Hastert
Norwood
Nunes
Pryce (OH)
Radanovich
Rothman
Royce

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised that there are less than 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1430

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 79 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

AMERICAN RIVER PUMP STATION PROJECT TRANSFER ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 482.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 482, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 425, nays 0, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 80]

YEAS—425

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Chabot
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—10

Costa
Davis, Jo Ann
Hastert
Lewis (GA)
Norwood
Pryce (OH)
Radanovich
Rothman
Royce
Tiahrt

□ 1439

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which

the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken tomorrow.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE LIFETIME CONTRIBUTIONS OF RAFAEL JOSÉ DIAZ-BALART

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 131) recognizing and honoring the lifetime contributions of Rafael José Diaz-Balart on the dedication of the Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall at the Florida International University College of Law.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 131

Whereas a native of Santiago de Cuba, Rafael José Diaz-Balart completed his studies at the University of Havana with a law degree in 1919;

Whereas soon after joining the Bar, he became a municipal judge in the city of Palma Soriano, where he served with distinction for four years until, by civil service examination, he obtained the post of civil law notary in the town of Banes in eastern Cuba;

Whereas, while maintaining his law practice, Rafael José Diaz-Balart was elected City Council President and Mayor of Banes;

Whereas he was later elected Congressman and transferred his law practice to the city of Holguín and subsequently to Havana, where he founded the law firm of Diaz-Balart, Diaz-Balart and Amador, with his son, Rafael Lincoln, and Rolando Amador;

Whereas, years later, also by examination, Rafael José Diaz-Balart assumed the post of Land Registrar, a prominent achievement for lawyers in many civil law countries, including Cuba;

Whereas Rafael José Diaz-Balart lived in exile after 1959, and became a proud citizen of the United States;

Whereas along with his son, Rafael Lincoln Diaz-Balart, Rafael José Diaz-Balart commenced law school at the University of Madrid, Spain, and in 1965, at age 66, earned a second Law Degree;

Whereas Rafael José Diaz-Balart died in Miami, Florida in 1985;

Whereas Rafael José Diaz-Balart instilled not only in his son, but in his four grandsons a sense honor and service, which led them to become prominent members of American society;

Whereas his son, Rafael Lincoln, was a prominent member of the Cuban House of Representatives, and his grandsons, Lincoln Diaz-Balart and Mario Diaz-Balart were elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1992 and 2002, respectively, Jose Diaz Balart became a prominent journalist as the Washington bureau chief for Telemundo Network and was the first United States journalist to host daily Spanish and English language newscasts, and Rafael Diaz Balart became a prominent Miami investment banker;

Whereas, on February 10, 2007, Florida International University will dedicate the Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall as the new home of the College of Law;

Whereas Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall will provide a state-of-the-art facility for teaching, research, and study, as well as scholarly and social interaction; and

Whereas the Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall was designed by the internationally renowned architect Robert A. M. Stern, Dean of the School of Architecture at Yale University: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives honors the lifetime accomplishments and legacy of Rafael José Diaz-Balart for his numerous contributions to democracy, and recognizes the Florida International University dedication of the Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall at the College of Law as an appropriate tribute in his memory.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may insert material relevant to H. Res. 131 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to yield the time to Representative MEEK from Florida for the purpose of managing the Democratic side of the bill.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to come before the House today in support of Resolution 131, to recognize Rafael José Diaz-Balart, grandfather of two of our great colleagues here in this great House, LINCOLN and MARIO DIAZ-BALART.

Rafael Diaz-Balart was a native of Santiago de Cuba and completed his law degree at the University of Havana in 1919. Soon after he joined the bar, Rafael Diaz-Balart became the municipal judge in the city of Palma Soriano, where he served with great distinction. Four years later, he earned a post of civil law notary in the town of Banes in eastern Cuba, where he was later then elected city council president and mayor of the city.

Upon his election to the Cuban House of Representatives, he founded the law firm of Diaz-Balart, Diaz-Balart and Amador in Havana, with his son, Rafael Lincoln, MARIO and LINCOLN's father, and Rolando Amador. Years later, he earned the post Land Registrar, a prominent achievement for lawyers in Cuba.

After the 1959 coup, Rafael Diaz-Balart lived in exile and became a proud citizen of the United States. In exile, Rafael José Diaz-Balart entered law school at the University of Madrid, and in 1965, at age 66, earned his second law degree.

While Rafael Diaz-Balart had many great accomplishments, his greatest of all may have been the honor and sense of duty that he instilled his son Rafael Lincoln and his four grandsons: LINCOLN and MARIO, whom I proudly serve with here in the House; also José, who is a prominent journalist; and Rafael, a successful businessman in Miami.

This week Florida International University Law School will be dedicated in the name of Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall, a tribute to their grandfather. The keynote address will be given by Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader-Ginsburg, and there will be countless Federal, State and local municipal elected officials.

This honor to the Diaz-Balart family is a testimony to the American Dream. Here is a family in a bloodline that left Cuban exile, but came to the United States to make this country better.

The entire family has contributed not only to the south Florida community, but the entire State of Florida, and also this great country of ours, which is the United States of America.

I think the House is full within its right to be able to recognize this great American for what he was able to do in his contributions to those that not only serve here in the House of Representatives, but serve in the fields of journalism and in business. I am honored to bring this to the floor at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 131, a resolution recognizing and honoring the lifetime contributions of Rafael José Diaz-Balart, on the dedication of the Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall at the Florida International University College of Law.

I would like to thank my friend Mr. MEEK for introducing this important resolution.

The founding of the Florida International University College of Law did not become possible until 2000. The college of law received full accreditation from the American Bar Association in December 2006.

The law school is home to 382 law students and 25 faculty members. The Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall was designed by the renowned architect and dean of architecture at Yale University, Robert A.M. Stern. It incorporates two interior courtyards, an atrium, a reading room, an auditorium, a legal clinic, and two teaching courtrooms. In addition, the hall will have two additional rooms solely for expanding international and foreign law collections.

Of particular interest to the students and the school are volumes focusing on international organization and Caribbean and Latin American law.

□ 1445

Rafael Diaz-Balart, for whom the hall was named, was born in Cuba and earned a law degree from the University of Havana in 1919. He later served as a lawyer, a judge, president of the city council and was eventually elected mayor of the city of Banes and then was elected congressman. Diaz-Balart went into exile in 1959 and earned his second law degree from the University of Madrid in 1965. He died in Miami in

1985. Mr. Diaz-Balart is also the grandfather of two distinguished Members of Congress, MARIO and LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART.

I congratulate the Florida International University College of Law on receiving its full American Bar Association accreditation and the inauguration of this beautiful new hall.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to one of my great colleagues from the Florida delegation (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank both of my good friends from Florida, Mr. KELLER and Mr. MEEK. It is my privilege to join with my colleagues in honoring the life and legacy of the Diaz-Balart family, and particularly Rafael Diaz-Balart, who distinguished himself not just in the Cuban House of Representatives, but by becoming a wonderful citizen of the United States of America and contributing his subsequent generations of his family to the history of the State of Florida and to the United States by lending his two grandsons to the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, across this country we have a wonderful history of naming institutions like law centers after our giants, and Florida is no exception. The Shepard Broad Law Center at Nova Southeastern University is named after a Florida giant. The University of Florida Law Center, the Holland Building, is named after a Florida giant. And now the law center at Florida International University will be named after a Cuban-American, a Florida giant, Rafael Diaz-Balart, and it is my privilege to join my colleagues in honoring his legacy and his life today.

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, and the first Hispanic woman elected in the history of the United States Congress.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I thank my good friend Mr. MEEK of Florida for presenting this resolution for us today.

I rise in strong support of this resolution, which honors the life of Rafael José Diaz-Balart, a prominent attorney, an elected official in pre-Castro Cuba, who is also the grandfather, as we have heard, of our esteemed South Florida Congressional colleagues, LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART and MARIO DIAZ-BALART, as well as their two other brothers, José Diaz-Balart, a very well known television personality and news anchor, and Rafael Diaz-Balart, a prominent South Florida businessman.

Their grandfather, Rafael José Diaz-Balart, was a native of Santiago de Cuba, and completed his studies at the University of Havana with a law degree in 1919. While maintaining his law practice, he was also elected city council president and mayor of Banes, and later as a member of the Cuban House of Representatives, similar to our body.

Following the 1959 communist takeover by Fidel Castro, Rafael José Diaz-Balart fled to the United States to live in exile with his family. Shortly following, he proudly became a citizen of the United States. Along with his son, Rafael Lincoln, he commenced law school at the University of Madrid, Spain, and in 1965, at the age of 66, earned a second law degree. He sadly passed away in Miami, Florida, in 1985.

He, like my father Enrique Ros and so many others who fled Cuba due to Castro's tyrannical regime in the last 50 years, Rafael dreamt of a free Cuba, a country where human rights are respected, where political prisoners are freed, with a democratic, multi-party political system that flourishes and a free market economy that thrives, thus allowing the Cuban people and their foreign economic partners to own their businesses and to prosper. None of those things are allowed today.

I am so glad that this Saturday, February 10, the Florida International University College of Law will dedicate its new law center as the Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall. We are also proud of the many accomplishments of FIU, Florida International University, my alma mater, and we think this is a positive step forward.

So I ask my colleagues to join us in commemorating the life of a great patriot, Rafael José Diaz-Balart, a tremendous mentor, a loving husband, a father and one of the most outstanding members of the South Florida community, a freedom fighter from his first to his last breath.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on House Resolution 131.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve my time.

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the grandson of Rafael Diaz-Balart, my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART).

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida, Mr. KELLER. I want to thank all of those colleagues who have spoken here today. On behalf of my brother, Congressman LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART, who is actually now in a committee and cannot be here, I want to particularly thank Congressman KENDRICK MEEK for this profound and deep honor.

Congressman MEEK, I have to tell you, there are not a lot of secrets in this process, but somehow you kept this a secret, and I am not quite sure how you were able to do this, because both my brother and I didn't know about this until very, very recently. That is something that is frankly unusual, for anything to be kept a secret in this process.

I particularly want to thank the sponsor of this resolution for, again, this honor to our grandfather and our family, our entire family, that this House is giving all of us today.

But when I think of families who have public service in their background, our dear friend Congressman KENDRICK MEEK comes from a family of deep service to our country. As I said recently in a public meeting in Miami, the matriarch of the Florida congressional delegation and particularly the South Florida Members congressional delegation is Congresswoman Carrie Meek, who was not only a fine Member of this institution and also was a member of the Florida legislature for many years, but she is an icon in the history of our Nation. She is one of those who has broken through, her entire life, that glass ceiling, not once, not twice, but many, many times. Then, of course, her son, KENDRICK, who is a tough fighter for issues that he believes in and for the people he represents and who I am honored to call a dear friend of mine.

So I am deeply honored, Congressman. I am deeply honored for all of this. On behalf of the Diaz-Balart family, I just want to thank you for this deep honor, this deep privilege. It is a day that we will not soon forget. Again, just thank you all very much.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is very interesting when you look at this resolution, because it is the American Dream. Some Americans don't have the opportunity to have a resolution brought before the House of Representatives honoring the memory of their bloodline, their father and their grandfather and their entire family. But I can tell you that, in the words of my grandmother, saying ''isn't God good,'' this resolution displays the American Dream.

As we start to look at this resolution, as we start to reflect on the contributions of the Diaz-Balart family to the United States of America, to find that it not only didn't start totally with Rafael José Diaz-Balart, but he had a lot to do with the pilgrimage to the United States of America and the contributions that his grandchildren have made and that his son made in this society, that have made America better. It has brought us together in many ways.

Understanding a story of some of the issues facing America right now, as some folks may feel about recent immigrants to this country, this is a perfect example to set up on the pedestal of how those that come to our country with the will and desire to serve this country, not to pull from this country, but to serve on behalf of this country, what can happen.

We have four individuals that are the grandchildren of the very man that we are recognizing here in the House of Representatives, this great country of ours, individuals fought to allow us to

salute one flag. Two are contributing to this country, serving at the same time in the U.S. House of Representatives in this Congress and in the last Congress and the Congress before that, and one is at the top of journalism as it relates to Spanish language international television, and another is a prominent businessman in South Florida. I think this is a time that the House is rightfully recognizing these great Americans for what they were able to do.

Mr. Speaker, to Mr. DIAZ-BALART and to Mr. KELLER and to all of my colleagues here, it is a great honor to bring this before the House, because I believe everyone can understand the reason why we are here, and it is justified. But this could be one of many examples of families that have contributed to our country. I know they will continue to do so, and I know their children's children will continue to do so, and this moment in history will just be one beacon of light to show how appreciative we are for not only the Diaz-Balart family for their contributions but other families like them.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would totally agree with my colleague, Mr. MEEK, that the Diaz-Balart family has made America a much better place for all of our children to grow up. I have been very honored to serve with both LINCOLN and MARIO DIAZ-BALART, and I know they both have a lot of pride in their grandfather.

I am very happy that Mr. MEEK introduced this resolution honoring Rafael Diaz-Balart. Mr. MEEK also obviously has a lot of pride in the bloodline he has with the famous Congresswoman Carrie Meek. I was reminded of her just this past weekend when I was down in Miami for the football game on Sunday and I parked on Carrie Meek Boulevard down there.

I explained to the parking lot attendant that I served with Carrie Meek and I am friends with her son, KENDRICK MEEK. He said, Yeah, man. That will be thirty bucks. It only gets you so far. But I have a lot of pride in knowing both of these families.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance my time.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I just would like to thank Mr. MILLER of the Education Committee, also the majority leader's office and the Speaker's office for allowing us to bring this resolution so that it can be timely for the dedication this weekend when the good people of Florida and this great country and the Supreme Court Justice will honor the memory of Rafael José Diaz-Balart at the naming of the hall of the law school.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 131.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1500

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

(Ms. FALLIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FALLIN. Madam Speaker, as you know, February is American Heart Month. It is a time when we here in Congress and the people across America can reaffirm their commitment to fighting heart disease, the number one killer in Oklahoma and the entire United States.

Nearly 80 million American adults suffer from some form of heart-related illness. Every 35 seconds, an American dies from that illness. Heart disease kills more Americans than the number two, three and four leading causes of death combined.

Madam Speaker, heart disease is a big problem for women just as it is for men, if not more so. In 1984, more women than men died from heart disease. In Oklahoma, 19 women die every day of a heart-related illness.

Last Friday, millions of men and women participated in National Wear Red Day to honor the many women who have been touched by heart disease. This was a great gesture, reminding us of the importance of fighting the disease. And we can fight it by exercising, maintaining health, eating healthy and refraining from smoking.

Madam Speaker, I encourage all my colleagues and all Americans to remember the millions of people affected by heart disease this month and to Wear Red Day for heart disease. By raising awareness of this disease, we can improve the lives of millions of men and women in this country.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE MIDDLE EAST

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, the President and his administration would be wise to avoid making Iran the next Iraq. Despite that, the demonizing of Iran has begun as the President tries to divert the attention of the American people away from the Iraq debacle. Instead of advocating diplomacy in the region as recommended by the Iraq Study Group and countless leaders in both political parties, the President is making veiled threats that are becoming increasingly worrisome. The boiling caldron of violence in the Middle East is growing hotter, and to many people, the policies and pronouncements of the President concerning Iran are seen as throwing gasoline on the fire.

As the situation worsens in Iraq, the President talks more and more about Iran, as if the attention of the American people and the world can so easily be diverted. That is not going to work this time. The focus of the American people, indeed the focus of the world, is on the U.S. occupation of Iraq and the disastrous war the President continues to wage and escalate. We know he is raising the stakes in Iraq. Many fear Iran is not behind. And we see an irony in that.

Leaders in the Middle East I met with recently in Jordan blame Paul Bremer, the President's first administrator in Iraq, believing Bremer, unwittingly or otherwise, handed Iraq to the regime in Iran. He did it with disastrous decisions.

First, he dismantled the Iraqi army. That left the border between Iraq and Iran unguarded and open to the infiltration of weapons and insurgents to foment violence in Iraq.

Bremer gave the Shi'a effective control by mandating they receive a majority of seats in reconstituting an Iraqi government.

These decisions opened the border and at the same time tightened relationships between Iranian Shi'a and Iraqi Shi'a. It set the stage for Iran's influence to grow stronger and stronger inside Iraq and unleashed a torrent of violence, pitting Iraqi against Iraqi with American soldiers caught in the cross fire. Is there any wonder that many Iraqis believe their nation is being handed over to Iran by the U.S.?

Now, many believe the President's saber rattling toward Iran has less to do with its efforts to develop a nuclear weapon and more to do with his failure to understand the region and contain Iran from the outset of the war. Thoughtful people in the United States and around the world fear the President is compounding the trouble, not confronting the problems in a troubled region. Where does all this saber rattling go? History shows us the way.

In less than one generation, we have done what we vowed never to do again: We have allowed a President to stampede the Nation into a hopeless war, not because we had to but because he wanted to. This President believed he could have victory by saying it was so. We have seen the tragic consequences of that.

There are so many parallels between the Iraq debacle and Vietnam; it is unbelievable. The President and many

people in America forgot the lessons of history when a blank check was given to a President in Iraq. There are still some lessons to learn.

The Vietnam War was going badly, so much so that an earlier President did not merely escalate the war, he expanded it into Laos and Cambodia, secret bombing that did not shorten the Vietnam War or offer a path to resolution.

My fear is that we will forget all the lessons of the Vietnam War. It is time to ask the question: Is Iran the next Laos or Cambodia?

With things going badly in Iraq, will the President continue to ignore the lessons of history and order the American military not merely to escalate but to expand the war beyond Iraq? I wish a question like this did not have to be asked, but we cannot watch Iraq, consider Vietnam, and not worry that a President who refuses to learn from history or admit mistakes is not doomed to repeating the same mistakes.

Military action is not the answer in Iraq, in Iran or Gaza, or any other flash point in the Middle East. We need to dispatch an army all right, an army of diplomats armed not with bullets but with ideas, with resolve and with a book of American history in every briefcase.

The way out of Iraq must begin here on Capitol Hill, because down the street at the White House, they are only talking about more ways in and, we fear, other places to go. This war must end now, and there should be a binding resolution to indicate that to the President and to the American people.

AMNESTY FOR U.S. BORDER PATROL AGENTS RAMOS AND COMPEAN

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. Madam Speaker, 3 weeks ago, two U.S. Border Patrol agents entered Federal prison. Agents Ramos and Compean never should have been sent to prison.

These agents were convicted last spring for shooting a Mexican drug smuggler who brought 743 pounds of marijuana across our southern borders into Texas. Members of Congress and countless American citizens have repeatedly petitioned President Bush to pardon these agents. At the House Democratic Caucus last week, the President said, and I quote the President, ''We want our Border Patrol agents guarding the borders from criminals and drug dealers and terrorists.''

Agents Ramos and Compean were protecting the American people from an illegal drug dealer. Mr. President, we are calling on you today, as you pledged you would last month, to take a sober look at this case.

Many Members of Congress have warned that if these two border agents enter prison, their safety would be threatened by those who hate law enforcement officers. Madam Speaker, tragically this happened last Saturday evening to Agent Ramos who was beaten in prison by a group of Mexican nationals.

Mr. President, the safety of these men is in jeopardy and time is running out. You alone have the authority to correct this injustice by pardoning these two men. Mr. President, please do not delay your review of the facts of this case.

Madam Speaker, my colleagues and I will soon be sending a fifth letter to the President concerning these agents. We are asking the President to please expedite his consideration of a pardon for these two men and help these families realize that America is a country that believes in justice. Madam Speaker, I want to repeat that phrase very quickly: America is a country that believes in justice.

Mr. President, please help these two Border agents. They deserve our praise, not to be in prison. Please, Mr. President, help them out now.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Well, finally, I have some grounds for agreement with the President, at least rhetorically. He says he is committed to balancing the budget by 2012. Unfortunately, after that statement, our disagreements begin.

First and foremost, he forgets or neglects to tell the American people that he achieves this so-called balance by borrowing $1.2 trillion of Social Security surplus, spending it and replacing it with IOUs.

Remember, just last year, the President was shocked, shocked, when he went to Parkersburg, West Virginia, that the Social Security trust fund consisted of nothing but IOUs.

Now, the Federal Government is pretty good for its debts unless you run up such a mountain of debt and you cut revenues so much with tax cuts for the wealthy that you can't afford to meet those obligations; you can't afford to cash in the bonds or the IOUs to Social Security. And I believe that is his long-term plan, to bankrupt Social Security, Medicare and other New Deal programs that this administration viscerally hates because they don't encourage people to stand on their own. They say it would be a more productive society if we just didn't have all those social support programs or guarantees of Social Security.

I think they give people an opportunity. They allow people to take chances during their life because they know, if they don't make it in that business or something else they are trying to do, at least they have got a foundation there for their later years. So we should not jeopardize Social Security; the President should not borrow and spend the entire Social Security surplus just before the baby boomers retire.

But even after he does that, the President's budget does not achieve balance. Far from it. The President's budget assumes there will be no cost for the war in Iraq or the war in Afghanistan after 2009. I guess he has a withdrawal plan he has not told us about.

What about the much vaunted war on terror? No money in the future budgets for that. He assumes all that goes away, you know, the incredible amounts of money we are spending there.

He further assumes that if we cut taxes more for the wealthy, that the government will get more revenues. Now, isn't that a beautiful world? If we could just eliminate taxes for the wealthy, I guess we would go back to having surpluses for the Federal Government under the bizarre economic theories followed by these neoconservatives who thus far have been proven to be pretty wrong on a host of things, starting with Iraq and on down to their bizarre theories that, as you reduce revenues, your revenues increase. They don't.

Plain and simple, the wealthiest among us have to start paying their fair share to support this country particularly in a time of crisis. Why shouldn't they sacrifice? Like the young men and women, many of whom are in the National Guard because they needed an income. Yes, they wanted to serve our country, but they also needed the income; many of whom are in the military, yes, because they want to serve our country but also because they hope to get those education benefits and some training to do better when they come out.

But the wealthiest, they are given a total buy. They have been given tax cuts, the first tax cuts in a time of war in the history of the United States of America. But the President doesn't think we should ask anything of the wealthy, and he pretends that if we extend their tax breaks forever, if we eliminate taxes on estates worth over $5 million, then in fact the government will have more revenues. Unfortunately, it is not true. It will increase the deficit wildly beyond the numbers in his budget.

So he borrows all of the Social Security surplus, robs the trust funds, spends the money, replaces it with IOUs, cuts taxes for the rich people. How else does he pretend to get the balance? By cutting Medicare.

□ 1515

That will help. $252 billion cut in Medicare, cutting Medicaid health care for poor people, that will get us to balance, would not want to ask the rich people.

The tax cuts for the rich people so far exceed the cuts that he is making in Medicare and Medicaid, we could fully fund those programs and just ask to restore a fraction of the taxes on people who earn over $300,000 a year and have estates more than $5 million, but the President does not want to do that.

He goes on through the entire budget slashing. Again, I agree with what he said. Unfortunately, he did not deliver. He said he would increase Pell Grants. His budget does not increase Pell Grants. It does not increase opportunity for young people to go to college. He does not take on the student loan programs where, if we converted from a bank subsidy program to a national direct student loan program, like I got when I went to college, we could give lower interest rates and make money for the taxpayers. No, he would rather give 17 cents of every dollar of every loan to the banks as profits and subsidies and take it out of the pockets of the students.

This is not an opportunity budget, it is not an honest budget, and it will take this country further down the road toward bankruptcy. That will be George Bush's legacy.

DOES ANYBODY CARE? HAS ANYBODY NOTICED?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, does anybody care, has anybody noticed, that:

Our policy toward Iran is hostile and provocative, and thus war seems inevitable?

That we have seized Iranians in Iraq, who claim they are diplomats, and now we have announced that any Iranians found in Iraq may be shot?

Has anybody noticed that large numbers of Iranians go back and forth into Iraq for many reasons, including family, religious and medical reasons, and probably for their own security as well?

Iraq Prime Minister Maliki has expressed opposition to the surge of U.S. troops?

That the violence in Iraq has sharply escalated since Saddam Hussein was hanged?

That the American electorate voted for deescalation of the war, and yet the war is being expanded with no new strategic goals?

That Iraqi officials, from the government we installed, have held conciliatory talks with Iranian officials, something we refuse to do?

That our own CIA acknowledges that Iran is not likely to have a nuclear weapon for at least 10 more years?

That Iran has a right to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, yet we claim they do not? By denying this right to Iran, we actually are violating the NPT.

The neoconservative propagandists promote the idea that President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad speaks for the Iranian people and her government, even though he lacks real power, in order to stir up hatred and generate popular support for an attack on Iran?

We completely ignore the leaders of Iran's National Security Council who have made reasonable statements about the United States and are open to direct talks with us?

That our threats and sanctions against Iran compound the problem by unifying the Iranians against us and undermining the moderates who are favorable toward America?

The latest accusations against Iran sound like a replay of the same charges against Iraq 5 years ago?

But not only does Iran not have a nuclear weapon, it has no significant military power; it is a Third World nation that could be wiped off the face of the Earth by the U.S. or by Israel if it ever attempted hostilities toward us?

One thing for sure, the Iranians are not suicidal?

But our policies toward Pakistan, India and North Korea serve as a great incentive for nations to seek a nuclear weapon, and thus gain respect at home and abroad while greatly lessening the odds of being attacked by us?

The promoters of military confrontation, who glibly criticize those who do not support preemptive, aggressive war are themselves the most extreme diplomatic isolationists, refusing any dialogue with our enemies or potential enemies?

There is no definition for victory in Iraq, and our goals are constantly changing, while the supporters of the war refuse to recognize that a war without purpose, by definition, cannot be won?

That it is now argued that after 4 years of killing, we cannot leave Iraq because a worse chaos would ensue?

That the U.S. naval buildup in the Persian Gulf has ominous overtones, none peaceful?

The world is preparing for a significant escalation of hostilities in the region, but are the American people prepared?

Most Americans in the November election asked for something quite different?

Our proxy war to bring about regime change in Somalia and gain control of the Horn of Africa scarcely has been noticed by the American public or the politicians in Washington?

That few observers noticed that we have placed in power some of the same warlords who humiliated us in 1993 in Mogadishu?

That the empty slogan ''War on Terror'' has no meaning and, therefore, it has no end?

That it serves as an excuse for endless war, anyplace, anytime.

That terrorism is a mere tactic and does not describe the nature of the enemy?

That acts by criminal gangs do not justify remaking the Middle East and Central Asia?

The careless support for this international war on terrorism has permitted the U.S. to intervene militarily and to bring about regime change in three countries: Iraq, Afghanistan, and Somalia. Now we are provoking Iran so we can have an excuse to do the same thing there. But who knows, maybe we will have to deal with a regime change in Pakistan first, a regime change that will not be to our liking.

Let us hope Congress comes to its senses soon and starts to defund our interventionist policies before we go broke. Time is short.

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

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

HONORING NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY 2007

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

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Madam Speaker, today we mark the seventh year that we commemorate National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. This is a bittersweet accomplishment. While I am proud to say that awareness of this epidemic's effect on the black community has grown over these 7 years, it pains me to admit that this disease continues to affect African Americans at a disproportionately large and growing rate.

I consider the fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic to be one of the most pressing issues of our time and of my tenure here as a Member of Congress. This issue attracted my concern years ago when I became aware of the staggering rate at which infants contract HIV from their mothers during birth or breast-feeding.

I helped to raise awareness of this important issue when I came to Congress in 1996 through the introduction of and authorizing a bill and going to the Appropriations Committee to target the mother-to-child transmission. At that time, it was mother-to-child transmission internationally, and President Bush eventually incorporated aspects of my legislation in PEPFAR, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

While mother-to-child transmission continues to be a pressing problem abroad, we have shown some success in

fighting this here in the United States. The rate of perinatal HIV has decreased steadily from 122 in 2000 to 47 in 2004. Of course, the only acceptable rate of mother-to-child transmission is zero. However, we would do well to achieve a similar 60 percent reduction in all categories of HIV infection.

So today we focus on the HIV epidemic among African Americans. The statistics are staggering, and it highlights the growing impact this epidemic has on African Americans.

In 1985, blacks accounted for 25 percent of AIDS diagnosed, whereas in 2005 they accounted for 50 percent of new diagnoses. This statistic is all the more staggering because in 2005 African Americans only made up 12 percent of the population of this country.

In 2005, 75 out of every 100,000 African Americans had AIDS, compared to only 7.5 out of every 100,000 whites.

Perhaps more disturbing, African American women and children suffer at a rate that is even greater than that of African Americans overall.

Black women accounted for 67 percent of new AIDS cases among women in 2005, compared to 16 percent among white women.

In 2005, young African Americans accounted for only 15 percent of U.S. teens, yet they accounted for 75 percent of new AIDS cases.

In 2002, HIV was the number one cause of death for black women between the ages of 25 and 34, and this is why, Madam Speaker, that I started the first-of-its-kind AIDS Walk for minority women and children and dedicated that to minority women and children. We celebrated 10 years last year because of the staggering statistics that we are still faced with, and we will not stop until we eradicate this dreadful disease. It is ravishing the communities of Latinos, especially Latinas, African American women and both our children.

The devastating effects of this epidemic have not escaped the notice of African American communities, in part due to the success of the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. Half of the African Americans say the HIV/AIDS is a more urgent problem than it was a few years ago, and indeed, it is. Half of African Americans also believe that the U.S. is losing ground in the fight against this epidemic domestically.

Today is an important day in the effort to increase awareness of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the African American community. However, awareness is not enough. We must work toward solutions to reduce and eventually eradicate not only the racial disparities of HIV/AIDS, but the disease itself. To do so we must increase funding for domestic HIV/AIDS programs, particularly those that target minorities. We must strengthen our efforts to educate the public, particularly young people. We must work harder to encourage HIV testing, and we must also work to care for those who already have contracted this devastating illness.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 547, ADVANCED FUELS INFRASTRUCTURE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

Ms. SLAUGHTER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110–9) on the resolution (H. Res. 133) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 547) to facilitate the development of markets for alternative fuels and Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel fuel through research, development, and demonstration and data collection, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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.)

NYPD'S FINEST

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, the NYPD is one of the most recognizable police departments not only in the United States, but the world.

Nearly 38,000 strong, these brave men and women protect and serve the greater New York metropolitan area and its citizens. Being a peace officer in New York City is a dangerous job. It has always been a dangerous job, and New York peace officers risk their lives daily.

The starting salary for a peace officer in New York City is $25,000, and once they graduate from the academy, it is only $32,000, almost poverty wages in one of the most expensive cities in the country to live in.

Yet, each year's recruiting classes, young men and women choose to wear the blue uniform and badge of NYPD. They choose to serve New York City and its citizens with honor and bravery.

Madam Speaker, I have had the opportunity as a former judge in Texas to address NYPD peace officers, and after we got through the language barrier, I found them to be dedicated keepers and protectors of the law.

Officer Patrick Lynch, Christine Schmidt and Joseph Cho are three of the valiant PD police officers from New York City. Little did they know that in the early morning hours of February 5, just a few days ago, they would make and become a cut above the rest of us.

It all started with a guy by the name of Danny Fernandez. He was broke, and he was in debt, so he decided how he was going to get some money to pay his debt and pay off other expenses, and he wanted to commit many serious felony crimes ranging from robbery to attempted murder.

So to begin his crime spree, he needed a weapon to commit these robberies. So he decided to attack an NYPD officer to get a firearm. His choice was 30-year-old Officer Joseph Cho, a 2-month rookie assigned to late-night foot patrol on the tough New York streets.

That night, Officer Cho unknowingly became Fernandez's target. Fernandez attacked him and smashed Cho twice over the head with a baseball bat.

Meanwhile, Officer Patrick Lynch, another rookie, who was also out of the academy just 2 months and assigned to the latenight foot patrol, was on patrol. Around 1:00 a.m., Officer Lynch came face-to-face with the menacing Fernandez, armed with a baseball bat, standing over Officer Cho ready to strike him a third time, even though Officer Cho was on the ground.

So seeing Officer Cho on the ground, unconscious, with the bat-wielding outlaw standing over him, Officer Lynch charged after the suspect, and then he radioed for backup. Responding to his calls for assistance was Officer Christine Smith, a 26-year-old, yes, that is right, rookie within NYPD.

She, like Officers Cho and Lynch, had only been out of the academy for 2 months, and she was on foot patrol just a few blocks away. She had given up a career in teaching to become a peace officer.

Together, this dynamic duo quickly caught the outlaw and held him and charged him with serious crimes.

Their bravery and heroism has earned these three rookies commendations from NYPD Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly. It has also earned them the respect of their fellow officers and the gratitude of the entire city.

Officer Cho received numerous skull fractures and required 20 stitches, but eventually he will recover. The criminal will be facing a jury in New York City for his crimes against New York City's finest, the NYPD.

Lawmen and women like Officers Lynch, Smith and Cho are a rare breed, but they are the Americans who wear the badge to protect and to serve. So, today, we thank rookies Lynch, Schmid and Cho and the thousands other peace officers in this country for their daily valor, courage and sense of duty to the people. These individuals fight the local thugs, child molesters, robbers, killers and street terrorists. They do our work for us. They are what stands between us, the law and the lawless, and we thank them for that.

And that's just the way it is.

□ 1530

THE SURGE AND IRAQI FORCES

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, you will recall that the hallmark of the

President's so-called surge, the escalation of troops into Iraq, was that Iraqi forces would actually be on the front lines, while American troops would be providing support.

In fact, a White House fact sheet from the day the President announced escalation, says that the primary element of the strategy is to let the Iraqis lead.

Well, the escalation has begun, and not only are they not leading, we are lucky if they even show up. That is right. Reportedly, as many as 50 percent of the Iraqi troops expected and needed for the Baghdad operation aren't reporting to duty. This doesn't bode well, Madam Speaker. American troops will now bear the brunt of what promises to be deadly, violent, urban warfare.

We are now finding out that the escalation will be twice as large as the President has said, requiring 48,000 additional troops, as opposed to 21,000, as originally announced by the President. Now, if Iraqis aren't prepared for the fight, it is easy to imagine still more U.S. soldiers being sent into the grinder. The surge has barely begun, and already, it is failing.

It is clear, furthermore, that the Maliki government is powerless to live up to its promises. Maliki himself owes much of his political authority to one of Iraq's most powerful militia leaders. So how, exactly, is he going to keep Iraqi communities safe from the militias?

On their way out the door, General Abizaid and General Casey warned that increasing force levels just absolves Iraqis of the responsibility for their own security, and they were absolutely right.

In the State of the Union address, the President said, and I quote him, '' . . . it's time for [the Iraqi] government to act. They have promised to deploy more of their own troops to secure Baghdad . . . They pledged that they will confront violent radicals of any faction . . . and they need to follow through.''

If they don't, where is the ''or else'' in the President's words, and where are the consequences if they don't meet these benchmarks and honor these commitments?

Madam Speaker, it is time for fewer carrots and more sticks. Edward Luttwak of the Center for Strategic and International Studies put it succinctly. He said, ''it's time for the Iraqis to make their own history.'' Or, in the words of Luttwak's New York Times op-ed piece yesterday, he said, ''To Help Iraq, Let It Fend for Itself. ''

There is only one solution, a quick military withdrawal from Iraq. I have a bill that was sponsored by 33 other Members of Congress that will do precisely that. H.R. 508, the Bring Our Troops Home and Iraq Sovereignty Restoration Act will do exactly what we need. It will take our troops out of harm's way and force Iraqis to secure their own country. We won't leave them high and dry. The bill calls for an international stabilization force, but one that would come only at the request of the Iraqi government for no more than 2 years, and with other nations taking on the burden as well.

H.R. 508 will have our troops home in 6 months, leaving behind no permanent military bases and turning over control of the Iraqi oil to the Iraqi people. We will not abandon Iraq. We will continue to be a partner in the reconciliation and reconstruction, but it is time for us to end the military occupation that has failed so tragically. There are no good answers here, but one thing is for sure: There is nothing more our soldiers can do to bring peace to the streets of Baghdad or any other part of Iraq. If anything, our continued presence is aggravating an already combustible situation, which, in fact, we created. We created this situation with our invasion in the first place. Madam Speaker, it is time for Iraqis to defend Iraq, and it is time for American troops to come home.

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

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

HONORING TAYLOR SIAS AND KEVIN TEMPLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about two outstanding youths in my district and to highlight, I think, something that we do too rarely here and across America. We talk a lot about our young people in their teens playing video games, not getting involved in their communities, not trying new sports, not enjoying the outdoors.

Today I am very privileged to talk about two such individuals in my district who are breaking the mold and are, I think, achieving at high levels, but they are also doing it by enjoying the great outdoors and also bringing strength to their communities.

First, I would like to recognize Taylor Sias from Weston, West Virginia, for representing our State in the 2007 Bassmaster CastingKids National Semi-Finals Competition in Gadsden, Alabama.

Taylor is a sixth grade student at Robert L. Bland Middle School in Weston and is a three-time State champion. Taylor previously competed in the 2004 semifinals in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and in the 2005 semifinals in Orlando, Florida. The Bassmaster CastingKids challenge is to flip, pitch and cast a hookless lure into a bull's eye target. Sounds kind of hard to me.

BASS developed the Bassmaster CastingKids program in 1991, open to young people in two age groups, 7–10 and 11–14. The goals of this competition are to involve America's youth in fishing and to foster in each participant an appreciation and a concern for our outdoors. Participants compete in local events conducted by affiliated BASS federation national clubs. Local event winners proceed to their State finals where each State then determines two to represent their State at the national semifinals. From the national semifinals, only 10 contenders advance on to the national championship. Since its inception, over 1.5 million youth have participated in the program, and over $2 million in cash prizes and scholarships have been awarded.

I would again like to congratulate Taylor and thank him for proudly representing West Virginia at the 2007 Bassmaster CastingKids National Semifinals Championship and wish him the best of luck in becoming an accomplished angler.

Madam Speaker, the other youth I would like to talk about today is Kevin Templan of Charlestown, West Virginia. Kevin became the first member of Boy Scout Troop 82 to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout. His commitment to family and community and church played an integral part in this achievement. Kevin worked on a beautification project at Saint Peter's Catholic Cemetery for his Eagle Scout project.

He is recognized by the Boy Scout National Honor Society, Order of the Arrows, for adhering to the traditions and values of scouting. A senior at Jefferson County High School, Kevin is a drummer in the Cougar Marching Band. He attends Saint James Greater Catholic Church where he will soon be a member of the Knights of Columbus. Kevin enjoys reading, origami and spending time with his younger brother and sister.

The Templan family recently moved to my district from Bryan, Texas, and we welcome them. I would like to take this opportunity to extend a warm West Virginia welcome to Kevin and his family. Jefferson County is fortunate to host such an accomplished young leader. It is a pleasure to serve such devoted young citizens like Kevin in West Virginia's Second District.

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

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

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

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

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

(Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania addressed the House. His emarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

BLACK AIDS AWARENESS DAY

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

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, today is Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, a day when we urge African Americans to get educated, get involved and get tested. On Monday, the House passed my resolution H. Con. Res. 35, recognizing the goals and the ideals of Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

The global HIV/AIDS pandemic is simply devastating black America, Africa and the Caribbean in disproportionate numbers to the rest of the world. With 40 million people infected around the world, over 1 million of which are right here in the United States, this disease is as much a problem in South Africa as it is in my district in Alameda County.

In the United States, among young people, among women, and among men, African Americans are at the most risk of getting infected with HIV, of developing AIDS and of dying of this disease. The unfortunate reality is that to be black in America is to be at greater risk of HIV and AIDS.

The numbers are staggering, but let me just mention a few specifically. According to CDC, in 2005, African American women accounted for 66 percent of all new HIV/AIDS cases among women. Compared to white women, African American women were 25 times more likely to be infected. Today, AIDS is the number one, number one cause of death among African American women between the ages of 25 and 34. That is, quite frankly, just mind boggling.

Black gay men are also heavily affected by this disease. In 2005, CDC surveyed black gay men in five United States cities and found that 46 percent, 46 percent were HIV positive. The situation is just as stark in my own district. In Alameda County, over 6,600 cases of AIDS have been diagnosed since 1980, and nearly 4,000 people have died. Of those numbers, African Americans represent well over 40 percent of the cumulative AIDS cases and AIDS deaths in the county.

In 1998, we became the first county in the nation to declare a state of emergency in the African American community. We tapped into the emergency funds and started a community-wide task force that included local AIDS service organizations, elected officials and county health departments. Together, this task force sought to provide a focused and very targeted response to the AIDS epidemic within the African American community in Alameda County.

At the same time, here in Congress, with the leadership of my colleague, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, who was then chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, and Congresswoman DONNA CHRISTENSEN, and, of course, with President Clinton signing this, we created the Minority AIDS Initiative in 1998. I have to thank the gentlelady from California for her leadership in helping us break the silence here on Capitol Hill with regard to the devastating cases and the situation of African Americans in America as it relates to HIV and AIDS, and recognizing the inability of our traditional programs to serve the minority communities.

The Minority AIDS Initiative was specifically designed to build capacity and to expand HIV/AIDS outreach activities so that we can target programs and services, target them directly to those who need them. It took us 8 years, but I am happy to say that, last year, we finally codified the Minority AIDS Initiative by passing the Ryan White Treatment Modernization Act at the end of the Congress last year, which included the Minority AIDS Initiative.

□ 1545

But now, of course, what do we have to do? We have got to fully fund it. We need a minimum of $61 million, and that is just a drop in the bucket. We need billions of dollars to address this pandemic. And at the same time we have got to go further. We have got to get to the real factors that are ultimately driving the epidemic in the African American community: poverty and discrimination, the lack of affordable housing, the disproportionate rates of incarceration among black men, poor access to care, and limited cultural competency for health service providers.

All of these deserve our attention and deserve action. We can start to get at one of these factors by ending really what this is, is a head-in-the-sand approach to HIV prevention that is turning our prisons, really turning our prisons into a breeding ground for this disease.

We need to provide routine, but rigorous opt-out HIV testing that is linked with treatment for all incarcerated persons. Congresswoman WATERS, I am sure she will talk about her bill in her presentation. But this is, again, a major step in the right direction. We have got to pass Congresswoman WATERS' bill, my bill, H.R. 178, which is called the Justice Act. This would allow condoms in our prisons and demand accountability in stopping the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections among incarcerated persons.

We have got to do this. This is a crisis. And we have to do this part, our part, in Congress to make sure that this happens. We must continue to work with advocates and health providers and faith communities to raise awareness, to get tested and to get active in our communities.

We participated last year with the International Aids Conference in Toronto, and there were wonderful, unbelievable activists at that conference from America, African Americans, who came to Toronto to raise the plight of the African American AIDS pandemic to the international level.

Many were amazed that here in America we have a pandemic that is just killing many of our communities. At that conference many of our civil rights organizations recommitted themselves to making the stamping out of HIV and AIDS a top priority in terms of their overall objectives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

LIFT THE RESTRICTION ON MEMBER TRAVEL ON PERSONAL AIRCRAFT

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

Mr. PEARCE. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the group today. I represent the southern district of New Mexico, New Mexico 2. I come with a chart today, and with a map of the district.

Now, if you can visualize, I live all the way on the east side of the State, Hobbs, New Mexico. We are about 3 miles from the Texas border and represent all of the way to Arizona. Now, it is almost a 9- to 9½-hour drive to come across to the Silver City area, and then if we have to go further north up into the Zuni area, it takes an additional 2 to 3 hours.

So each time I go home is a lot of miles. On a 3-day weekend, we have made up to 1,000 miles. On the 10-day breaks, we have been known to make up to 2,500 miles with events all of the way across. And then on our first 30-day break, our August break in my first year here, we had 29 different motel rooms and about 6,500 miles that we made to cover this large district.

Now, my particular approach today is to talk about a rule that the new majority put into place when we voted on January 4, 2007. I will read from those rules, House Resolution 6, section 207, rule 23, item 15(a). A Member, Delegate or Resident Commissioner may not use personal funds, official funds or campaign funds for a flight on a nongovernment airplane that is not licensed by the FAA to operate for commission or hire.

Now, in the FAA there are basically two categories of operating for hire. There is the category of airlines. Those operate under section 121 of the FAA rules. The second section that is predominately used is section 135; that is, the charters. Those are the private aircraft that are used that you call, and

they are like a taxi. They show up so they are called air taxis or air charters.

Now, these are the only two categories who live in the West, in these broad, sprawling districts. We all represent about 6- to 800,000 people. That is determined by our districting process. So everybody represents the same number of people, but it requires a lot more ground for me to represent 600,000 people, so I have a small aircraft, a four-place aircraft, single engine, that I use to fly around the district.

Now, when it takes me 9 hours to drive across this district, I can make it in about 2½ in that small aircraft. That is about the size of a Volkswagen. If I get in, the ceiling is just barely above my head. My knees are touching. And if people get in the rear seats, their knees are absolutely up against us. So this is not like some limousine service.

This is just basically a small aircraft with a 210 horsepower engine, very economical. I would use the same gallons of gas to fly across the district as I would to drive across it. But according to the rules that are adopted by the new majority, we cannot any longer use this. I cannot even pay for this out of my own pocket to serve the constituents of New Mexico. It is against the rules. I will be held in violation of House rules. And why they did it, I do not know. It affects as many people in their party as it does ours.

Now, given that backdrop, it is very interesting to see that the Speaker of the House now wants a 42-place aircraft to transport her. She was given the access to a Lear jet-type aircraft that the former Speaker used, 12 seats, 5 crew members, and those are very comfortable, plush seats. But now then she is wanting a 42-person aircraft with a crew of 16.

The cost of flying that aircraft is $22,000 per hour. The cost for her to round-trip back and forth to California is going to be an astounding $420,000. Now, we just voted for an omnibus where we took funds away from our military, and yet she is asking the military to not only take funds away from the troops, but also to fund this $420,000 trip, presumably every weekend, because all of us try to go home every weekend.

At the same time she has taken a constitutional provision for me to use my private property, to use my own funds, my own aircraft, and I cannot do that because she has made it against the rules.

Now, we were told when the Democratic majority took over that there was going to be a new way of doing business, and we are finding out what that way of doing business is today. We are finding the willingness to limit people from using personal assets, while on the other hand reaching for these extraordinarily large perks.

Madam Speaker, I would request unanimous consent to submit for the RECORD the actual words of the rule. Also I would like to submit for the RECORD the Washington Post article which brings out the observations about this new Speaker requesting these. It is dated February 6, 2007. And then I would like to submit for the RECORD the Lou Dobbs comments last night that she could take a circus with her. So we will submit those.

H. RES. 6 RULES RESTRICTIONS ON MEMBERS TRAVEL

SEC. 207. FURTHER LIMITATION ON THE USE OF FUNDS FOR TRAVEL.

Rule XXIII is further amended by redesignating clause 15 (as earlier redesignated) as clause 16, and by inserting after clause 14 the following new clause:

15. (a) A Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner may not use personal funds, official funds, or campaign funds for a flight on a nongovernmental airplane that is not licensed by the Federal Aviation Administration to operate for compensation or hire.

''(b) In this clause, the term 'campaign funds' includes funds of any political committee under the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971, without regard to whether the committee is an authorized committee of the Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner involved under such Act.''.

[From CNN, Feb. 5, 2007]

42 BUSINESS CLASS SEATS, A FULLY-ENCLOSED STATE ROOM, AN ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

CORRESPONDENT: ''It's clear skies for Nancy Pelosi. The Pentagon is providing the House speaker with an Air Force plane large enough to accommodate her staff, family, supporters and members of the Californian delegation when she travels around the country. . . .

''Pelosi wants routine access to a larger plane. It includes 42 business class seats, a fully-enclosed state room, an entertainment center, a private bed, state-of-the-art communications system and a crew of 16. . . .

''It would be 42 people, and clearly she won't be the only one on this plane. She wants to have members of the congressional delegation. And her critics will say, look, this is a very nice perk that she can share with her colleagues and use as leverage, should she need to.''

LOU DOBBS: ''Well, it's really a fascinating thing: 42. She could take a circus with her, for crying out loud.''

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 6, 2007]

PELOSI CATCHES NONSTOP FLIGHTS HOME

Amid rumblings from conservatives that she is seeking special treatment, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D) will receive use of an Air Force jet larger than the one used by her predecessor, Rep. J. Dennis Hastert, so she can fly nonstop to her home in San Francisco.

Ever since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, the speaker, who is next in line for the presidency after the vice president, has been given use of a government plane for security reasons. Hastert (R-Ill.), who had flown commercially before the attacks, was the first to have use of a plane. But the one he traveled in was too small to make it to California without refueling.

Yesterday, the House sergeant-at-arms issued a statement saying that the leadership is awaiting word from the Air Force on the rules for using the plane. It is unclear, for example, who can travel with Pelosi and whether she can return home from a political event on taxpayer-funded plane.

Pelosi's office requested the guidelines, triggering a story in the Washington Times in which sources questioned whether she was asking for more than the former speaker received.

Democratic aides sputtered about a ''right-wing hatchet job'' to make Pelosi look bad. But, said one involved in the negotiations, ''this is about security, not about convenience.''

An aide in Hastert's office said yesterday that the former speaker used the plane for official business but not for political travel. He did at times transport his wife and staff when he was flying to and from Illinois.

Brendan Daley, a spokesman for Pelosi, said that she will not use the plane for political travel.

[Feb. 5, 2007]

SOURCE: STANDARD PLANE NOT BIG ENOUGH FOR . . . SUPPORTERS AND OTHER MEMBERS

''The Department of Defense offered Speaker Pelosi the same aircraft'' as the one used by Hastert, said one senior Republican who has spoken extensively with Defense Department officials about Pelosi's requests. ''She found it was not big enough for staff, supporters and other Members.''.

[From the Examiner, Feb. 5, 2007]

COLUMNIST: SPEAKER NANCY PELOSI NOW WANTS TO BE CUT IN ON THE TAKE

''Well, that didn't take long. After campaigning against the 'waste, fraud, and abuse' of the Bush administration, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi now wants to be cut in on the take.

''The woman who five months ago said, ''Democrats are committed to a new direction in the way our government does business so taxpayers' money is handled responsibly,'' is dunning the White House to put an Air Force jet at her disposal—reportedly, not only for her use, but for her family's as well. . . .

''But all of this luxury doesn't come cheap. Hourly operating costs for an Air Force C–32—the planes that typically carry the vice president, the first lady, and Cabinet officials—are about $15,000 an hour.

''So for one of those planes to fly the speaker home to San Francisco, drop her off, and fly back and get her, would cost taxpayers around $300,000—while round-trip commercial fares start at $233. That doesn't qualify as ''waste and abuse''?

[From the Washington Times, Feb. 5, 2007]

SOURCE: PELOSI AIDES PRESSING THE POINT OF HER SUCCESSION

''The sources, who include those in Congress and in the administration, said the Democrat is seeking regular military flights not only for herself and her staff, but also for relatives and for other members of the California delegation. A knowledgeable source called the request 'carte blanche for an aircraft any time.'

'' 'They [Pelosi aides] are pressing the point of her succession and that the [Department of Defense] needs to play ball with the speaker's needs,' one source said. . . .

''U.S. Air Force travel for VIPs such as members of Congress is first-rate. The planes are staffed with stewards who serve meals and tend an open bar.''

[From Fox News Channel, Feb. 5, 2007]

PELOSI SEEKS MILITARY PLANE FOR MERE ''152-MILE TRIP'' TO DEMOCRAT RETREAT

''Pelosi's office also inquired about a military plane for the 152–mile trip to a Democratic party congressional conference in Williamsburg, Virginia last week. No plane was provided.''

MINORITY AIDS INITIATIVE

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

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, the first annual National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day was organized on February 23, 2001, with the message: Get educated, get involved, get tested. The National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day dates back to 1999 when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention funded five national nonprofit organizations known then as the Community Capacity-Building Coalition, which are Concerned Black Men, Incorporated, of Philadelphia; Health Watch Information and Promotion Services, Jackson State University; Mississippi Urban Research Center; National Black Alcoholism and Addictions Council; and National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS.

On February 23, 2001, the CCBC organized the first annual National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. The date was changed to February 7, the following year, that was in 2002, and now it is recognized on February 7 of each year.

Madam Speaker and Members, many members of the Congressional Black Caucus and many Members of Congress have joined in the struggle and the fight to find a cure to prevent HIV and AIDS. I need to congratulate all of these Members right in the CBC. I need to congratulate BARBARA LEE, and ED TOWNS, and DONNA CHRISTENSEN, and Mr. CUMMINGS, and ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, and DIANE WATSON, and so many more for the years of work that they have put in on dealing with HIV and AIDS, and HIV and AIDS in the minority community.

That is why back in 1998 I worked to establish the Minority Aids Initiative with the support of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Clinton administration. The Minority Aids Initiative provides grants for HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention programs that serve minority communities and enables health care providers and community-based organizations to expand their capacity to serve these communities.

The initiative received an initial appropriation of $166 million in fiscal year 1999, and was funded at slightly less than $400 million in the most recent spending cycle.

However, the AIDS virus has continued to spread in the minority communities, and more needs to be done. This year I am calling for at least $610 million in funding to expand the Minority Aids Initiative, and redouble our efforts to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic which has been especially devastating to African Americans and other communities of color.

But it is important to remember that HIV/AIDS affects us all. Over 1 million Americans are living with HIV/AIDS, and 24 to 27 percent of them do not know they are infected. That is why on Monday I introduced H.R. 822, the Routine HIV/AIDS Screening Coverage Act, a bill to require health insurance plans to cover routine HIV/AIDS tests under the same terms and conditions as other routine health screening.

Routine HIV/AIDS screening will allow thousands of African Americans and other infected individuals to find out about their infection, begin life-extending treatment and avoid spreading the virus to others. I also very soon will reintroduce the Stop AIDS in Prison Act, a bill to require routine HIV/AIDS screening of all Federal prison inmates upon entry, and prior to release from prison. The bill would also require HIV awareness education for all inmates and comprehensive treatment for those inmates who test positive.

Madam Speaker and Members, we here today come on the floor of Congress, all of us, to speak about this because it is a pandemic. It is a pandemic in the world that must be dealt with. We must lead the way here in the United States of America.

And for those of us whose communities are being overtaken by HIV and AIDS, we must stand up and be counted. We must ask for the money. We must demand the resources. We must take our heads out of the sand. We must call on all of the members of our community to accept personal responsibility. We must get our churches involved, all of our social clubs and organizations. Today we make a special appeal to them.

ON THE PASSING OF LEO T. MCCARTHY

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

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, this week the State of California and indeed the Nation has lost a great leader. Leo McCarthy was a statesman, he was a great champion for justice, and he was a dear friend and purposeful mentor to me. As speaker of the California State House and Lieutenant Governor, Leo McCarthy promoted a values-based agenda to educate our children, grow our economy and protect our environment.

After he left office as the head of the Leo T. McCarthy Center for Public Service and the Common Good at the University of San Francisco, Mr. MCCARTHY taught children and students about promoting justice according to the highest ethical standard. He was brilliant, he was principled and committed to the future.

I am proud to have called Leo a friend for more than 30 years. He encouraged me not only to support candidates and be involved in the political process, but he was the main force in encouraging me to run for office in the first place in my own right.

Again, he was my friend and mentor, but he was that to so many people in California. Many who serve in this Congress today were mentored by Leo McCarthy, going back many years.

As recently as Saturday night when I spoke to Leo, he was optimistic about the future. He said, ''My morale is high. I am surrounded by my children and my grandchildren,'' and of course his wife, whom he adored, Jackie. ''They are with me, and I am not getting better as quickly as I would like, but I am happy.''

My husband, Paul, and I and indeed our entire family, extend our deepest sympathy and condolences to many who loved Leo, especially his wife, Jackie, who he adored, and his children, Sharon, Conna, Adam and Niall.

I also want to recognize our former mayor of San Francisco, Art Agnos, who was a dear friend of Leo and a great comfort to him in his last months. I know Congresswoman ESHOO and I were regular visitors to Leo McCarthy's bed side, and he followed the proceedings of Congress with great interest right up until the last day.

I hope it is a comfort to his family, as I said, whom he adored, that so many people are praying for them at this sad time and that are mourning his loss.

I just wanted to make our colleagues aware of the loss of Leo McCarthy, a great person, a great friend, a great American. He served our country in the military, he served our country in the legislature. He served our country by teaching our young people. He will be sorely missed.

□ 1600

IRAQ STUDY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, before I begin, I would also like to second what the Speaker said with regard to Leo McCarthy. He was also a member of the National Commission on Gambling, which I was the author of. And he came by my office a number times. And I was actually going to put his bio in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. So I thank the Speaker for that comment, and second it.

Madam Speaker, I was the author of the amendment to set up the Iraq Study Group. I felt that more should be done to look at what we were doing in Iraq, and so we put together a group and picked 10 people. It was chaired by former Secretary of State Jim Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton, head of the 9/11 Commission. Also

serving on it was former Secretary of State Larry Eagleberger; former prominent lawyer, Vernon Jordan; former Justice of the Supreme Court Sandra Day O'Connor; former Member of the House and Chief of Staff, in the Clinton administration, Leon Panetta; former Secretary of Defense, in the Clinton administration, Bill Perry; former Senator, and Governor from my State, Chuck Robb; and at one time, up until the end, a month before, current Secretary of Defense Gates, former head of the CIA.

This group was provided the opportunity to, in depth, to take a look at what was going on in Iraq and to develop some recommendations. The resolution that I have introduced as House Con. Res., that puts the Congress on record in support of the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group.

Now, here's a group that has taken 9 months to analyze extensive hearings. Also there were 45 military and diplomatic experts, retired and active duty, of all political persuasions, along with key congressional leaders that came up with these recommendations. So I am asking Members to support my resolution when it comes up next week in support of this.

Secondly, it makes a major effort and encourages the administration to adopt also a diplomatic effort in addition to what it is doing. We urge the administration to engage Syria the same way that President Reagan during the 1980s, when we were defeating communism, President Reagan, God bless him, one of the greatest presidents we have ever had, gave the famous speech in Orlando about the evil empires. But he was also having his administration engage with the Soviet Union. And when Ronald Reagan then gave his speech, saying, ''Mr. Gorbachev, tear down that wall,'' Reagan also had emissaries going to Moscow to engage.

Those of us in the Congress, when we used to go behind the Soviet Union, the Berlin Wall in the Soviet Union, during the 1980s would always meet with the dissidents, would always attempt to meet with the leadership of the government on behalf of freedom, on behalf of liberty.

President Reagan was self-confident in what he believed. He believed that to engage the Soviets was not a sign of weakness. It was a sign of strength.

Madam Speaker, I would like to put in the RECORD an article from the Wall Street Journal by Abraham D. Sofaer, who was counselor to Secretary of State Schultz, who also explains how Reagan engaged with the Soviets and how it is appropriate now how he would engage with Syria.

I am hopeful and I ask all Members to support the resolution when it comes up.

[From the Wall Street Journal, Dec. 20, 2006]

A REAGAN STRATEGY FOR IRAN AND SYRIA

(By Abraham D. Sofaer)

The Iraq Study Group's recommendation that the Bush administration drop its preconditions and negotiate with Syria and Iran has been praised as a ''no-brainer''—and condemned as an improper effort to reward rogue regimes. Neither reaction is correct. Negotiating with enemies can be a useful aspect of effective diplomacy. But successful negotiations with enemies result not from the talks themselves but from the diplomatic strategy that accompanies them. The Group's recommendations deserve support, but must be effectively integrated into President Bush's strategy of ending state-sponsored terror.

The arguments against negotiating with Syria and Iran were also made against negotiating with the Soviet Union, and by some of the same people. Soviet misconduct easily matches that of Syria or Iran in aggression, oppression, murder, support for terrorist groups and mendacity. President Reagan challenged Soviet behavior by supporting groups fighting communist intervention, building the military, strengthening NATO, condemning human-rights violations, commencing a missile-defense program, and conveying the message of freedom in every way possible. George Shultz supported these efforts but sought to negotiate with the Soviets in an attempt to increase stability, reduce nuclear weapons, attain freedom for oppressed groups, and enhance understanding. To make negotiations possible the U.S. adopted specific policies, including:

Regime acceptance. The U.S. refrained from activities aimed at destroying the Soviet regime it was seeking to influence, while vigorously denouncing its political and moral legitimacy.

Limited linkage. Negotiations on human rights, arms control, regional issues and bilateral relations were pursued without linkage to Soviet conduct, enabling negotiations to proceed while the U.S. responded firmly through deeds.

Rhetorical restraint. Reagan vigorously criticized the Soviet system and its behavior, but promised not to ''crow'' when the Soviets agreed to U.S. proposals, enabling Soviet leaders to avoid being seen as capitulating to U.S. demands.

Self-Interest. U.S. negotiating policy was based on convincing the Soviets to act in their own best interests.

The Study Group's ''external'' strategy for Iraq contains several elements necessary for successful diplomacy: the need for both incentives and ''disincentives''; negotiations ''without preconditions''; and negotiations that are ''extensive and substantive,'' requiring a balancing of interests. The general incentives identified by the Group are unlikely, however, to lead to constructive discussions. While Syria and Iran should realize that preventing a breakdown in Iraq is in their interests, they see great advantages in having the U.S. lose strength and credibility in a costly effort to help a state they are relieved to see powerless. The notion that they will help in order to have ''enhanced diplomatic relations'' with the U.S. assumes that states, will do what they know the U.S. wants simply because Washington will not otherwise talk to them. The pronouncements that accompany this Bush policy exemplify the sort of rhetoric that discourages cooperation. The possibility of obtaining U.S. assistance in joining the WTO would be a real incentive in an ongoing negotiation, but it is not a credible incentive in the context of hostile confrontation and proliferating sanctions.

The incentives proposed for negotiating with Syria are, by contrast, concrete and substantial. Syria are, by contrast, concrete and substantial. Syria would benefit economically from a stable Iraq, and getting back the Golan Heights would give President Bashar Assad's standing a much needed boost. Syria has no deep commitment to Hezbollah or Hamas to prevent it from accepting peace and with Israel and increased cooperation in Iraq, Lebanon and the Palestinian areas, in exchange for the Golan and a constructive role in the area. But the Study Group too casually assumes that the U.S. can secure ''Syria's full cooperation with all investigations into political assassinations in Lebanon.'' The ''full cooperation'' of a sovereign state in such situations must be negotiated, rather than made a precondition. Convincing Israel to give up the Golan Heights will also be difficult, and Syria's help in securing the release of Israeli soldiers seized by Hamas and Hezbollah is a good place to start. While the security threat posed by returning the Golan has largely been worked out in prior negotiations, the challenge posed by Syria's claim to access to the Sea of Galilee, and the meaning of a ''full and secure peace agreement'' will require great of forts. Still, bringing Syria into a responsible nationhood is an objective well worth pursuing.

The anger and scorn heaped on the Study Group for advocating negotiations with Syria echo the opposition to negotiating with the Soviet Union. But Syrian behavior must be addressed, not just condemned. Egypt, too, wrongfully supported terrorism against Israel after the 1967 war, and launched the 1973 war, to get back the Sinai. Yet, the U.S. properly urged Israel to negotiate with Egypt, and the peace between them serves the interests of both countries. Similarly an agreement to return the Golan in exchange for peace would have the support of most Israelis and the current Israeli government, and would be consistent with governing Security Council resolutions and the principle that precludes acquiring territory by force.

The Study Group is probably right that Iran is unlikely to agree to negotiate with the U.S. to bring stability to Iraq. The distrust between the U.S. and Iran suggests that negotiations between them should commence on limited issues, in a noncontroversial forum. The U.S./Iran Tribunal in The Hague might well work. Iran resents that many of its significant claims against the U.S. remain unresolved there after over 20 years. The U.S. should offer to negotiate these claims on an expedited basis. As progress is made, the dialogue would likely expand to include such issues as Afghanistan, Iraq, commercial matters and human-rights concerns. (During my negotiations with Iran as legal adviser between 1985 and 1990, we resolved many cases and discussed other issues; my interlocutor eventually agreed, for example, that the fatwa against Salman Rushdie could not be enforced in any state outside Iran.) A successful negotiation will include Iranian demands, such as an end to efforts at regime change. Major change in Iran is in fact more likely to result from normalization and internal activities, than by opposition groups seeking to overthrow the regime.

Finally, any effort to negotiate with Syria or Iran will fail if based only on incentives. The Study Group's proposal lacks a program of sufficient pressure to make diplomacy potentially successful. James Baker was able to convene the Madrid Conference in 1991 only after the U.S. had expelled Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. The effort to impose sanctions on Iran for its nuclear program should continue as forcefully as possible. Multilateral sanctions helped get Libya to abandon its quest for nuclear weapons. A clear warning that Syria and Iran must end all forms of state-sponsored terrorism, as now required by Security Council resolutions, must be a central element of U.S. negotiating policy, backed with meaningful preparations for action. The power of the U.S. to inflict damage

on its enemies remains substantial, despite current difficulties in Iraq. While it is now difficult to contemplate military action against Syria or Iran, continued sponsorship of terror against other states will eventually provoke the American people, if not the international community, to exercise their right of self-defense through affordable wars of destruction instead of costly nation-building exercises.

No one can convey this message more effectively than George Bush, who remains determined to prevent a future of state-sponsored terror. He should accept the Study Group's sound message on negotiating with enemies but supplement it with the toughness that effective diplomacy demands.

IN OBSERVANCE OF NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, today I rise to observe National Black HIV and AIDS Awareness Day. In doing so, I ask my colleagues and I ask the Nation this question: How many more reports on the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the United States and its disproportionate, detrimental and devastating impact on the African American community must be published before we, as a Congress and as a Nation, acknowledge, observe and uphold the objectives of National Black HIV and AIDS Awareness Day?

African Americans have been and continue to be the hardest hit by this epidemic. Today, HIV/AIDS kills African Americans during the most productive years of life, robbing them of their opportunity to follow their dreams and pursue their destinies and to contribute, not only to their families and their communities but to our society and our Nation. What's more, the numbers are not improving.

African Americans have a HIV diagnosis rate that is more than eight times that of whites. African Americans, who are represented in about 13 percent of the population, account for nearly 50 percent of all new HIV infections, and more than 40 percent of all individuals currently living with AIDS, and 40 percent of all AIDS deaths. The AIDS case rate among African Americans is nearly 10 times, 10 times higher than that among whites.

Particularly affected by HIV and AIDS are African American women. In fact, in 2002, AIDS was the leading cause of death for African American women age 25 to 34 years of age. African American women today are represented in about 7 in 10 new AIDS cases among women and are roughly 25 more times more likely than their white counterparts to be infected with HIV.

Madam Speaker, often as Members of Congress we take to the floor to discuss and debate an issue that resonates with us, not only because of our constituents who are affected but because we personally identify and are disturbed by the issue. And not only as a physician and as chair of the Health Brain Trust of the Congressional Black Caucus but as an African American woman with daughters and granddaughters, this issue is particularly salient. The numbers are particularly disturbing, and our inaction as a country inspires me to stand here today and call on my colleagues to stand up and do more.

I also rise today, Madam Speaker, not only to observe National Black HIV Awareness Day but to encourage my colleagues in Congress on both sides of the aisle to do the same in a manner that is consistent with the day's intent. That intent is to get educated, to get tested and to get involved.

We know that, as members of the Congressional Black Caucus, almost all of whom have been tested, we have a key role to play. I urge all of my colleagues to embrace these objectives today, February 7, and beyond. The HIV epidemic in the United States will not be conquered until we not only encourage but also embrace the destigmatization of the disease among not only African Americans but also all people living and struggling with HIV/AIDS. How one gets infected is irrelevant. HIV affects all people the same way. And we, along with all Americans, should extend a hand of compassion, understanding, fellowship and, most of all, action to help.

Madam Speaker, in this new time with new opportunities, we need to leverage ourselves as Members of Congress to fully fund the Minority AIDS Initiative to at least $610 million, although we should be asking for more in order to really build the capacity in the minority communities that are hardest hit by the epidemic. That includes the Latino community as well. We should expand voluntary testing, especially among incarcerated, ex-offenders and other high-risk groups, and ensure that all individuals who need it are enrolled in adequate HIV/AIDS related care.

We should also work together to reduce the social determinants of health that put people at greater risk for HIV infection. And we should expand access to culturally appropriate substance abuse prevention programs as well as to drug treatment and recovery services.

Madam Speaker, the budget that was released on Monday clearly deprioritizes the health and health care needs of all people with HIV and AIDS and their families. However, our new political climate has brought us a new day, and we, therefore, must leverage ourselves to redeclare HIV and AIDS as a state of emergency. We must demand that this administration responds to this emergency with adequate funding and resources instead of tax breaks to the wealthy. The lives of far too many people literally depend on it.

And so, today, Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand with my colleagues to observe National Black HIV and AIDS Awareness Day. I affirm, and we all must stand to affirm that HIV and AIDS in the African American community and communities of color has long been a state of emergency, and from today forward we must respond with compassion and justice. And we, the representatives of the people who are infected and affected, as all of us are, must act.

HONORING THE LIFE OF RAY BECK

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

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the memory of football all-star and community hero Ray Beck, who passed away recently in Cedartown, Georgia.

Mr. Beck is a football legend both in my home State of Georgia and across the Nation. After 4 years as a star on the Cedartown High School football team, Ray attended Georgia Tech, my alma mater, to play guard for the legendary coach Bobby Dodd.

In 1951, he was named an All-American by the American Football Coaches Association and the Football Writers Association. That same year, he helped lead Georgia Tech to an 11–1 record and an Orange Bowl victory over Baylor University.

After college, Beck was drafted by the New York Giants. He was part of the 1956 World Championship Team. And Madam Speaker, that team included the likes of Y.A. Tittle, Kyle Rote and Sam Huff. They led the Giants to a 56–7 victory over the Chicago Bears, a far more lopsided score than the Indianapolis Colts achieved this past weekend.

On the football field, Ray was known as a team player, someone who gave his all to the game. Because of his tremendous work ethic he was inducted into the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame and the College Football Hall of Fame.

But Ray was more than just a football player. He was an active and enthusiastic supporter of the Cedartown community. The same attitude that made him a star on the field made him a hero in his community. There is hardly an organization in Cedartown that hasn't been touched by Beck's generosity.

Madam Speaker, he was chairman of the Cedartown Development Authority. He was president of the Cedartown Chamber of Commerce, a member of the Polk Medical Center Advisory Board, a board member of the Georgia Motor Trucking Association.

But perhaps he will be best remembered for a charity golf tournament he arranged with his long time friend, Doc Ayers. This annual event raised thousands of dollars for Polk County, for charities such as children's literacy and all the way to local food banks.

It is a little wonder Beck was named Citizen of Excellence by the Cedartown

Civic Arts Commission for his philanthropy to this great community.

One of Ray's former teammates commented that he was, and I quote, ''one of the people you could always count on.'' Ray took that attitude from the football field to the community of Cedartown, and his contributions to both will live on as his legacy. I send my deepest, deepest condolences to his wife, Claire, and to his whole family. I know all of Polk County mourns your loss.

Madam Speaker, as a younger generation looks to sport stars as heroes and role models, I hope they come across men like Ray Beck. He was committed to his team and committed to his community. He gave his all on the field and then gave back to the town where he was raised. He was generous with his time, his wisdom and his energy, and Cedartown, Georgia, is a far, far better place because of him.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring the legacy of Ray Beck.

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

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 22 U.S.C 6913, and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China:

Mr. LEVIN, Michigan, Chairman.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to be here on the floor once again on behalf of the 30-Something Working Group. I am glad to be joined by my good friend, Mr. RYAN, from Niles, Ohio, who has joined me on a number of occasions here. We have joined one another.

□ 1615

We look forward to other members of the 30-Something Working Group joining us here on the floor.

There is a lot going on in the Capitol Building today, a lot of committees meeting, Madam Speaker. A number of bills are moving through the process, and the American people are being served, with a new attitude of the U.S. House of Representatives, especially 110th Congress, that we will work as every American does. We will punch in at the beginning of the week and punch out at the end of the week and work on the weekends sometimes. So that is a good attitude to have, especially when you have two wars going on. You have the President passing on a budget that the American people don't see eye to eye with, nor this Congress sees eye to eye with. But we will work those issues out, and we will talk about them a little further as we move along.

One of the other things that I think that we can touch on are some of the findings, that now these committees are meeting and we have some level of oversight, Madam Speaker, that we are going to find out some things that have been happening in Iraq or what has not been happening in Iraq.

We are also going to learn more about the President's budget as we move along. And I am having a copy of the budget brought to us here on the floor because I want to make sure that the American people and definitely the Members get an opportunity to see this big document. Yesterday and today the Ways and Means Committee held hearings and had the Secretary of the Treasury and now the Office of Management and Budget Director here before the committee today. And there are a lot of questions that are being asked, and very few are being answered. And we will talk about a little of that today.

But once again, I yield to my good friend Mr. RYAN from Niles, Ohio. I am glad that you are here and am looking forward to talking about some of the issues that are facing this Congress and the American people.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. It is an honor to be with you, Mr. MEEK. And I appreciate that you were on the floor today passing legislation commemorating a fine citizen down in Florida, a leader in that community. And I want to thank you for taking the time to come out.

There are so many issues that we need to discuss today, Mr. MEEK. The President submitted his budget this week to the Congress, and we are going to have to go through that with a fine-tooth comb and recognize some of the mistakes that are in there and correct them.

And as I said the other night here, Madam Speaker, the only thing that stands between President Bush's budget, which would have been passed post the election, is Speaker PELOSI. And so we have got a real opportunity here to make things right and to make some real progress.

A couple of things that we want to talk about that are in President Bush's budget that we need to fix immediately as we go through the hearing process is the tax increase that is going to be placed on middle-class families. The President's entire budget is balanced on the backs of 33 million American families who will be forced to pay higher taxes through the alternative minimum tax. This was a tax that was put on years and years ago to make sure that wealthy Americans had to at least pay a base level, the minimum level, of taxes. Regardless of how much you make, you had to pay this much. And through that process over the years, that AMT started creeping and creeping and creeping into middle-class families now to the point where it may go past the $100,000 point, meaning that if you make $100,000 or possibly even less, you will be forced to pay this alternative minimum tax. The President did not deal with that. We are going to have to fix that because the alternative is it means a tax increase on 33 million Americans.

Cuts to health care and to our seniors, Madam Speaker. The President's budget cuts Medicare and Medicaid by over $100 billion over 5 years, $300 billion over the next 10 years. And these are two key components of our health care system in the United States of America that cover about 80 million Americans. There have also been cuts to home energy assistance for poor families. As cold as it is today here in Washington, D.C., and across the country, the President submits a budget that cuts that by about 18 percent.

There are a couple other things I want to talk about here, Mr. MEEK, and I am glad you are paying attention and asking me to help you out here today. We have seen this tremendous change in the economy over the past couple of decades where we went from basically a national economy to an immediate global superpower post-World War II. And with that there have been tremendous changes.

Here is one of the key components that have affected us, and as capital moves and globalization occurs, whether we like it or not, Mr. MEEK, here is what has happened. This is a chart that indicates the new global workforce. And the increase, from the left side, 1985 to 2000, the increase from about 2 billion people that were considered in the global workforce to almost 6 billion people. That means China has been added to the list. That means India has been added to the list. That means Central American countries have been added to the list. And now all of a sudden we have expanded the global labor supply, which has driven down wages for people here in the United States. This is a major issue that we have to deal with.

And, Mr. MEEK, as you know, Speaker PELOSI was kind enough to appoint me to the Appropriations Committee, and today we had a meeting with our chairman Mr. OBEY, and he said we

want our committee to be about the future, and we want our committee to solve future problems. And that is really what we need to deal with here.

Here is another issue. As we have had the increase in labor, most Americans have been losing ground, Madam Speaker. And if you look at real median household income, and this comes from the New Democratic Network Web page, this is from the U.S. Census Bureau. Real median household income: In 1999, it was $47,500, real median household income. It was, in 2005, $46,500. That real median household income is dropping, not rising. And so this is an issue that the President's budget does not address, but we are going to have to address this, and we have already made great strides to do this.

Two other charts I want to share with Mr. MEEK, Madam Speaker, real quickly is people say, well, if you are productive, you will make more. The top line here in the red is the increase in productivity; the blue line is the median income. As productivity has increased by 15 percent, wages have actually gone down. So the tie between productivity and wages no longer exists because of this new global market that we are in, which is a major public policy issue, Madam Speaker.

And then, finally, the share of national income in 2003 and 2004. This is the change. The change. The bottom 99 percent, their share of national income went down 2 percent. The top 1 percent, they went up 2 percent. And the top .01 percent went up 1 percent. So you can see that the bottom, the 99 percent hasn't benefited from what is going on here, and the top 1 percent has. So the question is what do we do, and what have we already done?

If you look at what the new Democratic majority has already done, Mr. MEEK, they have already, in the first 100 hours, made strides to try to rectify this. Passed the minimum wage to try to give the American people a pay raise to $7.25 an hour, and that means thousands of dollars a year depending on how many minimum-wage workers or how many minimum-wage jobs you perform. It could mean a couple thousand dollars a year. In addition to that, we have cut student loan interest rates in half for both parent loans and student loans, which will save the average person taking out a loan about $4,400. So you add the minimum wage. And in addition to that, we were able, in the first 100 hours, through the leadership of Speaker PELOSI, to also repeal corporate welfare and invest that money in new alternative energy sources. We passed the stem cell research bill, and alternative energy and stem cells are going to open up two new sectors of the economy. And then in addition to that, we were able to pass and give permission to the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate down drug prices on behalf of the Medicare recipients.

So this package, the first 100-hour package, has done a lot to try to address some of these problems: Boost the minimum wage, cut student loan interest rates in half, and allow drug prices to be negotiated so that we will actually reduce the burden that is being placed on people.

So, Mr. MEEK, I think there has been a lot that has been done. There has been a lot that has been done here on behalf of the American people just in the first 100 hours, and we are going to continue to move on global climate change, global warming. We are going to continue to move on alternative energy. We are going to move on research and development. We are going to continue to provide the kind of oversight that the American people deserve in order to fix some of these problems.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Reclaiming my time, Mr. RYAN, I am just so glad you had those charts to really spell out what the President's budget wants to do to Americans versus for Americans.

And I think it is very, very important that we continue to march on and do the things that we need to do to represent the American people, Madam Speaker. The reason why we come to the floor to point some of these issues out, this is an unopened copy of the budget that we received this week here in the Capitol, in the House of Representatives and in the Senate, and it is our job to look through this budget and see what is good and what is bad for the American people.

The American people delivered this people's House a change. The change for accountability, the change for oversight, and the change to be able to make sure that this country moves in the right direction. America said they want to move in a new direction. We said we wanted to move them in a new direction and that we were going to be a part of that atmosphere.

The reason why we are pointing these things out, Madam Speaker, is because we want to make sure the Members know the work we have before us not only on the Ways and Means Committee, but also on the Budget Committee. Every Member of this House, their said committees are having hearings now, need it be the Secretary of Education or the Secretary of Labor or even the EPA Administrator, to come before their said committees of jurisdiction to talk about why they submitted certain things in the budget, need it be the environment or education or justice or what have you.

But I think it is very, very important to point out how this budget continues to move in the wrong direction, the President's budget, as it relates to the growth of our country and the health of our local communities and States. I learned a term about 8 years ago when I was in the State legislature, and it is called ''devolution of taxation.'' Cut the taxes at the Federal level, and pass unfunded mandates down to the States and local government. And in this budget I see the President continues to embrace that philosophy, devolution of taxation.

Let me go further on in that definition of ''devolution of taxation.'' Here in Washington, D.C., we have made a paradigm shift in this House to use the philosophy of pay as we go. We want to show how we are going to pay for it if we are going to fund it, not pay for it and continue to work on this chart and borrowing from foreign nations and owing foreign nations money, as the Republican Congress did and the President did. What we want to do is do it in a responsible way.

But as we start talking about devolution of taxation, when you cut opportunities for local government, and some statistics have shown that as it relates to this budget, from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, they estimate the total aid to States and local governments will decline, has declined $12.7 billion. So we pass this on to the States, and they have to fill the gap that we are not willing to fill, or obviously the President is not willing to fill, that we are going to try to do our best to fill here in this House of Representatives. They have to rob from Peter to pay Paul. Well, who is Peter? Nine times out of ten, it is a person that is trying to educate him or herself or their family, or grandparents that are trying to educate their children, that the tuition at the State university system is going to up.

□ 1630

The assistance for the elderly in a said State may end up being cut. Health care to children and other opportunities that States like to provide for the citizens of their State will end up being cut because they have to fill the gap that the Federal Government is not filling.

Then, on top of that, it continues to roll down, because, by constitution, by all State constitutions, they have to balance. They don't have the prerogative of saying, we will put it on a credit card or borrow from a foreign nation. They have to balance their budget. So they balance their budget on the backs of local government. Then the local government has to figure out how they are going to raise money, be it needed for education, school districts, or needed for local county or city commissions. Then they end up putting some sort of levy or penny tax or referendum on the local communities and voting for transportation needs or voting for parks and recreation.

The reason why that is happening more and more in U.S. cities is because of the kind of budget that the President sent to the Hill on the backs of the American people.

Now, what else is in this budget? You have to think about, this budget is standing for the individuals that are not even asking for tax cuts to be made permanent on behalf of wealthy Americans.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. If the gentleman will yield, I think this is very illustrative of your point. Here we said earlier, the share of the national income

went up 2 percent for those people in the top 1 percent of the country. The bottom 99 percent, their share of the national income went down 2 percent.

Add on that what you are saying, okay, what you just said about the devolution of taxation. Okay. So now these are the same people who have to vote on property tax issues. These are the same people who have to vote on libraries. These are the same people that have to vote on the penny sales tax to keep their counties running. So I think they are getting squeezed from all sides.

Then, when you look at what the top 1 percent have benefited from the globalization of America and the ability to be in the stock market and benefit from that, and get tax cuts and the tax loopholes and everything else, the bottom line is, Mr. MEEK, the bottom 99 percent have not benefited from all of this.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. RYAN, once again, thank you for your charts, sir, because we need to make sure the Members know exactly what was handed down from the President of the United States to this Congress and the work that we have cut out.

Some tough decisions are going to have to be made, Madam Speaker. Some millionaire may not get all of the tax break they have been waiting and counting on from the President of the United States. We have hard-working Americans out there looking for a break. We have small businesses out there looking for a break. Meanwhile, the President says, make my original thoughts permanent because I had a rubber stamp Congress in the 109th and 108th and so on, that did what I said do, continue that, and let's cut assistance to State and local governments. Let's cut the COPS Program. Let's cut Medicaid benefits. Let's make life harder for veterans as it relates to their benefits and the clinics that are open out there, that we just did something about in the continuing resolution. Let's continue that philosophy.

But for those individuals that are being driven and buying new cars every other year, let's continue to make life wonderful for them. And, by the way, let me send an escalation of more troops over to Iraq, where we just had a hearing just yesterday here in the House of Representatives that we are now getting down to the nitty gritty on what happened to $8 billion that no one can account for that was cash money. Very little of it can be accounted for, very little. Eighty percent can't be accounted for. Let's continue to practice that philosophy in Iraq.

So, Mr. RYAN, the only, I guess, comfort that I have at this moment is the fact that the American people voted to move in a new direction, Madam Speaker, and we are willing to take them in that direction. But, at the same time, Mr. RYAN, the philosophy of the 30-Something Working Group, we want to make sure that every Member understands their responsibility.

We have Veterans' Day coming up. We have Memorial Day coming up. We have a number of holidays that are recognizing the contributions of Americans that allowed us to salute one flag. The least that we can do is break it down to the point that every Member understands his or her responsibility in the House of Representatives.

So, if you want to be on the side of the super, super billionaires and millionaires, you make that choice. If you want to be on the side of the American people that work hard every day, to give them some sort of break so hopefully they can pay for tuition to make sure their children can make it through college, and, as Mr. RYAN said, in the first 100 hours, we dealt with a lot of that. We dealt with the minimum wage, which is now coming back from the Senate that will be over here in the House either today or tomorrow, or is already here. We dealt with the issue of being able to make a reverse about face on the interest rates that the previous Congress put on students and their families. We rolled that back.

There are a number of things that we have already put through the process, pay-as-you-go principles here in this House, to put this country on the right track.

Yes, tough decisions have to be made. But, at the same time, we have to be responsible, and we can't just rely on sound bites as though, well, that will get us past the process.

I believe that we can make it to the promised land, not through doing the same thing expecting different results, but having the kind of oversight and having the kind of foresight and watching out for these individuals.

Weatherization. You mentioned weatherization, Mr. RYAN, as it relates to keeping our most frail and poor warm during the wintertime. The President is asking to keep a tax cut permanent for super billionaires but cut weatherization assistance for a lady on fixed income in Detroit, Michigan.

I am just trying to understand the balance here and the priorities as we start to look at this. The President is asking for a cut in a number of the Department of Justice programs, Madam Speaker, that assist local sheriffs and police chiefs in combating and preventing crime. The COPS Program, zeroed out.

The President last week, Mr. RYAN, had an announcement come out that we are going to move for the maximum Pell Grant. Then the budget comes out, and it is the same level of what he has recommended over the last 4 years. So, the words don't match the action.

So our job here in the House, Madam Speaker and Members, is to make sure that even if the President makes a commitment to the American people and we agree with that commitment, that we have to find some room in this budget, which I know that Chairman SPRATT and other members of the Budget Committee and members of committees that have jurisdiction and oversight, will have some say in how we move in the new direction as it relates to America. So we are going to have a serious paradigm shift.

I see Mr. RYAN here has one of our favorite charts out right now just to illustrate what past budgets have done, Madam Speaker, and where it left this Congress in spending the majority of its money, not on the priority that the majority of the American people would like us to balance on but because of bad management.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I appreciate your insight, Mr. MEEK. You have talked about this, and we have been talking about this for a long time.

We would love to come in, as the Democrats did in January and swore in Speaker PELOSI, and come in and bump the Pell Grant up two thousand bucks and eliminate student loans altogether as far as paying interest on them and all kinds of other things we would like to do. But we are limited by the kind of budget that we have inherited from the President in a 6-year presidency and a 14-year Republican control of this Chamber.

Here is what they are doing: The 2008 budget authority says that the red on the left, $230 billion or $240 billion a year, is going to be spent just paying the interest on the money that this country has borrowed; not to pay down the debt, but just to pay the interest payments. We are going to have to spend $230 billion because of that. Look how that just dwarfs other priorities in the budget of the United States.

The next one is education. The next one is veterans. The next one is homeland security. All pale in comparison to what we are forced to spend to pay the interest on the money we are borrowing.

As Mr. MEEK has said in his previous chart, this money, over $1 trillion, has come from foreign interests. This President and the Republican Congress borrowed more in 4 years from foreign interests than all of the previous Presidents and Congresses combined. Combined. This is the net result, the interest that we have to pay on the debt.

So what has happened is that we have a huge number; $2.102 trillion in 2006 is the amount of foreign held debt, $2 trillion. That is unacceptable in the most powerful, wealthiest country on the face of this Earth.

So we have seen what has happened since the Clinton administration had some sanity. We had a $5.6 trillion projected surplus. It went down $8.4 trillion. Now we are in a $2.8 trillion deficit. We have some real problems.

So when it goes to making the investments that we want to make in education, the investments that we want to make in health care, SCHIP, the COPS Program, making sure young kids are covered, have some form of health care coverage, Madam Speaker, we are limited by the budget that we have been handed.

Unfortunately, we can't start from scratch, but there are some decisions

that need to be made, and I can tell you that it is not acceptable to me, and I know it is not acceptable to my friend from Florida, to continue to allow people who make millions and millions and millions of dollars a year to continue to get a tax cut.

Some may say they earn it. Maybe they do. Some do. And some work hard. Just because you wear a white collar doesn't mean you don't work hard. But what we are saying is, that group of people benefit the most from the lavishness that this country has given them, the roads and the bridges and the safety and the security provided by defense, the stable markets in which to invest money, in which many, many do, into the stock market. This is all provided for by the stability that comes out of this institution, and therefore they owe a little bit back.

Now, even if you don't believe that, our alternative, we have a decision to make: Either we borrow this money from the Chinese, the Japanese and the OPEC countries, which gets us to that chart where there is $2 trillion in foreign-held debt by this country, or we ask those people who are making millions and millions of dollars a year, Mr. MURPHY, to pay their fair share, to step up to bat and help us solve this problem that we have so we don't have to put the future of our kids and our grandkids in the hands of Communist China.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Ohio. As you dig deeper into this budget, Mr. RYAN, what you find is the financial gimmickry involved in the President's claim that this budget will be balanced by 2012 is accomplished by forgetting about this little thing that hides in our Tax Code called the Alternative Minimum Tax. That is a difficult concept for some people to understand, but it is not going to be so difficult for millions of middle-class families to figure out when, next year and the year after that, they are going to be hit for the first time with a massive new tax increase.

The Alternative Minimum Tax was introduced first to try to make sure that those at the highest end of income scales were forced to pay some type of income tax. But because we haven't adjusted that number over the years, more and more middle-class families are going to fall into that trap.

Mr. RYAN, you are exactly right. You and Mr. MEEK and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ have talked about the fact that, during a time in which we are expending vast amounts of money overseas while we have major overdue investments here at home, we are giving away this multi-billion dollar tax cut to the richest 1 percent of Americans. That is wrong. We need to reinvest that money back into our infrastructure, back into education and energy and all of the things that help regular families.

But what we need to tell people about is, this budget not only decreases taxes for folks at the very top of the income echelon, but it also raises taxes on middle-income folks, because the President in this budget does nothing to address that looming Alternative Minimum Tax.

It is kind of a difficult subject to talk about, because it is complex tax policy, and you have to dig a little bit into that income tax form to figure out how much it is going to hit you. But it is going to hit you.

□ 1645

And unless we do something about it, we are not just going to have a tax decrease for those at the top, we are going to have a big tax increase for those in the middle. And as we know, this budget does nothing to help the costs that all the middle-class families are facing. Their premiums go up every year from their employer, as the cost of higher education spirals, as we know, a 41 percent increase since 2001. This budget does nothing, little if nothing, to help those families.

So, Mr. RYAN, this is a double whammy for American taxpayers. Not only are we sucking money out of the budget by giving away tax breaks to the very wealthiest, but we are then very explicitly hammering those in the middle income.

But here is the good news. We know what the good news is, is that, as you have said, in previous years that budget which stands in front of Mr. MEEK would have been delivered to Congress and would have had a little cursory look by the Members here and would have sailed out basically intact, at least when it comes to those priorities.

This year it is very different. And by the grace of the American people that sent a new Democratic Congress here, that budget is going to have a very, very hard look, and it is going to look very, very different when it leaves here, Mr. RYAN.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And you are right. In years gone by, they would have greased that sucker up, and it would have flown through the House and the Senate, who knows what kind of changes. It wasn't until in the last year or so that the Republican majority at that point couldn't even agree with each other. So we have had to come in and clean up with the continuing resolution, which we made some great advances with veterans and some other issues that we were able to deal with.

But when you look at it, we don't want to get into, and you are exactly right, there is going to be an increase in taxes if the President's budget over the next few years stays, because that alternative minimum tax is going to creep in and is going to creep in to average American families' lives, middle-income families. And so I appreciate you making that point.

We have been joined by a special guest who periodically jumps in and joins with the 30-something Working Group, the gentlewoman from Texas. I would be happy to yield.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished gentleman. It is a delight to be here with all of my colleagues, and I might say that it is a pleasure to jump in and to accept the glory of the 30-something once in a while, particularly on this very vital and important issue.

And I want to say to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio, having watched the Ohio election process; if there was a State that spoke loudly about a decided necessity of change, it certainly was Ohio, and the rest of us followed. And I can't imagine that we would be facing this budget but for mistakes and missteps that have been made in foreign policy, for example the Iraq war and funding that has been somewhat misplaced.

But the good news is, and that is what I wanted to just focus on for a moment, that we now have the opportunity; Speaker PELOSI, the leadership, Chairman DINGELL, Chairman WAXMAN on the health issues, we now have an opportunity to address the American people and to, frankly, make sure that we listen.

I want to start very briefly on tracking the reauthorization of the Ryan White bill that was authorized in the last Congress. But an authorization goes nowhere unless there is, if you will, the funding that is necessary. And so I just wanted to briefly highlight the fact that we have a continuing AIDS crisis in the United States which really requires a focused and concerted effort at funding. And I don't believe that with the President's budget, these enormous tax cuts, we will be able to address the fact that there are now over 1 million people in the United States living with AIDS, and that particular communities, African Americans and Hispanics, are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS, and they account for nearly 50 percent of the people living with HIV/AIDS.

That means that we need more Federal funds made available to help in the minority health initiatives, the AIDS initiatives, and we need more funds to encourage testing for as many people as possible. So I cite that as a challenge to this budget that is going to impact many of us extremely negatively.

Then I would encourage my colleagues from the various States, 50 States, to take a litmus test or to take a thermometer and measure the temperature of the President's budget against the health of your State.

Let me just share with you what is going to happen to the State of Texas. We have a sizable young population, the State of Texas. Most of our population is under the age of 25; we have an extensive population of under 5, and we need, if you will, a refocus on the domestic agenda for this country.

I am looking forward to Chairman SPRATT's, the Budget Committee's reforming of the President's budget because this is what will happen to Texas: Two million Texans could see

retirement benefits cut under the President's privatization proposal that is in his budget. And I would simply ask the question, how many times do we have to say that privatization of Social Security will not work? And it will not work.

The President's health care proposal will squeeze Texas middle class of more cost and less coverage. So the President's health insurance proposal, which is opposed by my public health system, Harris County, who says, ''Are you trying to close our doors?'' We will see a squeeze on the middle class; 5.5 million uninsured in the State of Texas will be impacted.

Let me give three other points. Huge Medicare cuts which we are seeing in the President's budget would endanger 2.5 million Texan Medicare beneficiaries' access to quality care and impose new taxes on seniors. The one thing our seniors said on the prescription benefit part D, no more burdens, no more doughnut holes. And that is what the President's budget gives us.

In addition, one of the greatest tragedies of the President's budget is the cut in the State grants for children's health insurance could add some 1.4 million children to the uninsured ranks in Texas. Now, they say that they are going to leave this to the States. The States need to find out how to handle this. This is, this is, this is comedic. This is joking. This is completely impossible. I am lacking for words. We are fighting in our State to be able to insure children who need to be insured, and you are telling us we will give you, the State, a certain amount of money, and it is how you do it. It is not how we do it. We can't do it without the funding. So you are going to deepen the hole of health disparities by suggesting that we cut off 1.4 million uninsured children in the State of Texas.

I would ask my colleagues to check the temperature of their State by taking a thermometer and measuring the President's budget against the needs of the American people. In Texas, 1.6 million veterans could be hurt by VA funding shortfalls. And I spent time with homeless veterans in my community at stand-down. I have homeless veterans in shelters in my community, as many of us do, but I see many of my homeless veterans under our bridges. We can't afford any more cuts in veterans health coverage because they are already paying the maximum amount.

Let me conclude by suggesting that we likewise have made a commitment, 30-something and 30-something-plus, have made a commitment to America's youth. We want to ensure that the doors of our institutions are open. And just today I heard the fact that in our own community in Houston, we don't enough seats in colleges to be able to help educate young people. This may be a phenomenon across American in many communities, and that means we are closing the door to higher education to our children. Well, the budget that the President has put forward, aid for Texas college students, may be whacked again; and, therefore, tuition increases may go up almost 100 percent, because under State laws that we have in the State of Texas, we give that latitude to our universities. Our students cannot be whacked again, and they can't take the burden again.

So I am hoping that, in addition to cutting the Department of Homeland Security, which we will obviously not tolerate because we are certainly not, we have not met the test of the 9/11 Commission Report, this budget needs fixing, it needs a fixing, and we need to rally around the American people's voice of health care, education, security, and the environment and affordable energy before we allow this budget to come to the floor of this House. And I hope that we will have the opportunity to be able to work our will, the will of the American people, and work our will on behalf of seniors, on behalf of those suffering with AIDS in minority populations and other, on behalf of the working middle-class families that struggle every day, that we would choose them over outrageous tax cuts that have been proposed by this President's budget.

And I thank the distinguished gentlemen for allowing me to participate and to acknowledge that these policies are not family-friendly. And I look forward to a budget coming to this floor that we pass, the majority, Democrats, with our friends on the other side of the aisle, that will be family-friendly, children-friendly, those who are suffering from various diseases, education-friendly, environment-friendly, and certainly a new day in energy by the budget that we put forward on this floor.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. We thank the gentlewoman. As we have been saying in the last few weeks here and the last few days especially, that years ago that budget would come and get greased up and come right through this Chamber and on to the other side of Capitol Hill and get signed into law, with the tax cuts for the top 1 percent and cuts to the kids. And now NANCY PELOSI stands between that budget and the American people, and we are going to make sure, and our friend from Florida. So we thank you for joining us. It is always a special treat for our friend to come down from Texas. And I would be happy to yield to our friend from Florida, who is standing to be recognized.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Thank you, Mr. RYAN, for yielding to me. And I just think it is important that we have this dialogue here on the floor, Ms. JACKSON-LEE, just to make sure that we prepare the Members for the decisions that have to be made.

We talk about bipartisanship a lot, and I have my information here to talk about some of the votes that we have moved on this floor in a bipartisan nature, and I know I will have it in a minute, that kind of set a tone through this Chamber that we can work together, Madam Speaker, when the ideas are good and when they are sound.

And I know that the budget is probably one of the most partisan votes that we have taken in past Congresses, especially the last two that I have been involved in, Mr. RYAN. But the way the President's budget has been drawn up, with cuts of 20 percent to first responder grants and high-threat and high-density areas, and a cut in State grants as relates to training and buying equipment and conducting exercises for their first responders by 64 percent, for many of the Members on both sides of the aisle that talk a lot about the war on terror, we have to make sure we are prepared.

All of these things, all of these speeches that people come to the floor and make, Members of Congress, this budget is not in the spirit of those speeches. And I think it is important that those Members on both sides of the aisle, and I would say mainly with my Republican colleagues, that they start preparing their leadership now on the things that they can vote for. And I know that making tax cuts permanent for the superbillionaires is not something that is going to fly back home.

Now, I was thinking about staying in the majority always, which is not a bad idea, but if that was my paramount reason for being here on this floor, then I wouldn't say out loud that they need to start telling their minority party, on the Republican side of the aisle, that there is things that I have to vote for. I am not willing to cut veteran benefits. I am not willing to not do the things that we need to do for the children of America. I am not willing to not give the middle class a tax cut or give billionaires a tax cut. I am not willing to cut local government assistance, especially in the area of homeland security and other areas of law enforcement. I am not willing to do those things because I don't think my constituents will send me back to Congress.

That is the kind of discussion they need to be having with their leadership, because one thing that I have seen, Madam Speaker, especially with the past votes that we have taken on the minimum wage, on taking big-time subsidies from oil companies, on the whole issue of cutting tuition, on the issue of a few of the other packages that we passed, but on the main issue as it relates to how we are going to move from this point of pay as you go, I have noticed that the leadership on the Republican side have voted opposite of the majority of the Members of the House, with some Republicans joining us on those votes, or we are voting together. I hate to say joining us, because it seems like it is something that was a last-minute thought.

□ 1700

No, they were great ideas, and they need to be passed, and they were passed overwhelmingly.

But as it relates to this budget, this is going to be one of the most important documents that we pass in the 110th Congress' first session, and I think it is important that Members start talking to their leadership now and saying this to the Republican side about the votes that they cannot and the votes that they will take.

Now, I have watched in the 109th Congress the moderate Members on the Republican side who went to their leadership and tried to make things happen, and you know something, if the leadership would have listened to some of the moderate Members of the Republican Party on the other side of the aisle, maybe, just maybe, the majority on the Democratic side would not be as wide as it is.

Now, the American people want us to move as one, not just as Democrats and Republicans. They want us to move in a responsible way that will lead this country in a new direction; not in a Democratic direction, not in a Republican direction, not in an Independent direction, but in a new direction.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. For America.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Which is good and as American as apple pie and Chevy trucks and what have you. But I think it is important that we say this out loud, because when we get around budget time, there is a lot of interesting things that are said on the floor. Some Members are even gaveled down for some of these statements because they try to justify a good or bad vote.

With the continuing resolution that was passed, we saw a little spike in Members having to reflect back on to the rules, the Parliamentarian running around the floor saying, you cannot say that, you cannot do this. Before we get all animated and excited about this budget, I just want to make sure that the Members understand that you have to start having that discussion with your party leaders, especially on the Republican side of the aisle.

Now, let us just look at this. On the 9/11 Commission, 68 Republicans voted with 231 Democrats to do what the bipartisan Commission said we should do in protecting America, but the shocking part is that 128 Republicans decided not to vote with the majority of the Members of the House, Republicans and Democrats. What is going on there? The American people cannot understand that overwhelmingly.

Minimum Wage Act, 82 Republicans voted with the majority of the supermajority and every last Democrat, 233, voted to give the American people a pay raise after years and years and years, and as you can see here, Madam Speaker, over the years under the Republican Congress, Member of Congress did not have a problem in giving themselves a pay raise until the Democratic majority put a stop to it, saying that we will not agree to a pay raise until the American people get one. But 116 Republicans voted against it for people who were making $5.15 an hour. It reminds me of the President saying, let us make those tax cuts permanent for superbillionaires, and let us forget about the middle class, and let us cut programs on the local level for the most fragile Americans.

Stem cell research, again bipartisan vote. A number of Republicans voted against it. Medicare prescription drug price negotiating, 24 Republicans joined 231 Democrats; 170 Republicans voted against it. College Student Loan Relief Act, 232 Democrats voted for it, 124 Republicans voted for it, supermajority Members of the House, 71 Republicans, hard-core holdouts, on the bipartisan spirit. Held out again on creating long-term energy alternatives for the Nation Act; 228 Democrats voted for it, 36 Republicans voted for it, 159 Republicans voted against it.

I am saying all of this, and I am not trying to speak fast on this, Madam Speaker, I am just saying that if we are going to come together as a country, and we are going to work in a bipartisan way, now here I am in the majority saying that it is important that we work in a bipartisan way.

Madam Speaker, I know the officers of the House who have witnessed many of these 30-something sessions that we have had in the minority. They were like some of them Tivo'd it when we were on break because they just heard it so many times, and they wanted to hear it again. If I have said it once, I have said it 30 times: Bipartisanship can only be allowed when the majority allows it.

Now we have the will and the desire by the Speaker of the House of Representatives that has said that she wants to move in a bipartisan way, and we still have Republicans that are saying, no, we do not; we want to be different, even when we are wrong. And that is not the philosophy that the American people have embraced. I do not care if it is a Republican voter or Independent voter or Democratic voter, the American spirit will prevail, and that is what happened last November.

So we have some individuals that are saying, we are willing to continue to hold on to the old way versus moving in a new direction. I am not trying to be offensive. I am just saying, I am reading the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and the vote chart. I am trying to encourage folks to work in a bipartisan way. So let us have the discussion now in the Budget Committee, in the Ways and Means Committee, and discussions in committees of jurisdictions standing. Let us have those arguments, but let us come together on the fiber of the budget and for us to be fiscally sound and for us to be able to move this country in a new direction.

That has nothing to do with what the Republican leadership may believe what is right or the Democrat leadership believes what is right. It is what is right for America.

So we are willing to do that. Pollwise, the American people are on the side of doing things that we are trying to outline here and that we are speaking against in this budget, and as we move through that process, I look forward to not only fruitful debate, but I look forward to a paradigm shift in the minority side, in a number of double-digit, hopefully triple-digit, Republicans voting for a budget that comes before this floor that this House hammers out.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I am not sure that I believe the people were Tivo-ing, but if they were, it was only because of your eloquence when you talk about issues like bipartisanship, because you should be right to crow.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Please mention Mr. RYAN's name. He gets a little jealous when folks started mentioning the fact I make a good argument on bipartisanship, so, please.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I hear people talk about him as well.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Will the gentleman yield? I have family members who have Tivo'd, okay.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. So here is what those of us who are new to this Chamber sort of see from the outside, and I think it probably matches up with what Mr. RYAN and Mr. MEEK keep seeing from the inside.

What used to happen here was that the agenda that came before the House was decided essentially by folks sitting in the third floor of the Republican National Committee, a bunch of Republican Party insiders who decided that they were going to put a Republican agenda on the floor. They were going to put a party agenda on the floor at the exclusion of the minority party.

So what you saw, for those us that turned on C–SPAN late at night when we were not watching the 30-somethings, we saw votes go up on the screen. And everybody sees those C–SPAN votes where they have got Republicans in one column, Democrats in the other column. You see all the Republicans voting one way, all the Democrats voting the other way, vote after vote after vote, because what was being put before this House was a Republican agenda. Occasionally you would have some people slide over, but by and large that is what you saw.

Here is the difference. The agenda that was part of the first 100 hours and the agenda that was behind the continuing resolution, as Mr. MEEK says, if we have anything to do with it, the agenda that will underlie the budget that finally arrives before this body is not going to be a Democratic agenda. It is not going to be a Democratic budget. It is going to be a people's agenda. It is going to be a budget that comes from the voices and the concerns and the hopes and the fears of people back in all of our districts, Republicans and Democrat.

That is why you see on the 100 hours agenda and even on the continuing resolution, which is probably maybe the most controversial piece of legislation that came before that, even on the continuing resolution, the bill that kept the Federal Government going for the

next few months, you have Republican votes, because no longer is the legislation that gets put before us a partisan agenda. It is now a people's agenda.

And for someone who spent the last 2 years in my district campaigning to come here, talking to people that were so utterly frustrated with what was happening in Washington, yes, people were angry about the agenda here from issue to issue. They were upset that people were not listening to them about their concerns on rising energy prices, rising health care prices, why they could not send their kids to college. But they were maybe more overarchingly concerned with the tone this place had taken, and I think that is our lasting legacy, because, as I think I said the first time that I got to talk with you both on this floor, our legacy as a Congress may be that we have some small role in restoring people's faith in government.

When we go around and talk to elementary schools, we are talking to some of the most cynical 10-year-olds you have ever seen, because all they think government is is a bunch of people fighting with each other, yelling at each other, disagreeing instead of agreeing.

So what we do here is we are going to start putting those middle-class families first. That is what this budget will be about. If we can do it with Republicans, and when you do it with Democrats, in the end we make people believe a little bit again in government.

And for those of us who are in this 30-something caucus who might be around long enough to hopefully see government do a few more good things over the next 10, 20, 30, 40 years, that could be one of the most important things we can do.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I appreciate that. As we are wrapping things up, I found it interesting, I saw as we are talking about budget priorities and the kind of investments that we want to make as a country, looking at what the Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke has to say and what he said yesterday and was quoted in the Wall Street Journal and a lot of other media outlets.

Focusing on, and I will say, and I will quote, he said, Ben Bernanke said, The best way to narrow the gap between high-income and low-wage workers in the U.S. would be to strengthen education and training programs.

That is our call, and that is the mission for us, to make sure that average people have the skills and the tools and the opportunity with the increase in the Pell Grants, with what we already did by cutting student loan interest rates in half for both parent and student loans, cutting that in half and giving thousands of dollars back to those families. Those are the kinds of things that we need to continue to do, and No Child Left Behind and everything else.

So we need to make sure that as we reform these systems, we also provide the resources, as we started this, for the local level to make sure they can get the job done.

We are just wrapping up. We only have 1 minute. I want to give out Speaker PELOSI's e-mail, 30-Something Working Group e-mail, 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov, or you can come to our Web site, www.speaker.gov/30something.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I thank Mr. RYAN for doing such an outstanding job. I thought Mr. MURPHY had the assignment, but I can see you have taken responsibility to do that.

Madam Speaker, we would like to thank the Speaker and the majority leader and majority whip and others for allowing the 30-Something Working Group to come to the floor once again. It was an honor to address the House of Representatives.

REPUBLICAN STUDY COMMITTEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this first moment to recognize my colleague from Iowa (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. CAMPBELL for yielding to me, and I appreciate Mr. RYAN sticking around after the Special Order and the work that you have done. Over the last 2-plus years, we spent a lot of hours here on the floor together. It occurred to me as I arrived on the floor—

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Not necessarily together, but on the floor. Not necessarily together.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I would concede that point that not necessarily together, but on the floor. We have been together in some other things as well.

But the point that occurred to me as I arrived here on the floor this afternoon is we often do not commingle our policies. We have an argument that is set separate on this side and on that side, and it occurred to me that Lincoln and Douglas had some effective debates that were very, very instructive, and it helped the people understand the distinctions between the policies.

So as I mull this around in my mind, it occurs to me to offer an invitation that if our side could set aside an hour Special Order, and if your side would be interested in setting aside an hour Special Order, we could merge those together and then perhaps three from your side, three from our side, and we could spend 2 hours with an open debate type of a format so that we could have a free exchange with the best of attitude and comity. I think that would be a very good thing to do for the people across this country as they review what is going on here on the floor.

I would ask your opinion on that.

□ 1715

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I appreciate the gentleman's opportunity. Those decisions are made above my pay grade, but I can honestly say that we have numerous debates on this floor, which I think have been significant and monumental, especially in the first 100 hours, as we have talked about here. I don't exactly know how to respond to you. I think we do have adequate debate here, depending on what the issue of the day is, both sides getting an opportunity to do that.

We get our hours and talk about the things that we want to talk about, and you get your hour to talk about what you want to talk about. There can be, I am sure, some discussion. If there is room for us, as we push certain policies, that is what we are here to talk about. That is the issue of the day.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. You are welcome to respond to that.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time. If the gentleman would be interested, I would suggest you take it up above that pay grade and see if you come back with a positive response. I didn't check with anybody above me. I happened to be able to claim some time on the floor and make that decision.

I offer that openly with the best intentions. I think 2 hours would be a very good thing for all of us to have that discussion. The offer is there. I leave it on the table, and I thank the gentleman.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I appreciate the gentleman making the offer. Last year or 2 years ago, we were asking for opportunities to speak on the floor. We weren't given that opportunity, but I will take it to the leadership, and we will take that under consideration.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, I would point out that, as we have had exchanges here during special orders, I am one who has yielded, especially to Uncle BILL from Massachusetts. I would point that out. That is a matter of record. We can continue in that vein, I would hope.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. In spite of your age discrimination, we will take it under consideration.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Thank you very much, Mr. RYAN.

I yield back to the gentleman from California.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Thank you, Mr. KING.

We are talking about the budget this evening, and a number of things about the budget. The problem out there: We have a deficit. The problem is not that people are taxed too little; it is the government is spending too much.

I didn't just make that up. I didn't come up with that now. I am paraphrasing the words of President Ronald Reagan and comments he made several decades ago. But it is every bit as true today as it was then. The reason that we have a deficit, the issues with our government budget, are not that people

are taxed too little; it is that government spends too much.

Why, as a matter of fact, since 2003, revenues to the Federal Government, income to the Federal Government, have increased by 46 percent, assuming that this year it continues at the rate that the increases have begun this year, 46 percent since 2003.

Let me put that in a way maybe that folks listening can understand even more clearly. If you are making $50,000 a year in 2003, in order for your income to keep up with what the Federal Government's income has been, you would have to be making over $72,000 today, not bad. I bet most of you out there listening, if you were making $50,000 back in 2003, would be pretty happy if you had gotten raises to be at $72,000 or $73,000 today. But that is where the Federal Government is.

But what's interesting is, that is not because taxes were increased. That 46 percent increase in revenue is because taxes were decreased, because there were tax cuts in 2003.

Because there were tax cuts in 2003, a whole bunch of good things happened: More people are working. The unemployment rate is down. Business investment is up. Gross domestic product is up, and millions and millions of new jobs have been created. All that since these tax cuts that are so demagoged by the other side. Now, the people who spoke in the hour before me here were talking about tax cuts for the rich, and I think they said super billionaires or something like that.

Let us talk about what these tax reductions were. One of them was a reduction in the tax on capital gains and dividends. Let's see. Over 50 percent of Americans now own stocks or have been investing in the stock market. So I guess over 50 percent of Americans must be hyper billionaires because capital gains and dividends tax cuts saved them money.

Almost 70 percent of Americans own homes. When you sell your home at some point, you might be subject to a capital gains tax. I guess almost over 70 percent of Americans are hyper billionaires or the super rich.

Or perhaps the marriage penalty reduction, which saved money for every married taxpayer. I guess that means everyone who is married is a hyper billionaire type of rich.

Not true, but what is particularly interesting is that these tax reductions, these tax rate reductions, saved Americans at all income levels money, and it resulted in the economy growing, which is why you have had this 46 percent increase in revenue.

But even with that 46 percent increase in revenue, we still have a deficit, because we are spending too much. Now, the other side does have a tax that they don't like, which is interesting. It is the alternative minimum tax.

Now, I stand before you as a Member of Congress, yes, but also as a certified public accountant and an individual with a master's in business taxation. So I do have a little bit of knowledge in the area of taxation. The alternative minimum tax is pretty complicated. But basically you figure your tax on a regular tax, and then there is another tax, and you pay whichever one is greater.

The alternative minimum tax only kicks in if it results in more tax than the regular tax. The reason that would happen is because you pay a high rate. By definition, if you are not in one of the highest tax brackets, the alternative minimum tax cannot apply to you.

If you were to compare the capital gains tax, alternative minimum tax, and look at which one is more for the rich, it would certainly be the alternative minimum tax. Yet you just heard the Democratic colleagues on the other side of the aisle just say that the capital gains, the dividends, all these tax reductions that were in 2003 are terrible and are hurting the economy, and they are hurting people, and they are only for the super billionaires. But, yes, they insist on doing something to get rid of the alternative minimum tax, which, by definition, can only hit people in the highest tax brackets, can only create more tax for them.

You can't have it both ways, Democrats, you cannot have it both ways. If eliminating or reducing the alternative minimum tax is good policy, then so is reducing the tax on capital gains and on dividends and on the marriage penalty and all the other rate reductions that we did back in 2003.

Now, the President released a budget this week. The budget he released balances in 5 years without raising taxes. The other side of the aisle, the majority here spent the last 2 days saying how terrible it is. I am trying to figure out what is so bad. Is balancing the budget in 5 years bad? I would rather balance it in 2; I would rather balance it in 1, sure.

I don't think balancing the budget in 5 years is that bad of an objective, and it balances it without raising taxes. Ah, that is really the part they don't like, balancing the budget without raising taxes. They don't want that to happen because they want to raise taxes, because a 46 percent income growth since 2003 is not good enough, because increases in jobs, increases in the economy, increases in gross domestic product, that is not good enough, because they want to spend more, more and more and more. They want to tax, and they want to spend.

The new Democrats are the same as the old Democrats. You are seeing it on this floor, in this hall, today, this week and this month. Unfortunately, I am afraid you are going to see it in the months going forward.

So what is the problem with balancing the budget without tax increases? That is what we want to do. That is what the President wants to do. But, unfortunately it is not what the other side wants to do.

Let me take a moment, and if I may, and yield to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING). Would you like to speak on some of these matters for a few moments?

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman from California for yielding to me both times here this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, taking up the issue of the budget that is coming before us and this sense of responsibility and debates that I have had this year and debates that I recall I had in the national media that I had with members of the other party, and some of them took the oath that they would be willing to support a balanced budget without raising taxes; I don't hear any of that talk here on the Democrat side of the aisle. Nobody is stepping forward, and saying, yes, I remember what I said, I didn't mean it, or even, I remember what I said. They seem to have forgotten what they said.

They do say they want to balance the budget. But we also know from listening to Mr. RANGEL, there isn't any one of the Bush tax cuts that he would not want to eliminate, which would result in a tax increase.

Yet we have the strongest economy that we have had in my lifetime, the most consecutive quarters of growth. We have a very healthy unemployment rating of about 4.5 percent, and that has been staying low. Inflation has been staying low. Interest has been staying low. Every economic indicator that is low when it is good is low. Every economic indicator that is high when it is good, it is high. The stock market has reached any number of all-time highs.

These Bush tax cuts, the 2001 cuts and the 2003 cuts were essential and necessary to keep us out of a depression and a recession at a time when the dot.com bubble had burst, when our financial centers were attacked on September 11, and we had to go to war and spend hundreds of billions of dollars to protect the American people, of which there has been no significant attack against Americans by terrorists in our country since that time.

Who would believe that our economy would be this strong, our safety would be this good, that there are so many things sitting where they are today? But we need to step forward and make progress. I can tell you frankly that I was not thrilled by the proposal here several years ago, 3 years ago, that we were going to cut the deficit in half in 5 years. That was not enough for me.

Now, I believe that President Bush has offered a budget, and I think that we will see the House Republicans offer a budget that will reach balance within 5 years. That is a balance without dynamic scoring, and the increase that we are seeing in the revenue because of this dynamic economy indicates that could well happen within the next 3 years. I expect it will happen in the next 3 years.

I am an individual, though, who would be willing to sign on to a budget

that would balance the budget this year. I will not go very far into that for these purposes, because I recognize, practically speaking, there aren't enough votes to pass a budget like that. It would be a bit too Draconian.

But had we have been able to slow some of this growth, we could be at balance today, except that we have been facing the war, and we took the hit from the burst in the dot.com bubble. So we are pulled together here now, and the principle needs to be, slow this growth in discretionary, nondefense discretionary spending. We are doing that, and we have effectively done that. We have kept it at below the rate of inflation or at the rate of inflation.

The biggest problem we have is the constant growth in entitlements called Medicare, Social Security, Medicaid to a lesser degree, and, of course, the interest that goes up on that. You will see a budget comes from Republicans that gets us to a balanced budget within 5 years. I am grateful that that is coming out.

But, again, I believe that if we can give the investors the confidence that we can continue the Bush tax cuts, the 2001 and the 2003 tax cuts, then I think that you will see this economy continue to grow, and you will see the budget balanced before the 5 years are up.

But if we turn this over to the other side, if we turn it over to the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, who wants to see the end of all of those tax cuts, we will see the goose that lays the golden egg slaughtered and on the field of class warfare.

Now, we know that what you tax you get less of. The Federal Government has the first lien on all taxation in America. We tax everything that moves, that produces. We tax labor. We tax interest, investment, dividends capital gains, you name it, all the way down the line. Then the alternative minimum tax sits there and sneaks up on people and grabs people, and it is creeping down into the lower brackets over and over again.

So to make this call, I would say this, extend those tax cuts. The American people need to clamor in order to extend the Bush tax cuts. If that can happen, the confidence in this economy will continue. We will get this budget balanced.

The other side wants a balanced budget, too, because they called for one. But they want to raise your taxes to do it. I guarantee you, that is the only way that they can balance this budget, and that is the effort that they are down on. I stand with the remarks made by the gentleman from California, and I appreciate very much him taking the leadership to come to the floor and yielding to me.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Mr. KING, one second, before you leave, figures, we talk about the progress we have made on this budget so far. The 12-month budget deficit, the last 12 months, is $188 billion. Remember, some time ago, we were talking about nearly half a trillion dollars. That $188 billion is down 38 percent as a rolling 12-month budget deficit from what it was a year ago.

For 22 straight months now, the budget deficit has declined by about 18 percent, year on year. There is a lot of progress happening on this budget deficit because of the growth in the economy, because of those tax cuts, and because we, the prior couple of budgets, were beginning to start to control spending. It is something we haven't done, well, frankly, a lot, lately. But we are starting to in the last couple of years. Isn't that right, Mr. KING?

Mr. KING of Iowa. It is interesting to me, the statistics that you put out on that data, that if you believe in a free market economy, you understand that description intuitively. You understand there is going to be dynamic growth that is stimulated because there is a return on investment.

If you don't believe in the free market economy, then you think somehow that people that make money and create jobs are evil, and they should be punished for their productivity. When you punish productivity and tax it, you get less of it. That was another Reagan statement. What you tax you get less of. What you subsidize you get more of.

We are going to see productivity more highly taxed. We get less productivity, and this economy will slow down.

□ 1730

I point also that if we could freeze our spending at current levels, sometime in the middle of fiscal year 2010 we would be looking at a surplus. That is something else to consider.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Mr. Speaker, we all understand how much we would rather have the private markets than us making decisions, than some nameless, faceless bureaucrat somewhere close to where we are all sitting right now, someone here in Washington. Someone who fully understands that is my colleague who will be speaking next, Dr. PRICE from the State of Georgia. Dr. PRICE.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from California for yielding and for organizing this and his leadership on this issue. I appreciate your perspective and your expertise as a CPA practicing before you came to Congress. I know that you have the knowledge that all of us should utilize as we talk about budget and the economy.

You know, I was sitting over in my office and listening to our good friends on the other side of the aisle as they were discussing their issues before. I could not help but being amused by their comments. And you sense that they are trying to lay the groundwork now for a budget that they are going to propose, and they are going to propose it obviously with more spending, because that is what our friends on the other side of the aisle do.

But I could not help but just be reminded of the Orwellian sense of how the folks on the other side of the aisle seem to govern. You know, they just seem to think that if they just say it, that it is so. All you have got to do is say it, then it is so. They passed a bill last week that they said did not have any earmarks or any special projects. In fact, it had hundred of millions of dollars of earmarks that they could have taken out; in fact, voted against taking them out.

But I did want to review very briefly, before I mentioned a word or two about the budget and the economy, these wonderful Six for '06 programs that they passed. And of course they are celebrating them as if they were law. However, the Senate has not acted on any of these, so, in fact, they have not become law. And thank goodness they have not become law, because what this highlights is the hypocrisy of our good friends on the other side of the aisle.

They talk about passing all of the 9/11 Commission recommendations. In fact, that is not what they did. That is not what the bill did that they brought to the floor. In fact, they did not pass some of the most important recommendations that allow for communication between committees here that make it so all America would be safer.

They talk about the minimum wage increase. In fact, what they would do if they increased it in the way that they wanted to is to decrease the number of jobs on America and propose this unfunded mandate on American small businesses, which actually cuts the level of employment in our Nation. The Senate has recognized that, and they are working to try to correct the damage that the Democratic House has done.

They denied completely the proven results. I am a physician, practiced medicine for over 20 years before coming to Congress. And the Democratic majority here denied the proven results of adult and cord stem cell research on a bill that they passed here earlier. I suspect the Senate will have to correct the damage that they have done there as well.

As a physician I recognize the importance of doctors and patients making health care decisions by themselves without governmental intervention. And what our good friends on the other side of the aisle did was, in fact, work to fix prices in the area of Medicare prescription drugs, which would decrease the number of drugs available for seniors and, in fact, harm seniors, I believe, in the health care that they receive. And consequently I think the Senate is going to have to work on fixing that.

One of the remarkable hypocritical things that they did in their discussion points about decreasing student loans, in fact that is not what they did at all. What they did was pass a bill that kind of tracks down, decreases the interest on student loans, and then for 6 months

cuts the interest on student loans in half, not for students, though, for graduates; cuts it for 6 months, and then, bam, at the end of that 6 months, the interest rates pop right back up.

Then the most amazing thing that they have done is to tax domestic oil companies, not foreign oil companies, Mr. Speaker, not foreign oil companies. They tax domestic oil companies so that domestic oil costs more, foreign oil costs less. So what will happen is that Americans will be more reliant on foreign oil.

So it is a remarkable, remarkable culture of hypocrisy and misinformation, disinformation, I call it Orwellian government, that our good friends on the other side of the aisle have promoted.

I do want to mention some of economic issues that you had talked about before, the good news, remarkable news in the economy: economic growth, 3.4 percent growth in GDP over the last year; business investment up for 14 straight quarters; job growth of 7.2 million new jobs since the summer of 2003; low unemployment rate, 4.5, 4.6 percent unemployment rate. That is a rate lower than the average of the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s combined.

Tax revenues, tax receipts are up. Deficit reduction you mentioned, Mr. CAMPBELL, the latest numbers that are out on the 12-month rolling deficit, the budget deficit, down to $188 billion. That is the lowest that it has been since 2002. And a steady increase in labor productivity.

So one would think that if our friends on the other side of the aisle were interested in a good economy, they would look at this economy and they would say, well, how did that happen? What made that happen? Were there actions that were taken by the Federal Government and Congress that resulted in those good numbers?

Well, in fact, there were. And they happened in 2001 and 2003, as my friends know, and those were the tax reductions, the appropriate tax reductions on the American people, capital gains, dividends, tax reductions, and a decrease in income tax for the vast majority of Americans. What that did, as it did under President Reagan and as it did under President Kennedy, what that did was to stimulate the economy in a way that resulted in the numbers that we have seen.

And so our good friends on the other side of the aisle would do well to study history. They would do well to study history. They would do well to learn from history as they try to formulate their budget and make certain that they appreciate, as we do on this side of the aisle, that Washington does not have a revenue problem, it has got a spending problem.

We look forward to working with our good friends on the other side of the aisle in decreasing Washington's spending, solving those difficult challenges that we have, as my good friend from Iowa mentioned just a little bit ago, in the area of Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, all of those automatic spenders that are comprising more and more of the budget.

I look forward to working with him, I know that my friend from California does, and again I appreciate his leadership and the information that he has been bringing to the floor of the House today and to the American people. Because we are challenged with solving these problems and difficulties that we have as a Nation, we ought to do it together. We are proposing the kind of positive and uplifting messages that I think all America can embrace. I appreciate the time.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Thank you, Dr. PRICE.

It is as though the people on the other side, the Democrats, the facts of what is going on in the economy, what is going on in the budget, what tax cuts do, what they do not do, it just does not fit with what they want to do, which is tax more and spend more.

You know, I could put all of you here, keep you in this room where there is no windows, and tell you tomorrow morning that the sun did not rise. Now, you would have no proof that the sun did not rise, but it is very likely that it, in fact, did rise. And the fact that I keep you in this room and do not let you see it does not mean that the sun did not rise.

That is what they are doing. And we are trying to open the windows so people can see, no, you know what, the sun did rise this morning. Tax cuts do stimulate the economy. The budget is moving towards balance. But the problem is spending.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Exactly. I appreciate the gentleman's comments because they are absolutely true. That is why I call it Orwellian politics, bumper sticker politics, because just because they say it is so does not make it so. I appreciate your comments. I know we have got some other colleagues who are interested in shedding light and bringing truth and facts to the issues regarding the budget and the economy.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Well, we do have other speakers. The next one is from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND).

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, before I begin my remarks, I would like to call on my fellow Members to keep the gentleman from Georgia, Congressman CHARLIE NORWOOD, in your thoughts and prayers. As many of you know, CHARLIE has suffered from cancer for some time and has fought valiantly, just as he did when he recovered from a lung transplant several years ago.

Today CHARLIE announced that he is going to decline further treatment and return home to Augusta, Georgia, where he will receive hospice care in his home. CHARLIE NORWOOD has served the people his entire life. He has served his Nation as a soldier in Vietnam. He served Augusta, Georgia, but also as a dedicated father to his children, and a husband to his loving wife Gloria.

Since 1995, he has ably and some would say tenaciously represented the people of eastern, northern Georgia, but his service and his wisdom has benefited us all. To me he is not just a great Georgian and a great American, he is a great friend. He served as a mentor to me and to many others in this House. And I know that everyone, Mr. Speaker, here has CHARLIE and Gloria in their thoughts and prayers.

He said today that he is turning it over to the Lord's hands, and I know that he can be in no better place than that. I look forward to working with CHARLIE again. I look forward to him getting back.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that we are talking about the budget and the economy here today, because CHARLIE was a great champion, is a great champion, for the taxpayers of this country, fighting for smaller government, less spending and lower taxes.

In these hallowed halls we hear the word ''compassion'' when we are talking about spending other people's money, when we are talking about disbursing the hard-earned tax dollars of American workers.

Mr. Speaker, we talk about how important this spending is, how much it is going to help people. Certainly there is no end to the good and well-meaning projects that we could fund. We all want well and qualified students to have the resources they need to go to college. We all want to find an answer to cover the 47 million people who do not have health insurance. We all want to see the benefits that come from new roads, expanded public transportation, infrastructure improvements and economic development projects. We all scrape and fight to ensure that our constituents get their fair share of the Federal pie.

But as we consider the massive spending obligations that our government faces in coming years, everyone in this House, Republican and Democrat, liberal, moderate, conservative, can agree that we cannot stay on our present course.

Mr. Speaker, as the baby-boomers near retirement, we will soon face a scenario where there will not be enough workers to support the entitlement spending slated for Medicare and Social Security. We have talked often in recent years about the funding shortfall that Social Security faces. We know that Social Security will run out of money in less than 50 years.

Perhaps we have focused on Social Security because it seems to be the more manageable problem. As dire as the Social Security situation is, our shortfall in the Medicare program is eight times larger. That should concern not just Members of Congress, but all Americans.

The Medicare shortfall will affect not just retirees and those retiring in the next 10 years, it also is of concern to the younger generations. How will they pay for their parents' health care and long-term care without the guarantees of Medicare?

Mr. Speaker, how would their generation afford a pay-as-you-go system for their parents' generation when there are only two workers supporting every retiree? And finally they must ask themselves, will Medicare be there for me when it is my time to retire?

These are serious questions that demand serious answers. That is why I think we need to refine what we consider compassionate in this House. I would argue that it is compassionate for us to do a much better job of making tough decisions on spending in today's Congress to save programs not only for present generations, but for the future generations of Americans.

Quite frankly, to maintain current benefits after the baby-boomers retire would require crippling levels of taxation that would grind our economy to a halt and put all of our Federal programs at risk. In our effort to be compassionate today, we are spending tomorrow's money. At our present rate we are going to leave future generations with nothing but IOUs.

The best thing that we can do to save Medicare and Social Security for future generations is to reduce the growth of the programs and maintain the growing economy that allows us to sustain tax revenues and keep these important entitlements afloat.

The tax cuts of the past 6 years have served this purpose. I think the gentleman from California and the gentleman from Iowa have explained that very well. Last year the Federal Treasury took in more money than it ever has before, because our tax policies have allowed Americans to keep more of their money, and they have allowed U.S. businesses to flourish and expand despite the strain caused by the technology bubble, the tragedy of September 11, and the cost of the war on terror.

Mr. Speaker, the tax cuts boost the economy. In order to preserve the tax cuts, we have to reduce our spending. Certainly we have to cut back on earmarks and local projects, and I certainly hope we heed President Bush's call to cut the number of earmarks in half.

But that is not going to be enough. We must curtail the growth of entitlement spending, or else cuts elsewhere in the budget will never offset those exploding costs. We have to fund our national priorities, but we must be more selective in what we consider priorities.

□ 1745

We took an important step last year when we saved $40 billion in the Deficit Reduction Act. That legislation required courageous leadership, and we are going to need more of that kind of leadership in the future.

So to sum it up, the tax cuts boost the economy. A strong economy fills Federal coffers, and tax revenues allow us to fund programs important to all Americans so long as we learn to live within our means.

I would like to thank the gentleman from California for leading this important discussion. In his time here in the House, he has proven to be a leader on these issues, and I appreciate his experience as a CPA, as a businessman, and one who has furnished jobs and helped this economy grow. I appreciate this time he has yielded me.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. I thank very much the gentleman from Georgia for his remarks, with which I can fully associate. But there are people who have been in Congress less time than I have, and one of them will be our next speaker here, Mr. DAVIS, the gentleman from Tennessee. I would like you to yield time to Mr. DAVIS from Tennessee, one of our freshmen.

Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee. Thank you, Mr. CAMPBELL. Thank you for your leadership and bringing this important debate.

And thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to rise. One of my favorite people in Washington all through history was President Ronald Reagan. Most of us know that the anniversary of his birth was just this week; 96 years ago President Reagan was born. And he once said, we don't have a $1 trillion debt because we haven't taxed enough. We have a $1 trillion debt because we spend too much. And I think that is important for this Congress to understand. I think that is a commonsense approach that the people of America can understand. It is about spending. It is not about taxing. We overspend, we don't overtax. I think that is very important.

As a matter of fact, if we continue on the pace that we have today, our revenues are outpacing us, and we continue to do that, we have our revenues outpace our spending over the next 5 years, President Bush's budget will be balanced by the year 2012, and we can do that without raising taxes. Now, to me, that is an exciting prospect to be able to balance the budget without raising taxes. And we do that at the same time maintaining the successful pro-business economic policies that we put in place. I think that is very important. And it is not just Republicans saying that. It is the Congressional Budget Office. It has actually given us data to support the data that we have in front of us. Just last week, the CBO supported the fact that tax cuts of 2003 helped boost the Federal revenues by 68 percent. Cut taxes, bring in more revenue, allow people across America and from the First District of Tennessee to keep more money in their pockets. As they do that, they spend it back in their districts. It circulates through the economy. It helps the Federal Government. You do it by keeping taxes low, not overtaxing. And we need to do that at the same time we keep fiscal restraint in place. Our economy has actually grown through 21 straight quarters. That is a good thing. We don't want to go back on that. We want to make sure that we stand strong, keep our tax cuts in place, keep our economy humming along and see that we could go from 21 straight quarters to 22 to 23 to 24.

In the period between 2004 and 2006, Federal tax revenues rose by the largest margin in 40 years. You do it by keeping taxes low, not by raising them.

Another exciting fact about our economy, the deficit has been cut in half 2 years ahead of schedule. And we did it by keeping taxes low. I think that is what the people of northeast Tennessee, good commonsense, hardworking people, want to have happen. Keep our taxes low. Let us keep the money in our district. Let us provide for our families. And as we do that, the economy will grow. As the economy grows, we take care of the Federal Government.

I think we need to look at government much like we look at a family sitting around a family table back in east Tennessee. People do have tight budgets. Unlike the Federal Government, though, people back in east Tennessee have to make tough decisions. When they have a tough budget, they can't say, well, I will just go out and raise my taxes and have somebody send me some more money so I can spend more. What they do in east Tennessee and across America is they have to make decisions about, well, I can't spend as much as I used to. And if we continue to do the right things, they will have that money back home.

The President, once again, in his budget is calling for making the 2001 and the 2003 tax relief provisions permanent. The administration projects total revenue growth to grow 5.4 percent per year if we keep those tax cuts in place.

Tax cuts are critical to maintaining our present healthy economy. We simply have a choice. We have a choice of a bigger economy or bigger government. That is the choice we have. And I certainly hope that my colleagues here on the House floor will understand how important it is to allow people back home to keep more of their money and keep government small and allow families to take care of themselves.

To reach the goal of a balanced budget, we need to hold the line on spending. We need to reduce earmarks. And I think we need to pass line item vetoes to crack down on worthless pork barrel spending. I don't think the Congress has done a good enough job on that.

I know there was a bill passed just last week and said there was no earmarks. Well, reading through the data, I am from east Tennessee, and I didn't realize we had a rainforest in Iowa. That is interesting for me to know. I didn't study that back in school in east Tennessee. Maybe someone else can explain that to me when they get up to speak. But that is an earmark that was in the resolution that passed last week.

We are being disingenuous with the American people. And the American people are smart. They will catch on to

what is going on. They will not be fooled.

Another thing that I heard before I came over, I was sitting in my office, and I heard the other side speaking. And they talked about the Medicare cuts and what we are doing to health care. The reality is, under President Bush's budget, Medicare will grow 5.6 percent. Now, back in east Tennessee, that is not a cut. That is a growth of 5.6 percent in Medicare. So please, do not be fooled. Do not be fooled. There is not a rainforest in Iowa, and Medicare is not being cut.

I think if people continue to use common sense, they will support the Congress. They want the Congress to do the right thing. It goes right back to what Ronald Reagan said. We don't have a $1 trillion debt because we haven't taxed enough. We have a $1 trillion debt because we spend too much. And I ask my colleagues to make sure we don't spend too much in this Congress. Thank you for allowing me to take part.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. I thank the gentleman from Tennessee. And, you know, we don't have a rainforest in Iowa right now. But if the budget passed by the Democrats in this House, when was it, last week, were to become law, then we will have a rainforest in Iowa, and it will be built with $50 million of your money. That is you people watching. It will be tax money taken from you to pay to build a rainforest in Iowa.

Now, Democrats have only been in charge for a little longer than 30 days, and already they have made it easier to raise taxes. They raise taxes on domestic oil and gas producers. I mean, I totally don't get that when here we are trying to become less reliant on foreign oil, and we have gas prices where they are, and they are going to tax domestic oil and gas producers. And, of course, when they tax them, they spend the money on an entirely new program, and then on top of that then they pass this budget which allows this rainforest in Iowa to go through and spends another $10 billion, which increases the deficit not reduces it.

But I don't need to explain any of this to our next speaker, the gentlelady from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN). I would like to yield to the gentlelady from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, how pleased I am to join the gentleman from California and my Republican Study Committee colleagues in this special order hour. As we talk about the budget and we really begin to focus on some of the components in this budget, you know, I think that many of my Republican Study Committee colleagues are interested in digging into this document, and their constituents are well served by that, like the gentleman from Tennessee talking about his First District constituents who are logging on to his Web site, who are looking at this budget. And certainly we want to direct people to the Republican Study Committee Web site. Here it is: RSC@mail.house.gov. We will be happy to point out some of the fallacies.

Our colleagues across the aisle like to talk about fiscal responsibility, but then they don't practice it. They don't practice what they preach. And we have appropriately dubbed the work that the Democrats are doing as the ''Hold on to your wallet Congress'' because they are definitely coming to a pocket near you. And they want more of your money. That is one thing that you can basically take that IOU to the bank. They are going to try to cash it in. It is in the form of your hardearned dollars. So RSC@mail.house.gov. We invite everybody to work with us through this process. We want to be certain that we have your ideas. And we know, as the gentleman from Tennessee was saying, as Ronald Reagan, so many times has said, government doesn't have a revenue problem. It has a spending problem. Government never gets enough of your money. You know, one of the things that I have repeatedly done in my town hall meetings is to say, how much is enough? How much is enough for government to tax? What is the ceiling? When are they going to say, we have got it, we are flush with money? We all know that, and I will yield to the gentleman for comment.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. As you say, one of the great differences between us and them, we talked about it being your money, their money, the People's money, the taxpayers' money. Your money, watching on television, they talk about it like it is their money, like it is the government's money.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. If the gentleman will yield, that is an excellent point, because every dollar we spend is not ours. It is not the government's. It is the taxpayers'. And this is a government of, by and for the people. It is not a government of the government.

And our friends across the aisle, through the New Deal, through the great society, putting all of these programs that sound good, that really answered a lot of questions and needs, you know, they put these in place, and then it grows and grows and grows. And then you have a big, big bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy becomes unresponsive. And the constituents want accountability with that.

I had at one point said, you know, it reminded me very much of The Little Shop of Horrors, that stage play that we have all seen. And the plant grows and grows and grows, and then finally it says, feed me more, Seymour, and it envelops everything because that is what the government is saying to the American taxpayer, feed me more.

We have an expert who is with us on so many of our family budget matters, our Republican Study Committee, RSC, chairman, Mr. HENSARLING of Texas, and I will yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. HENSARLING. Well, I thank the gentlelady for yielding, and I want to thank her for all the great communications work that she does for the conservative caucus in Congress, the Republican Study Committee. Thank the gentleman from California, our Budget and Spending Task Force chairman for the excellent work he does in helping bring this debate to the American people. And you know, the gentlelady is so right. This debate really reduces down to a very fundamental issue. Do you want more government and less opportunity, or do you want more opportunity and less government?

People in this institution need to remember that every time they vote for more money for some government program, they are taking money away from some family program.

In many respects, Mr. Speaker, this isn't a debate about how much we are going to spend on health care or how much we are going to spend on education. It is a debate about who is going to do the spending. Republicans want families to do the spending. We want small businesses to do the spending. And yet, our friends on the other side of the aisle, the Democrats, they want government to do more of the spending.

Now, as I am fond of saying, people are entitled to their own opinions, but they are not entitled to their own facts. As a member of the Budget Committee, I just came from a hearing earlier this morning on our annual budget that was quite instructive. We heard accusations of massive tax cuts.

Well, it is kind of interesting, because when you look at the record, when we have provided tax relief to the American people, guess what? We have ended up with more tax revenue. We have the greatest amount of tax revenue that we have ever had in the history of the United States of America. And in 2004, after the pro-growth tax relief, tax receipts were up 5.5 percent. Well, how did that add to the deficit, Mr. Speaker?

In 2005, tax receipts were up 14.5 percent. Well, how did that add to the deficit? In 2006, 11.8 percent. And now in the first quarter of the first quarter of 2007, they are up approximately 7.2 percent.

Now I am not here to tell you that every time you engage in tax relief, you get more tax revenues, but, guess what? Facts don't lie.

You are entitled to your opinion. You are not entitled to your own facts. When you allow small businesses and American families to keep more of what they earn so that they can save and invest and create more jobs, guess what? They go out and do it. So that is myth number one that somehow by allowing American people to keep more of what they have earned, that somehow that is adding to the deficit.

□ 1800

The deficit has dropped. The American people are not overtaxed. Government spends too much.

Now, we have another myth in the debate that I heard in the Budget Committee this morning, and that is talk

about all the massive budget cuts. Well, Mr. Speaker, people have to be very careful. I took the liberty of looking up the word ''cut'' in Webster's dictionary. It means to reduce. Ninety percent of the time somebody in Washington talks about cutting a budget, what they mean is that the budget isn't growing quite as fast as I want it to grow, and so, therefore, that is a cut. I mean, that is like somebody's child coming up to him and saying, Dad, I would like an extra dollar a week in allowance. And you say, Well, you know what? Maybe you deserve an increase in your allowance, Daughter. I will give you 75 cents. And they say, Gee, Dad, that is a 25 percent cut. I wanted a dollar extra a week, and you are only giving me 75 cents. Well, the point is you are getting 75 cents more.

So we are going to hear the usual misleading rhetoric about all these budget cuts. But guess what? Since President Bush came into office, and I know we will hear about this one, total antipoverty spending is up 41 percent, one of the most dramatic increases in the history of America. That is assuming that you think that somehow government is ultimately going to solve this problem. And if you look at almost every major budget area and don't just look at what has happened under the Bush administration, as long as Republicans have been in control of Congress, look for the last 10 years, you can see energy up almost 200 percent; education spending, elementary and secondary education, 100 percent. So, again, you are entitled to your own opinions, but you are not entitled to your own facts. That simply does not equate into a cut.

So we will have increased debates as we go through and talk about this budget. But what is most exciting is that because of the economic progrowth tax relief provided by a Republican Congress, we have over 7 million people who now have paychecks who used to not have paychecks. We have one of the highest levels of homeownership in the history of America. We have the highest stock market we have had in a long time. And these people want to raise taxes on the American people.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HENSARLING. I would be happy to yield.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate those latter points. And it gets to the question of people who hear our discussions of why is this all-important to me? Over the last several days, as we have begun to look at the President's budget as he submitted it to Congress, we have heard from the experts, we have heard the debates, we have heard the speeches, we have heard talk of the CBO, the OMB, dynamic scoring, static scoring, a whole list of other acronyms and technicalities and the like. But you have to really at some point in time step back from all the Byzantine makeup that Congress is when it comes to a budget and say is there some sort of common principle that we can base all this on that underpins this almost $3 trillion endeavor that we are all engaged in?

For all the complexities of this process, the fact of the matter is that what we are doing is nothing different than what every family in America has to do every day of their lives. They have to look at the amount of money that they expect to have and get over the next 12 months and decide what are their priorities, where are they going to spend it, how are they going to spend it. Now, there are some differences, of course. I guess there are three of them between what we are doing and what the average family budget is. First of all, it is on the scale. We are doing things here on a mammoth scale compared to the average homeowner.

Years ago there used to be a $1,000 bill. I don't think there is a $1,000 bill anymore. I think they did away with that. But if you took a $1,000 bill and you stacked them up, you would need 1,000 of those $1,000 bills just to get up to $1 billion; and then if you had that stack of $1,000 bills, you would need 1,000 of those stacks to get up to $1 trillion. And we are looking at a $3 trillion budget. So we are looking here at a size that is different.

Also, families realize that their family budget has a finite amount of money that they deal with, whereas we look at it slightly differently because we know we can always borrow and spend and print more money.

And, finally, one other major difference in what we do here than the family budget is that we are spending other people's money. So many times people come down to the floor and say we have to be compassionate for this program or that, but we have to realize at the end of the day it is not our money we are taking out of the pocket. It is the American taxpayers' dollars that are coming out of the pocket to pay for these programs. So that is where the difference is.

But at the end of the day, it is all the same in the sense that we have to live within the boundaries, just like a family should. At least that is what the American taxpayer is looking at and asking us why we don't. Why don't we live within a confined budget like they do? And why don't we go one step further, as many families do? Just as many families save for their children's education for the future, why can't we get to the point of actually having a balanced budget where we can set aside some dollars for the future generations?

Now, I, like my colleague from Texas who just spoke, also serve on the Budget Committee. And I have to be honest with you that what we have heard there from the other side of the aisle is that they are laying the groundwork, from their comments at least, to do two things, to attack the budget on the point of taxing and spending. They are laying this groundwork on spending saying that we are not spending enough and on the side of the taxes that we are not taxing enough.

And on that latter point I will just close on this point. The budget cuts that this Congress, Republican Congress, has done in the past have been progressive budget cuts. That means it helps the average-income family more than anybody else. And I get the static information not from the CBO or these other experts. I get this information from nobody else but the New York Times. And they have looked at the budget cuts that we have done, and they proved the point for us; that if you are making less than $50,000, that you saw the percent change in your average tax bill by a 48 percent reduction. So the lowest incomes under the progressive tax cuts help the lowest-income people the most. If you are making between $50,000 and $100,000, a 21 percent reduction; $100,000 to $200,000, a 17 percent reduction; $200,000 to $500,000, it flows into a 10 percent reduction. So you see the trend.

What we have done in the past is help the average taxpayer in the State of New Jersey around $200,000. What we must do now is make those tax cuts permanent and do as a family budget, live within our means.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey. Wow, what a shock. The other side says they are tax cuts for the rich, and they are not, unless making under $50,000 makes you rich.

Now if we can go to the other side of the country, I yield to a great defender of taxpayers and taxpayers' rights, Mr. JEFF FLAKE, the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and putting together this Special Order. And I just have a minute, but I would like to submit a statement for the RECORD and to point out how important it is.

I am glad so many are making the distinction between tax relief and spending, overall government spending. You simply can't assume that spending money on a teapot museum ought to be treated the same as leaving money in people's pockets. You simply can't equate them the same. You can't score them the same. Whenever we have tax relief, we have increased revenue. As the gentleman from Texas correctly pointed out, those are the facts, and it has happened again and again and again.

So I am glad that so many are saying that tonight, and, again, I will submit a statement for the RECORD.

I applaud the President's commitment to balancing the budget by 2012 without raising taxes. I also support the attention given to cutting entitlement growth. Mandatory entitlement spending eats up 50 percent of the almost $3 trillion budget and is growing at an alarming rate.

However, I am concerned that Members will erode these savings by proposing to increase entitlement programs and, in order to adhere

to the new PAYGO rules, claim that the increases will be offset by eliminating some of the important tax relief Congress has passed over the last 5 years.

This rationale assumes that a tax cut is simply a straight-out loss of revenue for the Federal Government. This is why it is extremely important to consider how tax cuts have actually affected revenues over the last couple of years.

For example, the Joint Committee on Taxation estimated that the cost of the 2003 and 2004 tax cuts would equal $296 billion in lost revenues for fiscal years 2003 to 2005.

However, tax revenues actually finished fiscal year 2005 at $124 billion above the adjusted baseline, meaning that 42 percent of the projected revenue loss had been recouped. That number still continues to grow each year.

It is irresponsible to assume that by eliminating tax relief the government will see an increase in revenues. I believe the opposite is true.

We must take into account the increased capital that tax relief produces, which translates into more investments and savings, more jobs, and, ultimately, more income tax revenues.

This is why I will soon reintroduce my bill to require the CBO and Joint Committee on Taxation to include dynamic scores in their analysis of all revenue bills, and encourage my colleagues to cosponsor it.

We cannot continue to make policy decisions based on predictions that simply do not take into consideration fundamental economic principles that have been proven time and again.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona.

And now from the great desert Southwest to the South, I yield to Dr. GINGREY, the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding.

And I want to take just a second to join my colleagues from Georgia and particularly the two that are on the floor tonight, Dr. PRICE and Representative WESTMORELAND, in saying to our colleague CHARLIE NORWOOD that we are praying for you, buddy. All of us from Georgia, but every Member of this body on both sides of the aisle are praying that the miracle of God's healing will deliver you back to us soon, and we think about you constantly.

Mr. Speaker, this hour is a great opportunity for us to discuss the budget. And I had an opportunity this morning to be on the C–SPAN program, and the host said to me, Congressman, are you aware of the fact that one of the Members of the other body has recommended that maybe we need something called a war tax to pay for our Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom? And I said to the host, I know that has probably been done in the history of this country. Maybe it was necessary to fund a previous war. But the thing about this President and this administration is because of these economic principles of cutting taxes and growing revenue, fortunately, Mr. Speaker, we have been able to do this without raising the people's taxes. And I certainly commend President Bush for that foresight and wisdom and the former majority party as we supported those tax cuts when it was predicted that it would cost the economy over a 10-year period something like $1.3 trillion.

So what I would like to say to my friends on the other side of the aisle in particular as I wrap up quickly, and I know time is limited, on the defense budget, please, please do not cut future combat systems. Don't cut our missile defense system to pay for some social programs when the defense of this Nation is so important at this time of war.

With that, I really appreciate my colleague giving me the opportunity to weigh in tonight.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia. And I would just like to say to everyone who is watching and listening, you have been listening for the last hour to members of the Republican Study Committee. You will be hearing a lot from us because we want to watch out for your money and your interests, not the government and the government's interests.

To close things I would like to yield to another new Member of Congress, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN).

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding.

I just want to follow up on the gentleman from Georgia's comments. He is exactly right about the defense portion of this budget. It is critical at this time with the terror threat that we face that we do what is right by the defense budget. In 1945, 38 percent of gross domestic product was spent on the defense. Today it is 3.8 percent at a time, as I said earlier, where we have terrorists around the world who want to do our families and our country harm.

Normally when we talk about budgets, and folks have pointed this out, we get focused on the numbers, on the data, on the policy, and I think all too often we forget about the people, the families out there who are impacted by our decision. And I am hopeful over the next few weeks that we really focus on the impact our decisions are going to have on families and taxpayers and business owners.

I am reminded of a story of a constituent of ours a few years ago who wanted to meet with our U.S. Senator. And our constituent is a successful businessman in the manufacturing sector, and we were discussing the whole issue of trade and competing with China and India. And we sat down with our United States Senator, and our constituent took the piece that they make, and he had taped to that piece two pennies, and he took that manufactured piece of steel and he slid it across the table to our Senator, and he said, Senator, those two pennies, those 2 cents, represent our labor costs in that piece. He said, we can compete with anybody on labor. We are so efficient, our processes, our systems. What we do in our business, we are so good at it, we can compete with anybody. He says, what makes it tough for us to compete is the things you guys do, and he pointed right to our Senator.

It is the things the politicians do. It is the high taxes. It is the high regulation. It is the ridiculous spending we have heard others talk about here over the last hour. Those are the things that make it tough on the families and taxpayers of this great country to compete; to start their business; to go after their goals, their dreams; to pursue those things that have meaning and significance to them as a family.

And I am hopeful, as we proceed on this debate over the next weeks, several months, that we will remember the business owners and the families out there who are making it and doing the things that make this country the greatest Nation in the world.

I appreciate the time we have had here. I appreciate the gentleman from California and this opportunity to share with the American people.

HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HILL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this evening I am joined by some of my colleagues who are new Members, and we are going to talk about the President's health care proposals and also what he articulated both in his State of the Union Address, and more recently last Monday when he gave us his budget message.

And my concern, as always, is that President Bush has prioritized, or says he wants to prioritize, health care as an issue and particularly deal with the problem of the uninsured. And we certainly recognize that under his watch as President for the last 6 or 7 years that the problem of the uninsured has grown greater in this country. There are more uninsured than ever. But at the same time the proposals that the President puts forward, in particular the amount of money that has been allocated in his budget for some of these health care needs, does not go along, essentially, with the rhetoric that he has been using, saying that he wants to cover the uninsured and prioritize the concerns of the uninsured.

And, again, I always say my effort is not to chastise the President. I appreciate the fact that President Bush is prioritizing health care and talking about it, because he has the bully pulpit, and to the extent that he is out there talking about health care, it gives us an opportunity in the Congress to address the issue.

□ 1815

But it is unfortunate that the proposals in the budget that he proposes

do not really go along with any kind of concerted effort that would be meaningful to address those health care concerns, and particularly the problems of the uninsured.

Before I begin, I wanted to yield to my colleague from Colorado. I know he and I were both watching the debate by our Republican colleagues in the last hour. I know he would like to address some of those concerns.

I yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Congressman PALLONE.

We did have a chance to hear our friends from the Republican side of the aisle. They talked about how they could manage the budget, how this President's budget was great and good for America. But last November, the people of this country cut through the smoke and mirrors of the Republican budgets, and they asked for and voted for a change in direction of this country.

Let's just start with where this Republican President and the Republican Congress left off last fall when we had the elections. Under George Bush, under this presidency, we have had another $3.9 trillion added to the debt of this country. The debt on each one of us now is about $29,000 per person and rising every day under this White House and the Republican Congress. There was nowhere near a balanced budget at any time over the last few years, just continuing to dig us deeper and deeper and deeper into debt.

The people of this country saw it. They didn't want anymore of that, because they understand that, right now, because of that debt that has been incurred over the last few years, the interest that we pay on our debt now dwarfs what we spend on education, veterans' benefits and homeland security, to just name a few, because we are spending so much, because we borrowed so much. The President and White House has proposed a budget where we continue to borrow and spend and drive our country farther and farther into debt.

They talked about how they could manage the budget so much better. My friends here know they didn't even finish the budget. We had to take a mess that was left over by the Republican Congress and really the White House where they didn't finish their business. We had to deal with it last week to try to get our budget in order.

The Democratic Congress really is changing the way business is being done here in our Nation's Capital because we are addressing budget problems. And we are going to show that we really do believe in making health care a priority and not just giving lip service to it.

So I would like to yield back to Mr. PALLONE or to our friend, Representative CASTOR, for their comments, and then I would like to talk about how the President's health care budget affects the people in Colorado, my fair State.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's comments. This does directly relate to the health care debate, because if you are in a State where your deficit continues to climb, as we face now under the years of the Republican majority, it is very difficult to address any unmet needs, whether it be health care or whatever, because of the deficit and the constant having to pay back on the debt.

I wanted to say something about what you mentioned in response to our Republican colleagues. I have been here a long time, almost 20 years now, I am in my 19th year. When I first started in 1988, the Democrats were in the majority.

There were a group of Republicans who used to come down every night doing special orders, just like we are, and they would have the pages bring this huge digital clock that literally was the whole length of the well, from this chart over to where my colleague from Colorado is, and there would be two or three pages that would bring this big digital clock down. They would go on and rail about the deficit and the deficit was going up so much a day. This literally went on for like 6 years while I was down here, from when I first started in 1988 until 1994.

In 1994, the Republicans took the majority under Newt Gingrich. The digital clock disappeared, and all we heard were constant spending and going deeper into debt, and nobody in the Republican Party ever mentioned the deficit again as it continued to climb in those years, and particularly now under President Bush. For the life of me, I don't understand where this whole traditional Republican philosophy, which was to care how you spent the money and you didn't want to go into debt, just disappeared from their ideology.

In fact, I have to say, in the last campaign, because you mentioned it, President Clinton was actually at an event that I attended in New Jersey, and I am not sure I can repeat exactly what he said. But essentially he said that he watched the Republican party under their congressional majority in the 12 years or so that they were in the majority go from this party of principles that was worried about not getting involved in wars that were not in the interest of the United States, worrying about the debt and spending money, to a party that just abandoned all these ideals.

He actually said, right now, the Democrats cover both the left and right ideologically, because we are still concerned about the problems of the average person in that we want to cover people who don't have health insurance. We want to make sure people can afford to send their kids to college. But at the same time, we have covered the area where we don't want to get involved in foreign wars or foreign entanglements that are not in our interest. And, most importantly, we are the ones most worried about the debt and trying to make sure we are not spending a lot of money.

Now, all of a sudden, we are in the majority, and they are starting to talk about the deficit that they have grown so much in the last 12 years. It is unbelievable.

When you talk about the health care debate, this goes to the heart of it, because the bottom line is, if you want to expand and deal with the problem of the uninsured, some of them are people that are not going to be able to afford to buy their own health insurance. If you don't have any money because you just keep racking up this huge debt, you are not going to be able to cover the people. So it directly relates.

I just wanted to give these statistics about where we have been in the last few years. If you look at this, the point I have been trying to make is under the President's watch for the last 6 or 7 years, not only have the number of uninsured gone up, but the cost of health care and health insurance keeps rising. Therefore, it has just become unaffordable for a lot of Americans.

This chart says that workers are now paying an average of $1,094 more in annual health care premiums for their families than they did in the year 2000. You can see the problem with the affordability of health care.

Then the next chart has the number of uninsured in 2001, 41.2 million, and the number of uninsured in 2006, 47 million. One million more Americans become uninsured each year under the President's watch.

The chart over there, I will leave to the gentleman to explain.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Our chart in this instance shows the number of uninsured now exceeds the cumulative population of 24 States plus the District of Columbia, so all of those States that are in red and the District of Columbia, we have more people who don't have insurance. Under the budgets that have been proposed by the President and have been passed or just sort of glossed over by the prior Congresses, we have seen an assist to the wealthiest people in this country, while at the same time the people in the middle, the hardworking people of this country, have found themselves finding it harder and harder to make ends meet and have health insurance for themselves and their families.

Mr. PALLONE. Just briefly, I want to yield to the gentlewoman, and I have my colleague from the Virgin Islands here, too. The problem with what the President has proposed, both in the State of the Union and the budget message on Monday, there are really two major ways to cover more of these uninsured. One is, you do something with the employer-based system, which is traditionally the way most people get their insurance, on the job, so it is easier for employers to provide health insurance and for their employees to contribute to it.

The other, of course, is to build on existing Federal programs, whether it be Medicaid or Medicare or SCHIP, the program for kids, to expand eligibility

and make it so more people can sign up for them.

The problem that I wanted to point out tonight, and we will get into it more, is that between the State of the Union address and the budget message, what the President has proposed totally really does nothing to affect either of those areas. He is basically talking about taxing employer-sponsored benefits, group plans, if they are a good plan, and sending people into the individual market with some kind of a tax break. Generally speaking, that is not very helpful because it is going to penalize the people who have a good employer-sponsored plan and at the same time push people into the individual market where they probably cannot afford to buy a good policy. Then with the budget message on Monday, we got all these cuts in Medicaid, SCHIP, the government programs that we would like to see expanded to cover more of the uninsured.

So, between the two, he is addressing the problem but coming with proposals that, in my opinion, actually make it worse.

I yield now to the gentlewoman from Florida. I am glad she is with us tonight.

Ms. CASTOR. I thank my colleague from New Jersey, who has been such a leader for the American people for access to better health care. He is absolutely right, that the President's actions don't match his words. I have also been combing through the Presidential budget proposal. One of my hometown newspapers said that the Presidential budget should begin with these words: ''Once upon a time,'' as in a fairy tale. I am a mom with two young daughters at home. We do a lot of reading at night and try to get the homework done. We will do reading of fairy tales. This, what the White House has sent over, is a political fairy tale. Unfortunately, it is going to hurt a lot of folks. It is going to hurt a lot of our constituents back home. I thought we could explain that a little bit.

Oftentimes we talk in such technical terms in government. When we talk of Medicaid and people say Medicaid, sometimes they get Medicaid and Medicare mixed up.

Medicaid, these are pregnant women, infants, children in families earning about $25,000 a year, foster kids, medically needy adults, a lot of our senior citizens in nursing homes. So when you hear there are Medicaid cuts, I would like us to really put a face on that and say they are going after the most vulnerable in this country, infants, poor kids, foster kids and seniors in nursing homes.

Also the budget sent over from the White House will hurt our seniors. The White House proposes to cut Medicare. Now, I am from Florida, and a lot of folks retire down to Florida. They have worked hard all their lives, and this is really one of the only benefits that we can give them, in addition to Social Security. So what the White House budget is proposing to do is ask them to pay even more. They are asking our hardworking doctors to take a cut as well.

What that does in my community in Tampa Bay is it discourages the best doctors from participating in Medicare. You see, I want my seniors to have the best medical care. I want them to see the best doctors, and I want those good doctors to stay in the Medicare system.

This would also hurt our children, our kids back home. My colleague from New Jersey knows this very well, that under the State Children's Health Insurance Program, we have a lot of needs. The States, our local communities, the Feds, we have been doing a pretty good job. But, do you know what? We can do a whole lot better. We must do a lot better.

So it was very disappointing to receive this budget from the White House that says: Do you know what? Even though we are making such progress, and we have such tremendous needs in this country for children to be able to go in and see a doctor, get their immunizations, get some advice on how to take care of themselves, they say we are not going to do that.

Their priorities are out of whack. Instead, I think it is a blatant political statement that we are going to continue these tax cuts for the wealthiest among us, and we are going to sock it to the most vulnerable, our seniors and our kids.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman's remarks. You brought it home. It is hard sometimes to talk about the budget. The budget at the Federal level is a very complex thing. But we have to give an explanation, I think, about what the President's proposal is doing, which is really the opposite. It is not going to make it easier to cover the uninsured, it is going to make it more difficult.

I now yield to the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands, who is a physician and who has been very active in the whole health care issue for a number of years here in the Congress, particularly on the whole health care disparities issue, which is another thing that we haven't really talked about so much in this Congress, but has to be addressed.

□ 1830

I thank my colleague for yielding, and I want to thank Congressman PALLONE for his leadership on health care for a number of years. And we are really happy that you are going to be chairing the Health Subcommittee, and we look forward to addressing all these issues with you.

But certainly, as you were saying, as we look at how we can expand access to health care and bring more Americans under coverage, we can't start by cutting what has been the backbone of health care, Medicare and Medicaid, SCHIP. Those need to be really strengthened.

As we look at the President's budget, which is very disappointing and one fairy tale that is not going to end, ''and they lived happily ever after,'' because the cuts that we are seeing are leaving our seniors, our disabled, and our children and pregnant women who are about to bring children into the world without the access to the kind of health care that they need.

Beyond that, as we look at health disparities for people of color, African Americans, Latino Americans, Native Americans, Asian Pacific Islanders, there is nothing in the budget that addresses the gaps in health care for these populations. And certainly, if we are ever going to reduce the skyrocketing cost of health care, we need to focus on prevention and comprehensive systems of care that help people to stay healthy. And we also have to look at the social determinants of health care. You can't live in rundown housing and polluted neighborhoods and be healthy. So we have a lot of things to address.

And going beyond the cuts that you have already talked about in Medicare and Medicaid and SCHIP, there are so many other areas that are being cut as well that further undermines what we need to do to provide good quality comprehensive health care for people in this country. Some of them, funding for training: In the President's budget, again, nursing training is cut $88 million; the National Health Service Corps is cut; health profession training programs that bring some of the underrepresented minorities to serve our increasingly diverse population are cut $135 million, and it has already been cut in 2006; $143 million for children's vaccines is cut, vaccines, one of the bulwarks of prevention in this country; mental health programs cut $159 million; rural health cut $143 million.

So instead of helping, and you rightly point out that the proposal, the only proposal that we have heard with respect to health care in this country, the President's proposal and tax credits does more to harm the system than help the system. And then, in addition to that, undermining the safety net of Medicaid, Medicare, and SCHIP, as well as cutting some of the programs that provide the services that would be there to keep people healthy.

So this budget is a terrible budget. I know that we are under very, very tight fiscal constraints with huge unprecedented deficits, huge debts, but somehow the people are counting on us to improve health care in this country. And improving health care in this country really improves productivity. It keeps our country strong, and it is a matter of national security. And the health of our people is the health of our Nation, and we have to find a way to restore these cuts in the budget and close the gaps in health care, expand access to more Americans; and in doing so, we really will be helping our country.

Mr. PALLONE. I appreciate the gentlewoman's comments, and I know how much you have worked on this issue

and, in particular, the disparities issues. I could go on, too, with some of these things. We have worked a lot on health care for American Indians and the Indian Health Service. Now, there is a slight increase for the Indian Health Service, but he took out the whole urban Indian issue. And we find a lot of American Indians now gravitating toward urban areas, and he just cut out the whole program for them.

I want to yield to some of the other Members. But if we could just, because it is hard to explain this whole thing with the President's tax initiatives, but I think we should spend a little time on it. In his State of the Union Address, what he basically said is that, for the people who are in employer-sponsored health insurance, which still most Americans get their health insurance that way, a lot of them either through their union or individually with their employers have bargained, if you will, to have a very good health care package that is comprehensive; and what basically he is saying is, if it is too good, I will call it the Cadillac proposal, then we are going to tax you because you don't need such great health coverage. And then, at the same time, whatever money we are going to save on that, we are going to use by giving a tax break for those who go and try to buy insurance through the individual market. But the problem with that is, you know, the individual market is very volatile, very insecure, no guarantee that you can even buy a policy. So most of these people that are uninsured are not in a position to buy a policy in the individual market. So even if they get a break, it is probably not going to mean that much to them that they would actually be able to buy a good policy. So why would you sacrifice people who have a good policy and tax them to pay for people to go into the individual market, which is one that you may not be able to even get into anyway because it is expensive or there are all kinds of problems with eligibility. So that is the biggest concern. I don't know if anybody wants to talk about that, but that is why I think his proposal for employer sponsored care just makes no sense. If anybody wants to address that, otherwise, I will yield to you, and you talk about whatever you would like. The gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. KAGEN. I thank you for yielding and thank you for putting on this opportunity, making it possible for some of us to express not just our views but the views of the people back home that we represent.

Mr. PALLONE. I should mention that you are a physician as well.

Mr. KAGEN. But I don't want you to hold it against me. And I won't hold it against Mrs. CHRISTENSEN that you have ''M.D.'' behind your name.

But if you ask around the Chamber and ask around back home, everyone that I know understands that how you spend your money and where you spend your money is a reflection of your values. And the current administration has shown us where their values are, and they are not with people. They are not really helping us to provide care to millions of people, 48 million, who don't have access to affordable health care, in this country.

His State of the Union was very uplifting. He should be commended for bringing up the subject of providing access to health care for everyone. But his policy, as we talked about last week, raises taxes and offers no hope of lowering the cost of health care for insurance costs or prescription drug costs. And, more recently, with his 2,500 page budget, which I haven't finished all the fine print yet, he has shown us his values once again.

The first thing he did was to cut benefits to veterans and make it much more difficult for veterans to get the well-deserved benefits that they have earned and that they deserve.

What did he do? He is asking for $3.4 billion to come from veterans who have already earned their benefits, but now they have to kick it in. They are going to have to pay for their benefits that they have already earned. There are increasing copayments for veterans in their budget. I don't know where he is coming from on this, but he can't be coming from Wisconsin.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. My friend from Wisconsin is so right on this subject. It really is, where are your values? They are reflected in a budget. Now, as I said earlier, they didn't pass a budget last year. But last week, we passed a budget, and we wanted to show this country how much veterans mean to this country. And instead of cutting benefits, we raise benefits for our veterans.

We are changing the direction of this Nation because we know what the values of this Nation are, and they aren't reflected in the President's budget. They weren't reflected by the Republican's failure to deal with a budget last year. But they were reflected in what we did last week in taking a budget that hadn't been dealt with by the prior Congress and showing the world, showing this country, showing your State, my district, that we care about our veterans. And in this budget that the President has given to us for next year, again, this President has cut veterans benefits and medical benefits over the next 5 years.

I would like to yield back to my friend from Wisconsin.

Mr. PALLONE. If you could just yield to me for a second. I really appreciate you bringing this up because I think it is so much on point. And I know there is a lot of confusion.

We have a fiscal year that goes from October to October. Last year, when the Republicans were in the majority, they didn't deal with the budget at all. They literally left at the end of the session in their lame duck in December and said, we can't pass the budget, we can't deal with the appropriations, so we are going to go home, and we will leave it to the next Congress. So literally last week, we had to adopt the budget of the appropriations of the previous year that had already began October 1st, and it was level funding. In other words, it was basically a continuing resolution that didn't add any money and used the previous year's budget as a baseline. And even with that, we were able to increase money for veterans' health, for Ryan White, which deals with HIV, for global AIDS, for the National Institutes of Health. The emphasis and the priority was on trying to provide more money for health care even as we were cutting other things, and we did that.

The reality is that President Bush's budget that we got this week, which is for next year, because the last year's budget has not been passed in the Senate and gone to his desk yet, didn't even take into consideration, and in many of the cases, those health care items that he put in this budget are less than what we adopted in that continuing resolution.

So here we are trying to make everything right, and we are not getting any help either from the Republicans last year when they were in the majority or now from the President and the Republicans on the other side. And for them to even come down here tonight and talk about the budget or the deficit is absurd given their record.

I yield back.

Mr. KAGEN. Thank you very much, Congressman PALLONE. And what Congressman PERLMUTTER says is true. Really, let's ask the right question. A lot of times in your career, being an attorney, you have to ask the right question to get the truth out of somebody. So what kind of Nation are we, and in which direction shall we move? Are we a Nation that values and treasures those who have served in harm's way in our military? I think we are. Are we a Nation that values the health and education of our children and the mothers that care for them? I think that we are. And that is really where Democrats differ from our opposition party. I really believe that our core values resonate with everyone, not just in Wisconsin where I come from but everywhere, in Florida as well.

I yield to Congresswoman CASTOR.

Ms. CASTOR. We talked earlier about how the White House budget proposal we received this week is a fairy tale, but its impact on our veterans really is a nightmare. The State of Florida where I am from, we have the second highest number of veterans in the country, and in my district, I have the busiest VA center in the country, the James Haley Center, which saw over 1.5 million vets last year. That is more than the population of the State of Kansas we saw at the Haley Center in Tampa.

The Haley Center is specialized for current Iraq war vets injured, coming back, that are suffering the IED blasts, spinal cord injuries, brain injuries. And in Florida, out of all the VA medical centers, Haley, the busiest, we have

gone now over the past 10 years from 2 million visits to over 5 million visits. And how can we say this is a reflection of values? How can we say we are going to step back from that responsibility? How can the White House send us a budget that steps back, at a time where they are escalating the war in Iraq, they are going to deescalate the commitment to our veterans? I don't think so.

In this Democratic Congress, we are going to take a new direction. There is new leadership in Washington, DC. And I am proud to be joined by some of the new Members, my colleagues, tonight, and also join with the efforts of leaders like my colleague from New Jersey. And I yield back.

Mr. PALLONE. I appreciate your comments. And I really think it is important that we keep stressing how we want to prioritize these health care needs, and there are so many, whether it is veterans or children or whatever it is.

I just want to give you a couple statistics. And I know it gets so bureaucratic to say, what is he doing up here with these statistics?

□ 1845

When we talk about the uninsured, the biggest groups still are the kids, and the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands knows how much over the years what this SCHIP or kid care program, that we have tried to prioritize that, send the money back to the States, use their help to try to insure a lot of these kids.

I just use my State, but you could use any State. In my State right now for this SCHIP or kid care program, we have more kids that are eligible, meaning that they could theoretically sign up, or their parents could sign up, for this program than are currently enrolled, even though the program has been around for a while, and that is true in almost every State.

What we were hoping was that the President, in saying he wanted to deal with the uninsured, and knowing that the biggest group of uninsured is children, believe it or not, that he would simply provide funding to at least enroll those kids that are not enrolled who are currently eligible for the program. I am not even talking about expanding eligibility to kids who would not be eligible right now.

We got some statistics because we had a hearing with the Secretary of Health and Human Services earlier this week, and the number of children, if you want to just enroll those who are currently eligible, we figure it would take about $12- to $14 billion over 5 years to keep up with medical inflation to prevent current enrolled children from losing their coverage. I am talking about the ones that are now in the SCHIP program, $12- to $14 billion over 5 years just to make sure that they are still funded, those that are in it, and then at least another $35- to $45 billion over 5 years to reach eligible but uninsured children. These are the ones that could enroll, but they just have not for some reason. Their parents do not know about the program, the application is difficult, who knows.

So you are talking about what, maybe $60 billion over the next 5 years if you want to keep, to keep those that are in the program and expand it to those who are eligible, and we are not even talking about expanding eligibility.

He comes in, the President, in his budget with $5 billion. That would not even allow us to keep up with the kids that are currently in the program. These are not kids that are really poor and the parents are not working. These are working parents. I think the eligibility is up to like $38,000 for a family of four. They are working, but they cannot get health insurance on the job. We went into that before, and so they try to tap into this Federal program.

Well, the Secretary said, well, we think $5 billion is enough, and if it is not, well, then the States will have to take care of it. You know, the States are not in a position, I mean, they already have a hard enough time coming up with the money under the current match without having to go beyond that. So I just use that as an example.

The SCHIP, the kids health care program, is for those kids whose parents are working and who are making a little more money and are not eligible for Medicaid, which is for kids that are actually at the poverty level, like less than $20,000 for a family of four.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Would the gentleman yield? I think the gentlewoman from Virgin Islands has something to say on this, too, but a couple of things.

In Colorado, on the point you are talking about, the SCHIP for kids, we have 176,000 kids who are at risk in this instance, and based on the President's budget, we cannot keep up with them. We cannot continue to provide them with the care that they deserve.

And as some of you know, I have a daughter with a chronic illness, and luckily, through my law firm, we had a good insurance program for all the trips to the emergency room and the different things like that. So we see on the one hand poorer kids, uninsured kids that are at risk, they are not going to be served, and under this President's budget, as you were saying, those of us who were fortunate enough to have a good insurance policy for kids with chronic illnesses or whatever might affect us, we are going to be taxed on this.

The President has said this budget, and some of his people have said this is a balanced budget with no new taxes over a 5-year period. Well, it is not a balanced budget, and there are new taxes on a lot of people, as you said, who have contracted for, worked for good insurance policies, and at the same time he says we are going to help the underinsured and the uninsured. What we see under the budget, it gets cut as well.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. I go back to the day that we were sworn in and our Speaker saying that this was going to be a Congress that was dedicated to our children, and certainly, as everybody has pointed out, this budget that the President has sent out is just going in the opposite direction.

I would say, too, that in the Virgin Islands we do not get full SCHIP, we do not get full Medicare, and therefore, a lot of the services that even, meanwhile limited in the States, you take for granted, we are not even able to provide to our residents. Our veterans as well have to travel to Puerto Rico for their veterans care, and the cuts will cut deeply into their ability to travel to Puerto Rico to get the care that they need.

So, having just laid to rest two soldiers in the Virgin Islands, we are very sensitive to this issue, and we really have to sit down and work on this budget and ensure that our children, our veterans, our seniors receive the kind of health care that they need and deserve, and that we put that investment also to close the gaps in health care for people in our rural communities and people of color in this country.

Mr. PALLONE. I appreciate the gentlewoman's comments.

I just wanted to mention one more thing. The President in his budget message highlighted this SCHIP program, this kid care program, saying they are going to get another $5 billion, which, as I said, is not enough to keep up with the kids currently in the program.

But at the same time the Medicaid program, which deals with those who really are in poverty and whose parents probably are not working because they are disabled or whatever their situation is, covers even more kids than the SCHIP, because SCHIP was put in place to try to supplement Medicaid.

So I asked this question of the Secretary. I did not even get a response, because in the President's budget Medicaid, which covers 23 million children, SCHIP only covers 6.6-. So Medicaid covers 23-, SCHIP covers 6.6-. They herald the fact that they are giving $5 billion in extra dollars to SCHIP which does not even keep up with inflation, but in the same time over the 5 years, they cut Federal funding for Medicaid by $25.7 billion, and Medicaid covers, what did we say, five times as many kids and five times the cut. So we are not even talking about the poor kids here. He is just saying, well, forget them. I mean, I am not even addressing the problem of the poor kids and what happens to them.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. KAGEN. Well, the question then comes up, it is not just about values; it is about choices. So, if we are not going to be spending our hard-earned tax dollars for the good health of children, children who are in need, where are we going to spend that money? Where does the budget choose to spend it? Not here in our country, but in the sands of Iraq.

And I would suggest to you and everyone listening that we really cannot solve our health care problems, we really cannot solve many of the problems we are facing until we begin to bring an end to that involvement in that civil war in Iraq. I do not think any day should go by that we do not all stand up and ask the question where do you want to spend your hard-earned money, here at home or in the sands of Iraq?

You are quite correct; the budget the President has proposed is deficient, is neglectful to those who are most at risk, the children in poverty, and if you are not healthy, if you are not well fed, you cannot go to school and learn anything. If you do not get your education, you are not going to build a better future that we all require.

Mr. PALLONE. Can I just ask you, because I know you are a physician, when we talk about some of these programs like Medicaid, SCHIP, Medicare, and I know the gentlewoman from Florida brought it up. I know it is hard a lot of times when you are on the floor and you talk about doctors and they are not getting enough money for Medicare. They will say the doctors are all making a lot of money; why are you bringing that up?

The reality is we are getting to a crisis now where many physicians simply will not accept payment from some of these programs because the reimbursement rate has gotten so low.

Now, you mentioned Medicare, because that is the big one for seniors and the disabled, and how a lot of doctors now are not even looking to take Medicare, but when you talk about Medicaid, which I mentioned before, that has gotten to the point of no return.

Could I yield to you? Do doctors even take Medicaid in Wisconsin anymore?

Mr. KAGEN. Yes, they do. We go into medicine, most of us, because we care about people. We seek to solve problems for people.

The model at our clinic was how can we help you today. So we take people, and we take all people, but the real question is this: Is Medicare able to pay for the cost of producing the service at an institution? They do not. So that cost is shifted to others who can afford to pay, and those prices are sky high.

So many of the problems that we face, government has not really had its feet put to the fire saying, you know, you should pay for the cost of producing the service, at least for the overhead plus a margin of profit; you should pay for the entire cost of producing a medication or a vaccine, or it will not be there.

There are two ways to get rid of anything. Let us take cigarettes as the example. If you want to get rid of cigarettes, tax the heck out of it or do not pay for it. It will be gone. The same is true in health care. If you do not pay for the service, the institution at the hospital, it cannot stand. It cannot balance its budgets.

Most hospitals that I am familiar with in Wisconsin are running margins of profit anywhere from 3 to 5 percent, if they are profitable. So it is very difficult to make it.

But to summarize Medicare, it is over 40,000 pages of rules and regulations. I do not know that there is anyone that fully understands it, and just think of it as a mess, and it does need to be repaired. But I think the more important point is institutions, hospitals, research centers, educational facilities are not being compensated, and the people that will suffer are those yet to become aged, because we are not really adequately funding higher education for the physicians' training and their fellowships and the nurses' positions.

So there are a lot of problem to go after. I will not put you to sleep with the data.

Mr. PALLONE. Well, the one thing that I keep hearing, of course, with the hospitals is their ability to care for what they call uncompensated care. One of the things that the President proposed both in the State of the Union and his budget was to take money from the hospitals that get what they call disproportionate share, DSH. I hate to use these acronyms because it gets so bureaucratic, but your hospitals that have a disproportionate share of people that do not have health insurance, the uncompensated care.

Over the years, we have provided more funding for those hospitals through Medicare and other Federal programs so that they can cover the uninsured. Again, the President says we will give the States more money by cutting the payments to these disproportionate share hospitals.

In my home State of New Jersey, I mean, that is absurd. We have State legislators and the Governor now that are talking about trying to provide some kind of comprehensive health insurance so nobody in New Jersey goes without health insurance. The only way to do that is if the Federal Government provides some additional help in some of the ways we discussed tonight, but if you start cutting back on the funding that is going to these hospitals that cover all these uninsured people, it is like robbing Peter to pay Paul, I guess is the expression. It just does not work.

So I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. KAGEN. It does not have to be that way. With the money we have already spent in Iraq, we could immunize every human on Earth with every vaccine that we know about for the next 95 years. We could have sent 14 million children, our children, to a college education. We could have built over 100, maybe 150, hospitals in each and every State in the Union. There is a lot we could be doing with the money we are spending overseas in Iraq, and it is all about values, and it is all about choices, and we are really getting to a tipping point, I believe, not just in our economy, but people feel it in their gut that we are headed in the wrong direction still, even though the difference makers, the three of us that just got the opportunity to serve here in Congress, have arrived.

Ms. CASTOR. You all are absolutely right. It is very difficult to understand why the White House wants to sock it to our safety net hospitals. Have you all been to the emergency room lately, tried to get in? The long lines? People are ending up in our emergency rooms for their primary care because they have the flu. They are clogging the emergency rooms.

I was a county commissioner before I was elected to Congress, and the brave men and women in fire rescue said they would transport to the emergency room. It would be so busy and so full, they would have to stay with the emergency patient in the EMS truck for hours because the emergency room was clogged.

We have a crisis in this country, and it is inexplicable that the Bush administration would say by administrative rule and through this budget that has been sent to the Congress this week that we are going to cut money to those hospitals that provide the charity care in our country.

□ 1900

In my district, in the Tampa Bay area, the impact on Tampa General Hospital, which is a level one trauma center, $64 million. The great All Children's Hospital across the bay in Saint Petersburg, $31 million; the great St. Joseph's Hospital, another $20 million.

I would like to go back to SCHIP and also talk about the real-world, children's health insurance, because a few months ago, I ran into a friend of mine from high school, haven't seen her since I graduated 20-something years ago, and I saw her at a children's health insurance discussion.

She told me her story. Her name is Nan Dorton, and she lives in Tampa. She is married and has three kids. Her husband went through a tough time, and he lost his job, so they lost their health insurance. They didn't know what to do. It was very, very tough times. They didn't know about children's health insurance in Florida called KidCare or Healthy Kids, because the State has cut back under Governor Jeb Bush and the Republican legislature and they don't do any more outreach, so it is hard to find out about it.

Fortunately, he got a job. They were provided with health insurance through the employer. But you know how much it costs for that family to have the kids covered, $700 a month. She said it was hard to choose whether to put food on the table or take the kids to the doctor and sign them up for health insurance. She said, you live in constant fear of your child having to go to the hospital.

But then she found out about children's health insurance and KidCare, and signed them up. She said it revolutionized their lives because under these

health services, they pay a $20-per-month copayment for all three kids, and they don't have any copays for hospital visits or prescriptions. You know how much money that is saving us because they are not showing up in the emergency room, which is passed on to all of us in our health insurance? That is going to save us because that family is healthier today, and we are going to save that money later on down the road.

Mr. PALLONE. You are absolutely right. I appreciate the fact that you talk about how, by covering kids or even adults, you save money in the emergency room or in hospitalization or whatever it is. But also, you mentioned the outreach, because I talked earlier about how you have more kids that are eligible for this children's health care program than are even in it. The reason is because a lot of States have cut back on outreach, so they don't tell people that they can apply. They don't even know about it. Some States may even be doing it on purpose because they want to save money in the short run. So that is why we talk about reauthorizing this and expanding it. You even need money for the outreach, which is clearly not in the budget.

I yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. PERLMUTTER. I thank my friend from New Jersey. Just for me, this past election was, the people wanted a new direction. They wanted checks and balances back in this country. They wanted a different perspective to be brought to the values of this Nation. As my friend from Wisconsin and my friend from New Jersey, my friend from Florida said, this budget that the President has presented reflects his values, but I don't think it reflects the values of this country.

Just as we did last week with the concurrent, with the continuing resolution, with the budget that we passed last week, we are going to reflect what I believe are the values of this country, whether it is with veterans. And I just notice, in the President's proposed budget, he is increasing medical care fees for military retirees. The budget increases enrollment fees and deductibles under TRICARE. I can tell you, as I have gone around, my area, Golden, Colorado, Brighton, Aurora, wherever it might be in the suburbs of Denver, those military retirees are already complaining about increases in TRICARE and cuts in benefits that come with respect to that, that we haven't fulfilled the promises that we have made for the great service that we have received from these men and women in our Armed Services.

Now, you know, what are our troops in Afghanistan and Iraq to expect? We are going to provide them with the best care and the best service that we can. And we have got to show prior military retirees that same respect. We have got to do it for our troops now. I question the President's budget on these things. We are going to change the direction of this Nation. We are going to show what our values are, and they are the values of the people of this country. I am glad to be here, to be a check and balance on this current administration.

Mr. PALLONE. I appreciate the gentleman's comments.

I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin again.

Mr. KAGEN. Would my colleague agree with me that we will never cut and run from our veterans?

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Absolutely, I will agree. We are not going to cut and run from our veterans. We are going to fulfill the promises that we have made to them for the services that they provided to our country.

Mr. KAGEN. Would my colleague agree that we will support the troops, but not this failed policy?

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Your colleague would agree with that, that our troops are giving us the greatest service, the greatest sacrifices, and they deserve better policies from those who are leading them, particularly, the White House and the administration. Our military is doing great, and we have got to live up to that greatness that they are providing.

Mr. KAGEN. One of the things that I learned by listening to people on the campaign trail, perhaps the greatest lesson, came from a Native American, an outspoken woman, Gwenn Carr, who said, Dr. KAGEN, it is not doctors that determine who lives and who dies, it is politicians. It is politicians that take us to war based on lies and deception. It is politicians that prevent people from having access to affordable health care that they require.

I will share with you a story of Jerry Gajeske. Jerry Gajeske I discovered by knocking on his door. It was not even on his door. It was in Waupaca, Wisconsin, with a college student who 2 days earlier in a dialysis center fainted because of the blood that was available for the eye to see.

We were at the door, and I knocked, a gentleman came and said, ha, are you a real doctor? I said, yes, sir, I am, but I am running for Congress now. He said, well, if you are a real doctor, would you take a look at my cousin?

I said, sure. Because there were barking dogs, I asked him to come out on the porch. While he went out to retrieve his cousin, I turned to my assistant, I said, Katie, are you going to be okay with this because you don't know what this is going to be. ''Doc, what could it be''?

Well, his cousin came to the door and stepped out into the sunlight and had an obvious tumor protruding like a softball at the side of his sinus pushing his eye into the orbit. I said, sir, I can tell you it is not an allergy because I am an allergist, but what did your doctor say? He said, well, I saw my doctor several months ago. I could afford him, but I couldn't afford the tests. The tests were going to cost thousands of dollars. But I had lost my job. I had no coverage. I didn't get the tests. I have been hanging out here. I have 75 bucks to my name hanging out here with my cousin.

Well, I said, that ends right now.

I took him to the local hospital and asked one of my colleagues to see him. We referred him to a tertiary care center. Several weeks ago, he died of a cancer of the sinus.

It is not bad enough that you have to find these people knocking on doors, trying to get elected to office to change things. It is not bad enough that he died without any money or by getting care delayed.

To me, the bad thing was he died of the same cancer that my golden retriever did. But my golden retriever got better health care than Jerry in this country at this time. Jerry didn't make it.

We will never know if by being seen early and diagnosed early, having the availability of the tests, the radiation, the chemotherapy, if he would not be here today. Don't think that it was opportunistic for me to tell this story, he didn't even live in my district.

Jerry is like many, many other people today, who have just fallen off the edge into the crack of the sidewalk; is not being forgotten. Our party, this time, will change health care, not State by State, but across the country and guarantee access to care for everyone.

I will share with you this story that I tell often about Jenny, a single mother of two asthmatic children, who came to see me, and I wrote some prescriptions for the children to get medicine for their asthma. They were missing school.

When she returned a month later, the children were still sick. I said, Jenny, you know, this is good medicine but it only works if you put it in their mouth. She took the same prescriptions out of her purse and said, here they are. I went to the pharmacy, I stood at the counter, and I could see the medicine, but I couldn't afford to put it in their mouth. What are you going to do? I said, well, I am going to run for Congress because I couldn't help her in the office.

I think, by working together, we can build a better future and a better Nation for everyone by changing our health care system now, not later.

Mr. PALLONE. I appreciate your comments, because I know, as a physician and someone so caring, that you really understand how these problems relate to individuals.

I also appreciate the fact that you brought up the issue of priorities, because when we spend so much on the war in Iraq, as you say, we don't have the money, and the gentleman from Colorado talked about the deficit. The fact of the matter is that the President and the Republicans built up this deficit for so long, and now it makes it more difficult for us to find the funds to pay to cover the uninsured in the same way that we are spending all this

money in Iraq, and it means that we don't have the money left.

If I could just conclude, because I know we are running out of time, I do appreciate the fact that, in his State of the Union Address and also in the budget message, that the President was prioritizing health care and pointing out that we have a big problem with the uninsured.

But unless the solutions and the money are there to lead us down the path of covering the uninsured or lowering health care costs, then it is not going to be good enough to just say that is a problem.

I think, as you say, when we talk about going in a new direction, it means that the Democrats and the Democratic majority are determined to not only highlight that these problems exist and that we need to cover the uninsured to reduce cost, but to come up with solutions that practically are going to make a difference. That is why I am so happy that not only are you both here tonight speaking, but just that you are here, because all the new Members and particularly the new Democratic Members, I think, are going to make it possible to address these problems in a practical way.

I would conclude, again, by thanking both of you and everyone who joined us tonight, because we are moving in a new direction, and it is going to make a difference. Thank you.

FREE BORDER PATROL AGENTS IGNACIO RAMOS AND JOSE COMPEAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from California (Mr. BILBRAY) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, tonight I am privileged to yield to the second best surfer in Congress, Mr. DANA ROHRABACHER of the great State of California, and I yield to him whatever time he may consume.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, today we discuss a black mark on this administration, a vile crime against two law enforcement officers whose job has been protecting our families and communities and keeping control of America's borders. This sad episode started back on February 17, 2005, just another routine day for Border Patrol agents Ignacio Ramos and Jose Compean. Both were Border Patrol veterans with unblemished service records. Agent Ramos, in fact, had been nominated for Border Patrol Agent of the Year.

As they did their rounds that day 2 years ago, a trip sensor at the border was discovered, and Agent Compean then discovered footprints and drag marks, a usual indication of a drug load being smuggled across the river. He then spotted a vehicle and radioed the description and then followed the suspect. The suspect realized he had been made and turned around to rush back towards Mexico.

Agent Ramos then spotted the van driving at a high rate of speed. After the driver ignored all commands to pull over, of course, Ramos gave chase.

By the way, according to the prosecuting attorney, pursuing fleeing suspects without a supervisor's permission is against Border Patrol policy.

This, in and of itself, is an insane policy. The drug smuggler who they were pursuing abandoned his vehicle and fled toward Mexico on foot but was intercepted by Agent Compean. Once again, ignoring several commands by Agent Compean to stop, a physical altercation ensued with Compean ending up in a ditch.

While seeing his opportunity, the smuggler then ran toward the border, which was nearby. According to Agent Compean's sworn testimony, while running, the suspect turned and pointed with something shiny in his left hand. Believing his life was in danger, Agent Compean opened fire. Hearing gunshots, Agent Ramos came to his side, and he, too, shouted for the smuggler to stop.

□ 1915

But instead of obeying his command, the illegal drug smuggler once again turned as he ran and again pointed something shiny at the officers. Ramos, believing it to be a weapon, fired one shot. After disappearing into the banks of the Rio Grande, the smuggler reappeared on the Mexican side where he jumped into a waiting van. Unbeknownst to the officers, Ramos's bullet may have hit the illegal drug smuggler in the left buttocks.

Minutes after the shooting, seven other agents were on the scene, including two supervisors. When the abandoned van was examined, 743 pounds of marijuana were found. The payload was seized, and one would think congratulations would have been in order. Agent Ramos and Compean are heroes, right? They are responsible for taking off the streets $1 million worth of drugs bound for our communities. Good job fellows, right? Wrong.

At this moment Agents Ramos and Compean, not the illegal drug smuggler, are languishing in a Federal prison serving 11- and 12-year sentences. This is the worst miscarriage of justice that I have seen in my 25 years of public service. It is a nightmare for the two Border Patrol agents and their families, these Border Patrol agents who willingly risk their lives protecting us for 5 and 10 years.

The whole rotten episode turned justice on its head. The book was thrown at our heroes who protect us, while the drug smugglers got immunity. According to the U.S. attorney, Johnny Sutton, a Bush appointee and a longtime friend of the President, Ramos and Compean are not heroes. In fact, he considers those two officers to be criminals, charging them with assault with serious bodily injury, assault with a deadly weapon, discharge of a firearm while committing a crime of violence, which carries, of course, a minimum mandatory sentence of 10 years, and a civil rights violation.

Sutton claims that he had no choice but to prosecute the two Border Patrol agents because, according to Sutton, they broke the law when they violated these procedures concerning the discharge of their weapons at this fleeing suspect.

No. Even if procedures were not followed, Sutton could have granted immunity to the law enforcement officers and thrown the book at the drug smuggler. That was his choice. He chose the side of the drug smuggler and threw the book at the Border Patrol agents. This was an indefensible decision, and now Sutton lies to us and to the American people, suggesting that he did not have a choice, that he had to prosecute.

Well, the facts don't back him up. And what happened after this man got away? After the incident the drug smuggler contacted Renee Sanchez, a childhood friend for advice.

Now, why did she contact Renee Sanchez? Because Renee Sanchez happens to be a current Border Patrol agent in Arizona. And instead of turning in this drug smuggler, turning the drug smuggler over to the authorities for prosecution, this law enforcement officer, Agent Sanchez, he is sworn to uphold the laws of the United States, but he chose to personally intervene on behalf of his childhood friend who was a known mule for the drug cartels.

He was also called as a character witness on the drug smuggler's behalf during the trial. Mr. Sanchez contacted the Department of Homeland Security, who in turn decided to open an investigation into the conduct of Ramos and Compean. What? What? You have got a drug smuggler with 750 pounds of narcotics who is being thwarted from making his delivery, and that he complains that he was shot at, and our Government decides to investigate the law enforcement officers.

Mr. Sutton had every chance to focus his enormous prosecutorial powers on the drug dealer, but he chose to target the law enforcement officers. He chose to turn a procedural violation into a criminal act rather than prosecuting a career drug smuggler.

As part of their investigation, the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General sent a special agent to Mexico to offer the drug smuggler immunity in exchange for testimony against the Border Patrol officers. The smuggler was then brought back to the United States and given free medical care at all taxpayers' expense.

Now, one has to wonder if Mr. Sutton, our U.S. attorney, would have even spent one-tenth of that effort trying to find this criminal himself and track him down in Mexico so that he could be extradited and punished for smuggling narcotics into our country. No. No effort was made to do that. Instead, an expensive Herculean effort

was made to try to get the Border Patrol agents.

Now the drug smuggler is being portrayed as a victim because he swears he was not armed. Our government takes the word of this nefarious character over two law enforcement officers. In short, the initial decision to prosecute the two Border Patrol agents instead of the drug smuggler was indefensible. Period.

Sutton's only defense, to cover up this horrendous decision, has been to lie and to demonize the two Border Patrol agents. Well, it just does not jive.

According to that investigative report, Agent Compean's sworn statement, in his sworn statements he repeatedly stated he believed the drug smuggler had a weapon and felt threatened. The Border Patrol training manuals allow for this type of deadly force to be used when an agent fears imminent bodily injury or death. Both of the officers say they saw this drug smuggler turn and point what they believed to be a weapon in their direction while he was running away. The wound created by the bullet corroborates their version of the events.

So we have the prosecutor, even with the direction of the trajectory of the bullet as indicated by the wound, but the prosecutor is ignoring the fact that it backs up the Compean and Ramos position.

During the trial an Army doctor, a prosecution witness I might add, testified that the drug smuggler's body was bladed away from the bullet that struck him. That is consistent with the motion of a left-handed person running away while pointing backwards, causing his body to twist.

Once again, this corroborated Ramos's and Compean's belief that the smuggler had a weapon. And that was a reasonable belief considering the smuggler was transporting over $1 million of drugs that day. And I am sure, of course, drug dealers with $1 million worth of drugs are not armed.

Now, it is important to understand that only three individuals were eyewitnesses to the crucial events of that day, the two accused Border Patrol agents and a self-admitted drug smuggler. Those are the only two people who saw what happened. The other Border Patrol agents who responded to the scene testified under immunity, and quite often contradicting themselves; however, the most important thing when thinking about their testimony is their view of the events was completely obscured by a levee at the road, which is about 12 feet higher than the road on which they stood, and about 8 feet higher from the spot on the other side of the levee where Ramos and Compean stood and where they fired their pistols.

So let me make it very clear what I just said. None of the other agents could possibly have seen what transpired between Ramos and Compean and this drug smuggler, even if they climbed on top of their vehicles. It was physically impossible for them to see. Yet these agents were threatened with prosecution if they did not testify against Ramos and Compean. They agreed to testify. If they agreed, they would be granted immunity. It begs the question why these agents need to be granted immunity if they were not involved in the incident, and this whole thing calls into question what effect that this threat that was held over their head had on the truthfulness of their testimony.

The U.S. attorney's version of what happened that day relies almost exclusively on the testimony of the drug smuggler. Despite the fact that there were seven other agents, including two supervisors on scene within minutes, no report of the shooting was ever filed, even though the Border Patrol regulations require the supervisors to file the report.

Agents are only required to orally notify their supervisors, and Ramos and Compean justifiably believed that their supervisors were totally aware that there was a shooting. They were within about 50 feet or 100 feet of what was going on. So, as a matter of fact, the agents, those agents are prohibited from actually filing a written report, as in INS firearms policy, section 12B, 1G states: Ensure that supervisory personnel or investigative officers are aware that employees involved in a shooting incident shall not be required or allowed to submit a written statement of the circumstances surrounding the incident. All written statements regarding the incident shall be prepared by the local investigative officers and shall be based on an interview of the employee. That is what their regulations state.

Yet U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton continues to claim that the officers filed a false report to cover up their crime. They are not even permitted to file a report, much less a false report. And they were not asked by their supervisors who heard the shots.

So the supervisors decided not to ask questions about it, probably because had they then officially known about the incident, they would have had to fill out about 5 hours' worth of paperwork. This is about bureaucratic requirements of the people at the border. If one shot is fired, on their own time they end up having to work about 5 hours.

Because it looked like the incident was over, all of them, including the supervisors, decided to just close the book. Was that a good decision? Well, probably not, considering that you have an out-of-control prosecutor trying to find something to prosecute our defenders about.

By no means did their actions rise to the level of criminality, what might be considered an unauthorized discharge of their weapons, because, of course, they could not absolutely prove they knew that the drug dealer had a weapon. Well, if they could not absolutely prove it, then according to the U.S. Attorney, they are guilty of attempted murder.

Again, let me note, the agents thought the drug dealer was aiming something at them. He had just been in a physical altercation with one of the officers. Of course, when it came to the details about that, our U.S. attorney believed the drug dealer, who swears that Compean, for example, in the altercation just fell down.

You know, you would be surprised how many police officers just fall down in the middle of trying to enforce the law when dealing with professional criminals like the ones that Compean and Ramos were dealing with. Just fell down. Yeah.

You believe that, but you do not believe these guys with an unblemished record of 5 and 10 years of protecting the American people. So even though this investigation determined that all seven officers on the scene knew about or heard the shooting, the U.S. attorney granted those officers immunity even though it was their job to report the incident.

But of course they did not think it was an incident, they thought it was closed, the guns went off. They did not want to spend 5 hours filling out paperwork. Well, guess what? It was their job to do it. Actually one of them was actually promoted after all of this.

But the U.S. attorney decided to prosecute the Border Patrol agents, and in doing so, he had to intimidate these supervisors by saying that he was going to charge them and giving them immunity unless they went along with this legal lynching of Ramos and Compean.

□ 1930

If this incident would have been kept in perspective, all seven supervisors and agents who were failing to report a shooting that may or may not have been consistent with regulations governing the discharge of weapons, but just keep this all in perspective, they might have deserved a disciplinary action, maybe a week without pay or some mark on their record; that would have been the end of it. But the penalty for not reporting a shooting is a 5-day suspension. That is the maximum penalty. This was an issue of a procedural violation, not criminality, and there is a serious question about the viability of those procedures which are mandated by the policy. This, of course, flows directly from the insane border policy, and it led directly to this unconscionable situation.

Over 78 Members of Congress have expressed concern, if not outrage, at the troubling aspects of this case. Our repeated attempts for Presidential intervention or even to communicate with the President have been ignored. Our pleas to keep the officers out of jail on bond pending their appeal have been denied. The President could have just had the prosecutor go to the judge and say, please, let these guys stay out at least until their appeal. No, no. It was

the opposite. They insisted on the maximum. They wanted their pound of flesh. The maximum penalty, the maximum message to other Border Patrol agents: Don't you dare ever to even think about firing your weapon at the border.

Instead, the President, after we appealed to try to get him to look at this, the President dug in his heels, sent Tony Snow out to chastise us, you know. We were trying to save Ramos and Compean, and then we were told by Tony Snow to take a closer look at the facts.

Well, we have taken a closer look at the facts. We also know what happened. There has been a publicity campaign that has been put out to destroy and demonize Ramos and Compean even as they languish in prison, because the Federal prosecutor knows he is the one who made the mistake. He made the initial decision to grant immunity to the drug dealer, rather than for a procedural mistake by the Border Patrol agents. He made that decision. It is a horrendous decision, and he is trying to cover it up and destroying the lives of these two Border Patrol agents in the process. That is what he has to do. So he has gone on the air waves and lied to the public to discredit these agents.

We found out today, for example, that the Department of Homeland Security lied to Congress trying to cover up for their lies to Congress. What happened is five Members of Congress were briefed. We will hear about this later on tonight from another Member of Congress. They were told that Compean had claimed he was going to go out and shoot a Mexican. Now, here is Compean, Jose Compean, right? These are two Mexican American, proud Hispanics, and they were going to go out and shoot a Mexican. And this is from five or six areas that were just total lies given to Members of Congress looking into this. And then they were questioned, when the Department of Homeland Security investigators were questioned, they said, oh, yes, we have all of this proved in various reports. And so they asked for them, those reports. And today it was just determined that for 4 months the Department of Homeland Security has been lying to Members of Congress because those reports never existed. There was nothing to substantiate the charges, the horrendous charges that were made against Compean and Ramos.

Well, what we hear now is, well, you have got to just forget it because the jury has spoken. That is what Mr. Sutton and the prosecutor want to say. That is the end of it. That is the last word.

Well, let's look at what the jury knew about and whether or not this was a fair trial. The drug dealer we are talking about, in between the time he was shot and all of this was going on, and Ramos and Compean are waiting to be tried, he was caught again, this time with 1,000 pounds of marijuana that he was trying to smuggle into our country. But that information was kept from the jury. That information never made it to the jury.

Now, was that important for the jury to know? The prosecution told the judge that this would in some way jeopardize other prosecutions or investigations, so the jury was kept from that information. And, in fact, that information has been expunged from the record, so we can't get that information. But we know it happened. And they play word games with us to say, well, he really wasn't arrested. He was apprehended. No, this man was caught again with 1,000 pounds of drugs. Do you think the jury should have known that? Would that have been something important for the jury to know when they are deciding on the lives of these two brave Americans? Well, it is something that the jury never knew.

The jury also never knew that the drug dealer, after the bullet fragment was removed from his body, he was taken by an investigator, and the bullet was taken by the investigator and spent the night at the home of this agent.

Well, let me tell you something. You don't take evidence and break the chain of custody of evidence. He took the bullet into his home, and he took this witness into his home. Any lawyer will tell you that this is the type of sloppiness that taints the evidence and disqualifies a prosecution.

It is also significant to mention that of those 12 jurors, three of them later submitted sworn affidavits alleging that they had been misled by the jury foreman into believing that, if the majority of people wanted to vote guilty, they had to also vote guilty, that a hung jury was not going to be allowed by the judge. They felt pressured to vote guilty, and they have since signed affidavits and made statements that they would have changed their vote. They believed these men to be innocent, and some of them actually broke down in tears when they heard that they could have actually saved these men had they stuck to their guns. But they were told that the judge, these are not lawyers, these are simple people; they were told they had to go along with the majority.

And when the judge heard this, and the judge heard that there was evidence, he knew that this evidence had been kept from the jury, he, even after knowing this, denied the request that the two agents be permitted to stay out on bond until their appeal was made.

Well, let's look at this. There is no doubt that Johnny Sutton had a choice. This U.S. attorney decided to prosecute the good guys and gave immunity to the bad guys when he could have done it the other way around. But he chose not to. And now he is engaged in this propaganda campaign against these two men.

Well, the prosecution's only witness of course, the major witness testified that, of course, this drug smuggler was hit in the buttocks, not from the back. And even with that, we hear the U.S. attorney claiming that the essence of this case is these corrupt agents shot an unarmed man in the back. That is what he says.

Well, of course, this was not an unarmed man. You know, we are not talking about a nun or some tourist who happened to stray across the border. This was a professional drug smuggler who works for a drug cartel, a delivery man to deliver vile drugs into our communities to corrupt our children and destroy the lives of our families. These Border Patrol agents were up against this man, not just a man, a criminal of this level. And of course, they didn't, as I just said, they didn't shoot him in the back. One bullet, we think, maybe from the gun of one of these officers, actually shot him in the buttocks, but the medical officer said that he was turned around. So it was like he had something that he was pointing with his hand, which could well have been a gun. So it wasn't in the back. It was in the buttocks, and it confirms what the law enforcement officers were saying.

Now, let me say, remember this, this is really important. There is no way to know that this drug dealer, whether he was armed or not. Mr. Sutton chose to believe the drug dealer, but how do we know he wasn't armed that day? The two agents claimed they said they saw something in his hand. They have to take the word of the drug smuggler. Now, he has been smuggling drugs since he was 14, and his family in an interview said he always was armed. There is no question. He was a member of the drug cartel.

But Mr. Sutton, our U.S. attorney, takes his word over the word of our defenders. He has turned reality on its head. He has sided with a drug smuggler over two men who risk their lives every day to protect us, and now he must destroy them and vilify them in order to protect this horrendous decision that he made to go with the bad guys rather than the good guys.

There is no evidence, for example, that Mr. Sutton claims they were corrupt. The Wall Street Journal printed an editorial saying these are corrupt law enforcement officers. Corrupt. The Wall Street Journal vilified these two men. Of course the Wall Street Journal, of course, has a policy, an editorial policy of an open border policy. But now, to back up their guy, their open borders guy, they vilify these officers with a total falsehood. There has never been a charge of corruption against either one of these two agents. They have never been charged with corruption. They have, in fact, a totally clean work record.

And, yes, Ramos had some family problems a few years ago. And let's make it clear what has happened. Another part of this vilification campaign is that Mr. Sutton, even though he was not permitted to bring this up in the

court because it is totally irrelevant, brought up a family problem that Officer Ramos had many years ago. This is a despicable tactic on the part of the U.S. attorney. Indefensible. Except it does illuminate what this U.S. attorney is all about.

The family situation for Mr. Ramos was recognized as an aberration. The fact is, Ramos has been recognized as a solid and respected officer, and this is why he was nominated for Border Patrol agent of the year.

And of course the U.S. attorney says, oh, well, that is not true. He never became Border Patrol agent of the year. That is the type of dishonest communication that calls into question his entire decision-making process. No one has ever claimed he was Border Patrol agent of the year. But he was nominated for that, and that means something.

So our U.S. attorney has found that he is just compelled to vilify these people. So what is the real significance of this case? The U.S. attorney's despicable prosecution of these border agents has put all of our border agents on notice: Any use of force to protect America, to secure our borders, if you do that, use any force, you will go to prison and your life will be destroyed and you will be shown no mercy.

The consequences of the Ramos and Compean case extend far beyond the destruction of these two men and their families. And yes, it is horrible that these families are being driven into destitution. The Compeans have lost their home. Their kids and the family, all their family is shattered. They have no health insurance.

But what are the consequences for us? What does it mean for our families? I will tell you what it means: It means that our southern border is now open, not just to an invading army of illegal immigrants but to drug dealers and to terrorists.

Let's ask ourselves this question: What if that van that they found all the drugs in, what if it turned out to be a dirty bomb that they discovered, a dirty bomb headed towards a major city that would have destroyed the lives of hundreds of thousands if not millions of Americans? Instead of 750 pounds of drugs, which is bad enough, what if it was a dirty bomb? And what if the drug dealer turned out to be a terrorist instead of a Mexican national?

Well, those two men would have been invited to the White House to be congratulated. It is clear there is a larger and a hidden agenda at play here. And Ramos and Compean simply are pawns who got in the way.

Johnny Sutton is a dishonest and overzealous prosecutor who has lied to us about this case. And he is on the wrong side of the law by siding with drug smugglers, letting them go free while he is prosecuting two men for criminal activity when it may just well have been a procedural matter.

His claim of not being able to prosecute the drug smuggler is ludicrous. Both his office and the investigation have no trouble in tracking down the drug smuggler, yet he chose to turn a blind eye to the drug smuggler's offenses. And according to the investigation, there were lots of prints, sets of prints that he could have used on that van. Plus we had agents Ramos and Compean who identified him as the guy who jumped out of that van. They could have prosecuted the drug smuggler. But they chose to prosecute our heroes, our defenders.

Well, did Ramos and Compean make mistakes? Well, maybe they did. Should they have been punished and reprimanded for them? Maybe. Should they have been charged with a crime? Absolutely not. And by doing so, the Justice Department has demoralized our Nation's defenders. And what does that mean to us? That means that our defenders cannot now count on their government to support them even when they are up against a drug smuggler who may very well be armed.

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What does that mean for the rest of us? That means we have absolutely lost control of our border. Border agents are put in a situation on a daily basis that they must make a split-second decision.

By the way, this is the first time Compean has ever used his weapon in the 5 years of service. He is being portrayed as some trigger-happy Border Patrol agent? Well, these agents don't have a second chance when someone aims something at them. So this policy that you can't fire until you are in the sights of a drug smuggler's gun is a death warrant to our defenders. Ironically, Ramos and Compean thought that the drug smuggler was aiming at them. Interestingly, as I say, Compean had never fired his weapon before.

These are the facts. These are the facts that have enraged the public, causing Americans to wonder what in God's name is their government doing? What is their President thinking? How can our President be so mean-spirited and arrogant not to hear the pleas from so many of our citizens, even from Members of Congress, for some type of mercy for Ramos and Compean, who had risked their lives to defend us for so long?

Well, there is a hidden agenda here. That is what this is all about. Very powerful economic interests in this country want cheap labor. They want open borders. They want cheap labor from illegals to come here so they can depress the wages of working Americans.

Well, the out-of-control flow of illegal immigrants is a nightmare to regular Americans, not this one group of elitists. But the policymakers here in Washington and their elite corporate interests are so arrogant and so smug that they do not care about the suffering of the American people. They don't care. These elites don't care that illegal immigrants are shutting down the emergency rooms so if your children in California have a car accident, they will die. They are overcrowding our classrooms so our kids aren't getting the education they deserve. They are driving down wages. And our criminal justice system is breaking down in California. We have American citizens who are being victimized. They are being murdered and raped and robbed by criminal illegal immigrants every day. But these elitists don't care, and our President doesn't seem to care.

The only heroes in this entire immigration mess, the only heroes are the thin green line of the Border Patrol. And the elites now have decided they have to brutally smash two of them in order to warn the others not to get in the way of their open border policy.

The public has every right to be angry about this case, and I join them in this outrage. Let me note that today I received 304,000 petitions that were signed by citizens of this country for the President of the United States asking for pardon. As we know, Officer Ramos was attacked last night or the night before. He was brutally attacked in prison. And this should do nothing but ask for another plea. This man's life is in danger. Compean's life was in danger. We knew that. That is why they should have been out until their appeal is heard.

We are pleading with the President. The American people are asking the President to pay attention. Please pardon these men. Give them a chance. If they are murdered in prison, the President will be held accountable. The President is accountable of the fact that Ramos was beaten up.

This case shows the insanity of this administration's border policy and perhaps the hidden agenda of this border policy. No guest worker program, no amnesty program is going to be feasible if we cannot control our borders. If this country cannot stop an illegal alien drug smuggler, this country has no border controls whatsoever.

And let me end my comments by this following statement: Our job is to watch out for the interests of the people of the United States. The people of the United States and many of these illegals who stream across our border are wonderful people. The vast majority are wonderful people. But we have to be concerned about the interests of our people who are suffering because of this out-of-control illegal immigration flow.

United States, who is it? It is us, U.S. Who are we? We are Mexican American people just like Ramos and Compean. We are Irish Americans. We are black Americans. We are people who came here from every corner of the world. And if we don't have a consideration for Americans over and above what we care about people in other countries, then we will not have an America that our Founding Fathers dreamed about. We are losing our country. And if we lose control of the southern border, the terrorists and the drug dealers and the

invading armies of illegals will make it so that within a short period of time, maybe 10 years from now, maybe 20, we will have lost America.

The American people are crying out in a rage. The President should listen. The President has to listen.

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from California.

And at this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield to the gentleman from the great State of North Carolina (Mr. JONES).

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. BILBRAY, I want to thank you very much for yielding. You will soon be the leading the Immigration Caucus here in Washington, D.C., that is involved with many Members from both parties and who are concerned about the future of this great Nation.

To my friend Mr. ROHRABACHER, I want to thank him for his passionate feelings tonight. The American people had to feel that.

I want to say to you, Mr. BILBRAY and Mr. ROHRABACHER, that we have for the last 7 months, a large number of us, have been fighting for these two border agents.

I am not going to try to repeat anything that has been said. I want to be short in my time because of the limited time that is left tonight. But I want to say that, as Mr. ROHRABACHER articulated every aspect of this case, there is nothing I could add to it except this: We have written, at least myself alone, four letters to the President of the United States going back to August 21 of 2006. We have a letter today, which will be the fifth letter. Many of these letters by me personally have been signed by at least 30 to 40 Members of Congress. Mr. ROHRABACHER had one back in December signed by 50 Members. And I want to join him very briefly. Why will this administration not listen to the truth?

And I am not going to try to articulate anything that has already been said, but these men are heroes in this country. I don't know how these Hispanic Americans, and that is what they are, a great part of America, Hispanic Americans, Compean and Ramos, how their families could believe in America tonight, with their loved ones who tried to fight drug traffickers in this country. Their husbands tonight, Ramos and Compean, are in the Federal prisons. And as was said by Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. Ramos last Saturday night was beaten up by Mexican nationals.

I close my brief comments tonight by saying to the President of the United States, please listen to the Members of Congress. But more important than the Members of Congress, listen to the American people. For the last 8 months they have been calling talk shows throughout this great Nation and saying to the President of the United States please pardon these men.

And when I heard Tony Snow answer the question a month ago and said that this is nonsensical, Mr. Snow, wake up yourself. Awaken the President to what has happened. These men deserve to be heroes, not to be crucified by this government.

If we believe in justice, Mr. President, and I hope and believe that you do believe in justice, then soon, in the next few days, you will grant a pardon to these two men.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend for this brief time. And that is all I needed was this brief time.

Mr. BILBRAY. I appreciate the gentleman from North Carolina.

And at this time I yield to the gentleman from the Volunteer State, the great State of Tennessee, Chattanooga's favorite son, Congressman WAMP.

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's yielding to me.

I came to the Capitol tonight to actually take the eighth-graders from Silverdale Baptist Church on a Capitol tour here, which I am going to do downstairs in a few minutes. But this is a very important issue that really strikes to the heart of what our priorities are in this country today.

My responsibilities here in Washington and in this Congress are, as the ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, charged with resourcing the legislative branch. We ask Capitol Police officers and the Sergeant at Arms personnel to stand in harm's way on our behalf. I have got to tell you all across the country we are asking men and women of all ethnic backgrounds, all religions, all cultures who are proud to be called Americans to stand in harm's way on behalf of our civilian population and, in this case, our elected leadership in this country. And you can't ask them to do that and then send the wrong signals by not standing with them when they are doing their job. And I know that people are entitled to due process, but this is one of those obvious cases where the President needs to get involved and take decisive action.

My district director in Chattanooga's son works for Border Patrol on the southern border. It is a difficult job. These people are harassed. Their lives are on the line all the time. It is a tough, nasty business. It does not always go perfectly, but if we are ever going to recruit new people to serve and to stand in the gap on behalf of our country, we have to stand behind the people that do. I don't think we have done that. I do not think due process has, frankly, been served here. And I think the President should take action, and I was proud to join on the letters asking the President to do this.

Thoughtful people from all across the country are saying what in the world is going on? How could this happen? And I want that next generation of Border Patrol agents to be recruited and know that their country is not going to leave them hanging and leave them in Federal prison for doing their job. It is dangerous. Our country needs to stand behind them. And these are difficult days. Our generation is going to be called to enormous sacrifice. We have got to make difficult decisions on whether or not we are going to stick together, because if we do not hang together, we will indeed hang separately.

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the chance to be able to present this issue before this body. I think that, as the Congressional Immigration Caucus has pointed out, there is an issue here that obviously the American people are interested in and we were able to present tonight.

I just have to close with a few comments. One is the fact that the White House has discussed that there are procedures they have to go through. I think it is quite clear to anyone who reads the Constitution that the White House, the President, does not have to go through any procedure except to the decide either to pardon or not to pardon.

We hear a lot over the years of Executive privilege. Executive privilege. And every White House since George Washington has loved to discuss the concept of Executive privilege. But with that privilege goes Executive responsibility. And the White House bears the responsibility and the sole responsibility to issue pardons where there has been a miscarriage of justice. And I think the consensus is among many of us that this is exactly the kind of situation that the Founding Fathers had in mind when they proposed that the Executive and only the Executive would have this power, and this unencumbered power, separate from other procedures, to be able to right a wrong when the justice system has failed. I think that this is a chance that we can talk about.

But the thing that concerns me, Mr. Speaker, as being a Member who was born and raised on the border, I think that what has happened in Texas with this case reflects the total lack of understanding of just how out of control our borders are.

I hear people again and again in the Federal Government say that there are not the resources down at the border to be able to enforce the laws against drug smugglers, that there just isn't enough money and manpower to be able to address the problem, that we must allow these people to go free.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if there was enough money to go down into Mexico, find a drug smuggler, negotiate a backroom deal with this drug smuggler, bring the drug smuggler back, and give them amnesty not just once but twice, if there were enough resources to cut this kind of deal and make this kind of effort to make sure that two Border Patrol agents get convicted, my God, aren't there enough resources to use the same effort to go after the drug smugglers? And I really ask that we consider that.

I would just like to say that tonight we were able to spend almost an hour discussing an issue that is very near

and dear to those who are concerned about the fact that our borders are out of control, that this incident happened in an area where Border Patrol agents had a firefight with smugglers with automatic weapons a few months ago, if you remember. And we wanted to remind the American people how out of control and absurd the situation has become in a lot of ways.

We hope, as the Congressional Immigration Caucus, Mr. Speaker, that over the next few months that Wednesday night will be spent as a night where those of us who are concerned about the illegal immigration issue and the out-of-control border will spend an hour every Wednesday night reporting to the American people of what is going on, on this most critical issue that Democrats and Republicans both care about.

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If there was ever a situation and ever an issue where partisanship should be put aside and being an American should be first, it is time that we find a way to work together on the immigration issue. I call on you and everyone that has the honor of working in this House of the people to join together to address that. I invite you and every Member of the House to join the Immigration Caucus, so that we can work together for the good of all Americans.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. ROYCE (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of illness.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. MCDERMOTT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ELLISON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KAGEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. LEE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WATERS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. TIAHRT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. WOLF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, February 12, 13, and 14.

Mrs. CAPITO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GINGREY, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at their own request) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. PEARCE, for 5 minutes, today. Ms. PELOSI, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, for 5 minutes, today.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Mrs. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 434. An act to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 through July 31, 2007, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, February 8, 2007, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

524. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting Transmittal No. 07-13, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(a); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

525. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the annual report relating to the prevention of nuclear proliferation from January 1 to December 31, 2005, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 3281(a); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

526. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Cote d'Ivoire that was declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

527. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Liberia that was declared in Executive Order 13348 of July 22, 2004, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

528. A letter from the Deputy Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting the Agency's reports containing the 30 September 2006 status of loans and guarantees issued under Section 25(a)(11) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

529. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to Section 620C(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and in accordance with section 1(a)(6) of Executive Order 13313, a report prepared by the Department of State and the National Security Council on the progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period October 1, 2006 through November 30, 2006; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

530. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting consistent with the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling, and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997, and Executive Order 13346 of July 8, 2004, certification pursuant to Condition 7(C)(i), Effectiveness of the Australia Group; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

531. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the annual inventory of U.S. Government-sponsored international exchanges and training programs, as well as the FY 2006 report on the activities of the Interagency Working Group on U.S. Government-Sponsored International Exchanges and Training (IAWG); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

532. A letter from the Chief, Administrative Law Division, Central Intelligence Agency, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

533. A letter from the Secretary, Mississippi River Commission, Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting a copy of the annual report in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act covering the calendar year 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552b(j); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

534. A letter from the Assoc. Gen. Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

535. A letter from the Assoc. Gen. Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

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539. A letter from the Assoc. Gen. Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

540. A letter from the Senior Associate General Counsel, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

541. A letter from the Senior Associate General Counsel, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

542. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for the Alabama Beach Mouse (RIN: 1018-AU46) received January 25, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

543. A letter from the General Counsel, Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's final rule — Grants for Correctional Facilities [OJP (OJP)-Docket No. 1382] (RIN: 1121-AA41) received January 23, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

544. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification to Congress regarding the Incidental Capture of Sea Turtles in Commercial Shrimping Operations; jointly to the Committees on Natural Resources and Appropriations.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee: Committee on Science and Technology. H.R. 365. A bill to provide for a research program for remediation of closed methamphetamine production laboratories, and for other purposes (Rept. 110–8). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. WELCH of Vermont: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 133. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 547) to facilitate the development of markets for alternative fuels and Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel fuel through research, development, and demonstration and data collection (Rept. 110–9). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. NORWOOD (for himself, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. KLINE of Minnesota, Mr. BOEHNER, Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. AKIN, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BONNER, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. COBLE, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. DEAL of Georgia, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. FLAKE, Ms. FOXX, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. GILCHREST, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. HAYES, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. HERGER, Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina, Mr. ISSA, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. KELLER, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. MCHENRY, Mrs MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. PENCE, Mr. PITTS, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina):

H.R. 866. A bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to ensure the right of employees to a secret-ballot election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. REYNOLDS:

H.R. 867. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the provision for penalty-free withdrawals from individual retirement plans for qualified reservist distributions; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. DOGGETT (for himself, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. FILNER, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. HOLT, Mr. KIND, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. STARK, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. RODRIGUEZ):

H.R. 868. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a married couple who operates a unincorporated business as co-owners to file separate self-employment tax returns; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia (for himself, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Mr. HARE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. POE, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, and Mrs. CHRISTENSEN):

H.R. 869. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to revive previous authority on the use of the Armed Forces and the militia to address interference with State or Federal law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GILLMOR (for himself, Ms. DEGETTE, and Mr. TAYLOR):

H.R. 870. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide liability protections for employees and contractors of health centers under section 330 of such Act who provide health services in emergency areas; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. WEXLER:

H.R. 871. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to strengthen enforcement of spousal court-ordered property distributions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:

H.R. 872. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to make competitive grants to community colleges and advanced technology education centers partnering with community colleges to support the education and training of technicians in the fields of bioenergy and other agriculture-based, renewable energy resources, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. ACKERMAN (for himself and Mrs. MALONEY of New York):

H.R. 873. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to prohibit fees by creditors for payments on credit card accounts by electronic fund transfers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CARDOZA:

H.R. 874. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an additional penalty for public officials who abuse their office in furtherance of a felony; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARDOZA:

H.R. 875. A bill to amend the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996 to require the head of an agency to be reconfirmed by the Senate unless the agency is found to be in compliance with the requirements of such Act, as reported by the Comptroller General; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. CHABOT (for himself, Mr. LAMPSON, Mrs. BIGGERT, and Mr. CRAMER):

H.R. 876. A bill to modernize and expand the reporting requirements relating to child pornography, to expand cooperation in combating child pornography, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DELAHUNT:

H.R. 877. A bill to amend the Adams National Historical Park Act of 1998 to include the Quincy Homestead within the boundary of the Adams National Historical Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. EMANUEL (for himself, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. SIRES, and Ms. HIRONO):

H.R. 878. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require broker reporting of customer's basis in securities transactions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FEENEY:

H.R. 879. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require individuals to present a government-issued photo identification as a condition of voting in elections for Federal office, to prohibit any individual from tabulating votes in an election for Federal office unless the individual has been subject to a criminal background check, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. FORBES (for himself, Mr. WOLF, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. COBLE, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. PENCE, and Mr. SMITH of Texas):

H.R. 880. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to reduce violent gang crime and protect law-abiding citizens and communities from violent criminals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WELDON of Florida (for himself and Mrs. MALONEY of New York):

H.R. 881. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to reduce human exposure to mercury through vaccines; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GORDON (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ALLEN, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. HAYES, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. COHEN, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. HOLT, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Mr. DENT, Mr. SOUDER, and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD):

H.R. 882. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to emergency medical services and the quality of care furnished in emergency departments of hospitals and critical access hospitals by establishing a bipartisan commission to examine factors that affect the effective delivery of such services, by providing for additional payments for certain physician services furnished in such emergency departments, and by requiring reports on certain emergency department information as a condition of participation in the Medicare Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined

by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. HERSETH:

H.R. 883. A bill to enhance and provide to the Oglala Sioux Tribe and Angostura Irrigation Project certain benefits of the Pick-Sloan Missouri River basin program; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. REICHERT, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. DENT, Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, and Mr. MCNULTY):

H.R. 884. A bill to provide for the establishment of the Science and Technology Homeland Security International Cooperative Programs Office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. LANTOS (for himself, Mr. ACKERMAN, and Mr. SHERMAN):

H.R. 885. A bill to support the establishment of an international regime for the assured supply of nuclear fuel for peaceful means and to authorize voluntary contributions to the International Atomic Energy Agency to support the establishment of an international nuclear fuel bank; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. LARSEN of Washington (for himself, Mr. INSLEE, and Mr. DICKS):

H.R. 886. A bill to enhance ecosystem protection and the range of outdoor opportunities protected by statute in the Skykomish River valley of the State of Washington by designating certain lower-elevation Federal lands as wilderness, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York (for herself and Ms. PRYCE of Ohio):

H.R. 887. A bill to provide for Project GRAD programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. MEEKS of New York (for himself and Mr. FEENEY):

H.R. 888. A bill to provide for the admission to the United States of nonimmigrant business facilitation visitors; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. MILLER of Michigan:

H.R. 889. A bill to amend the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 to establish vessel ballast water management requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California (for himself, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. TIERNEY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

H.R. 890. A bill to establish requirements for lenders and institutions of higher education in order to protect students and other borrowers receiving educational loans; to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MORAN of Virginia (for himself, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. SHAYS, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SAXTON, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. STARK, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. PLATTS, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. COHEN, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. NADLER, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. FILNER, Ms. LEE, and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey):

H.R. 891. A bill to ensure that domestic dog and cat fur is prohibited from being imported, exported, manufactured, sold, or advertised in the United States and to require the labeling of all fur products under the Fur Products Labeling Act; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PITTS:

H.R. 892. A bill to establish and provide for the treatment of Individual Development Accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. POE:

H.R. 893. A bill to provide for loan repayment for prosecutors and public defenders; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PRICE of North Carolina (for himself and Mr. CASTLE):

H.R. 894. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to apply certain requirements regarding the disclosure of identifying information within communications made through the Internet, to apply certain disclosure requirements to prerecorded telephone calls, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. REYNOLDS (for himself, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. KIRK, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. TERRY, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. BURTON of Indiana):

H.R. 895. A bill to take certain steps toward recognition by the United States of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin (for himself and Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin):

H.R. 896. A bill to amend part D of title IV of the Social Security Act to provide for the pass through of all child support collected on behalf of families receiving assistance under the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY (for herself, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. STARK, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. COHEN, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. HARE, Mr. ELLISON, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas):

H.R. 897. A bill to require the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, Secretary of the Interior, and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to provide to Congress copies and descriptions of contracts and task orders in excess of $5,000,000 for work to be performed in Iraq and Afghanistan; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. SCHWARTZ (for herself and Mr. RAMSTAD):

H.R. 898. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employers to claim a work opportunity credit for hiring military service personnel returning from service in Iraq or Afghanistan; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCOTT of Virginia (for himself and Mr. CHABOT):

H.R. 899. A bill to provide a mechanism for the determination on the merits of the claims of claimants who met the class criteria in a civil action relating to racial discrimination by the Department of Agriculture but who were denied that determination; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SERRANO (for himself, Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. HOYER, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. PUTNAM, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. KIND, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. RENZI, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. DENT, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. WU, Mr. POE, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. MACK, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. KELLER, Mr. MOLLOHAN, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. COBLE, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. WELLER, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. CLAY, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PAUL, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. OLVER, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. CALVERT, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. MICA, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. WYNN, Mr. GILCHREST, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CASTLE, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, and Mr. CARDOZA):

H.R. 900. A bill to provide for a federally sanctioned self-determination process for the people of Puerto Rico; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. SLAUGHTER (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. CAPPS, Mrs. BIGGERT, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. CONYERS, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. HARMAN, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. LEE, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WOOLSEY, and Mr. KENNEDY):

H.R. 901. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to direct certain coeducational elementary and secondary schools to make available information on equality in school athletic programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself, Mr. EDWARDS, and Mr. PEARCE):

H.R. 902. A bill to facilitate the use for irrigation and other purposes of water produced in connection with development of energy resources; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado:

H.R. 903. A bill to provide for a study of options for protecting the open space characteristics of certain lands in and adjacent to the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests in Colorado, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself and Mr. PERLMUTTER):

H.R. 904. A bill to better provide for compensation for certain persons injured in the course of employment at the Rocky Flats site in Colorado; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado:

H.R. 905. A bill to increase accountability and equity in the Federal budget; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself and Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina):

H.R. 906. A bill to promote and coordinate global change research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PAUL (for himself and Mr. MILLER of Florida):

H.J. Res. 23. A joint resolution proposing an amendment the Constitution of the United States relative to abolishing personal income, estate, and gift taxes and prohibiting the United States Government from engaging in business in competition with its citizens; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PALLONE:

H. Con. Res. 60. Concurrent resolution expressing support for the goals of Veterans Educate Today's Students (VETS) Day, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. WELCH of Vermont

H. Res. 133. A resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 547) to facilitate the development of markets for alternative fuels and Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel fuel through research, development, and demonstration and data collection.

By Mr. CARNEY (for himself, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. DICKS, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. CUELLAR, and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas):

H. Res. 134. A resolution recognizing and honoring the employees of the Department of Homeland Security for their efforts and contributions to protect and secure the Nation; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (for herself, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. HOLT, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. CARSON, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. RUSH, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. SESTAK, Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. FILNER, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida):

H. Res. 135. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that a National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week should be established; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York:

H. Res. 136. A resolution commending the Girl Scouts of the United States of America on the occasion of their 95th anniversary, for providing quality age-appropriate experiences that prepare girls to become the leaders of tomorrow and for raising issues important to girls; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. NADLER (for himself, Mr. WEINER, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. COHEN, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. HOLT, Ms. KILPATRICK, and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida):

H. Res. 137. A resolution honoring the life and six decades of public service of Jacob Birnbaum and especially his commitment freeing Soviet Jews from religious, cultural, and communal extinction; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. ROSS (for himself, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. BERRY, and Mr. BOOZMAN):

H. Res. 138. A resolution recognizing the importance of Hot Springs National Park on its 175th anniversary; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, private bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. LANTOS:

H.R. 907. A bill for the relief of Denes and Gyorgyi Fulop; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LANTOS:

H.R. 908. A bill for the relief of Kuan-Wei Liang and Chun-Mei Hsu-Liang; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 18: Ms. BEAN, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. BOYD of Florida, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. CARSON, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Mr. DENT, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. DOYLE, Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. GILCHREST, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. HERSETH, Ms. NORTON, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. JEFFERSON, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. KIRK, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. REYES, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Ms. WOOLSEY.

H.R. 36: Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 42: Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, and Mr. GONZALEZ.

H.R. 43: Mr. HARE.

H.R. 73: Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, and Mr. LAHOOD.

H.R. 89: Mr. LAHOOD.

H.R. 137: Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 238: Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 241: Mr. PLATTS.

H.R. 269: Mr. SPRATT, Mr. REHBERG, and Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 303: Mr. KANJORSKI, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. KILDEE, and Mr. LAHOOD.

H.R. 312: Mr. POE and Mr. GONZALEZ.

H.R. 314: Mr. HALL of Texas.

H.R. 353: Mr. HALL of New York.

H.R. 358: Mr. SPRATT, Mr. SHULER, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. WALSH of New York.

H.R. 365: Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. OBEY, Mr. HOLDEN, Ms. KILPATRICK, and Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota.

H.R. 370: Mr. WILSON of Ohio.

H.R. 411: Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mrs. BONO, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. PORTER, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. FOSSELLA, and Mr. SALI.

H.R. 450: Mr. REICHERT.

H.R. 455: Mr. STARK, Mr. HALL of New York, and Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 491: Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 511: Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. HELLER, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mr. CANNON, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. KNOLLENBERG, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mr. REGULA, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. REHBERG, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, and Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey.

H.R. 566: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KILPATRICK, and Mr. MEEK of Florida.

H.R. 583: Mr. GORDON and Mr. ETHERIDGE.

H.R. 584: Mr. FILNER and Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 589: Mr. SMITH of Washington and Mr. REICHERT.

H.R. 608: Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mrs. CUBIN, and Mrs. BONO.

H.R. 620: Mr. COHEN, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. SIRES, Ms. WATERS, and Ms. BALDWIN.

H.R. 634: Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BAKER, Ms. BORDALLO, Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CARNAHAN, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. HOLT, Mr. ISSA, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. KIND, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. MCCOTTER, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. STUPAK, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, and Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 651: Mr. CARTER.

H.R. 652: Mr. CARTER.

H.R. 653: Ms. HIRONO and Mrs. MYRICK.

H.R. 656: Mr. KING of New York and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 663: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas and Mr. HALL of New York.

H.R. 676: Mr. COHEN and Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 677: Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. RUSH, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. REYES, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, and Ms. SUTTON.

H.R. 678: Mr. ROTHMAN.

H.R. 684: Mr. HARE.

H.R. 687: Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. PLATTS.

H.R. 688: Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, and Mr. FOSSELLA.

H.R. 690: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. WOLF, Mr. JEFFERSON, and Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 699: Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 703: Ms. DEGETTE.

H.R. 710: Mr. WYNN, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. DEGETTE, and Mr. WEXLER.

H.R. 722: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 731: Mr. GERLACH and Mr. ROSKAM.

H.R. 743: Mr. GILLMOR and Mr. MANZULLO.

H.R. 746: Mr. HALL of New York.

H.R. 748: Mr. PASTOR, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. TERRY, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. SHIMKUS, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia, and Mr. LOBIONDO.

H.R. 753: Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. WAMP, Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. COOPER, Mr. GORDON, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. TANNER.

H.R. 757: Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H.R. 759: Mr. KUHL of New York and Mr. MOORE of Kansas.

H.R. 777: Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 784: Mr. WOLF, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. FOXX, Mr. MCKEON, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. KIND, Ms. HERSETH, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. WAMP.

H.R. 811: Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. WALDEN of Oregon, Mr. CUELLAR, and Mr. HINOJOSA.

H.R. 822: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. MCNULTY, and Ms. KILPATRICK.

H.R. 845: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 846: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 851: Mr. PENCE.

H.R. 852: Mr. DICKS and Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.J. Res. 16: Mr. WELDON of Florida.

H.J. Res. 19: Mr. GOODE.

H. Con. Res. 37: Mr. GOODE.

H. Con. Res. 53: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H. Con. Res. 55: Mr. GONZALEZ.

H. Res. 53: Mr. WATT, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.

H. Res. 69: Mr. SHULER, Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H. Res. 107: Mr. CHABOT, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. ENGEL, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. NORWOOD, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. MACK, and Mr. KING of Iowa.

H. Res. 113: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. ROYCE, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H. Res. 128: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mrs. CAPPS.

H. Res. 130: Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. BOSWELL, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. GONZALEZ, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. BACA, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. CASTOR, Mr. SHULER, Ms. HOOLEY, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. RUSH, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. COHEN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CLAY, Mr. WYNN, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee, Ms. WATSON, Mr. TANNER, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. MELANCON, and Ms. WATERS.

H. Res. 131: Mr. WELDON of Florida and Mr. YOUNG of Florida.

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 547

OFFERED BY: MR. ROGERS OF MICHIGAN

AMENDMENT NO. 1: Redesignate section 6 as section 7 and insert after section 5 the following:

SEC. 6. ENERGY SECURITY FUND AND ALTERNATIVE FUEL GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established in the Treasury a fund, to be known as the ''Energy Security Fund'' (referred to in this section as the ''Fund''), consisting of—

(A) amounts transferred to the Fund under paragraph (2); and

(B) amounts credited to the Fund under paragraph (3)(C).

(2) TRANSFERS TO FUND.—For fiscal year 2008 and each fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary of the Treasury, subject to the availability of appropriations, shall transfer to the Fund an amount determined by the Secretary of the Treasury to be equal to 50 percent of the total amount deposited in the general fund of the Treasury during the preceding fiscal year from fines, penalties, and other funds obtained through enforcement actions conducted pursuant to section 32912 of title 49, United States Code (including funds obtained under consent decrees).

(3) INVESTMENT OF AMOUNTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall invest in interest-bearing obligations of the United States such portion of the Fund as is not, in the judgment of the Secretary of the Treasury, required to meet current withdrawals.

(B) SALE OF OBLIGATIONS.—Any obligation acquired by the Fund may be sold by the Secretary of the Treasury at the market price.

(C) CREDITS TO FUND.—The interest on, and the proceeds from the sale or redemption of, any obligations held in the Fund shall be credited to, and form a part of, the Fund in accordance with section 9602 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(4) USE OF AMOUNTS IN FUND.—Amounts in the Fund shall be made available to the Secretary of Energy, subject to the availability of appropriations, to carry out the grant program under subsection (b).

(b) ALTERNATIVE FUELS GRANT PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Energy, acting through the Clean Cities Program of the Department of Energy, shall establish and carry out a program under which the Secretary shall provide grants to expand the availability to consumers of alternative fuels (as defined in section 32901(a) of title 49, United States Code).

(2) ELIGIBILITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), any entity that is eligible to receive assistance under the Clean Cities Program shall be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection.

(B) EXCEPTIONS.—

(i) CERTAIN OIL COMPANIES.—A large, vertically-integrated oil company shall not be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection.

(ii) PROHIBITION OF DUAL BENEFITS.—An entity that receives any other Federal funds for the construction or expansion of alternative refueling infrastructure shall not be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection for the construction or expansion of the same alternative refueling infrastructure.

(C) ENSURING COMPLIANCE.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Energy shall promulgate regulations to ensure that, before receiving a grant under this subsection, an eligible entity meets applicable standards relating to the installation, construction, and expansion of infrastructure necessary to increase the availability to consumers of alternative fuels (as defined in section 32901(a) of title 49, United States Code).

(3) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—

(A) GRANTS.—The amount of a grant provided under this subsection shall not exceed $30,000.

(B) AMOUNT PER STATION.—An eligible entity shall receive not more than $90,000 under this subsection for any station of the eligible entity during a fiscal year.

(4) USE OF FUNDS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A grant provided under this subsection shall be used for the construction or expansion of alternative fueling infrastructure.

(B) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more than 3 percent of the amount of a grant provided under this subsection shall be used for administrative expenses.

H.R. 547

OFFERED BY: MR. BURGESS

AMENDMENT NO. 2: Page 4, line 17, strike ''and''.

Page 4, line 18, redesignate paragraph (3) as paragraph (4).

Page 4, after line 17, insert the following new paragraph:

(3) issues with respect to increased volatile emissions or increased nitrogen oxide emissions; and

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE *110th* CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, whose loving hand has sustained our Nation, help us to find our refuge in a personal commitment to Your plan for our lives. Give us the wisdom to trust You to guide our steps and to lead us to a desired destination.

Bless our lawmakers. Let the contagion of Your presence bind them together. Speak to them above the noise and prattle of impulsive rhetoric so that they will know and do Your will. Lift them above the valley and the mists of struggle to the mountain of trust and confidence in Your power. Give them the courage to seek first Your rule and righteousness.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 7, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. CARDIN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senate will begin morning business in just a few minutes, with the time until 2 p.m. equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees. The first 30 minutes this morning will be controlled by the minority, and then the majority will control, of course, the next 30 minutes. We are going to do the best we can to alternate back and forth.

Yesterday, we had a nice debate. When a Democrat wasn't here, a Republican moved in and vice versa. It worked out well with the time.

I announced last night that I intended to have the Senate proceed this afternoon to executive session to consider a number of Executive Calendar nominations. I had spoken to the Republican leader prior to making that announcement and told him I wanted to consider GEN George Casey and ADM William Fallon to be voted on today or tomorrow. I expect there will be debate with respect to the Casey nomination. We have had word that on the minority side there are a number of statements they wish to have made, and I am confident there will be some over here, also. We will make a decision at a later time whether we should have time agreements or just move forward with these.

Let me just say a few words about what is going on in the Senate and has been going on over the last few days. As we all know, the President, in giving a speech, said he wanted to move a significant number more of American troops to Iraq. As a result of that, there have been efforts made to have the Senate vote on whether that is appropriate. We have been unable to arrive at that point, which is somewhat surprising because the people who helped write the amendment voted against proceeding to debate on that amendment. People whose names are associated with that amendment decided not to proceed to vote on that amendment.

I think it speaks volumes that there has been almost nothing said by the minority about supporting the surge. There have been no speeches over here supporting the surge. In fact, late yesterday there was a proposal to not even have a vote on supporting the surge.

That is where we are. The House is going to take up this matter next week. They will send this over to us, and in due time we will try to get to this matter. But it is pretty clear that one reason for the slowdown here is to allow the President to move troops over there. The more troops moved over there prior to this vote, the more difficult it is to say don't send the troops—when he has already sent them. But there are other ways to approach this issue in Iraq.

Just a matter of hours ago, a Sea Knight helicopter was shot down over Baghdad, the fifth helicopter shot down in the last 2 weeks. We don't know how many Americans are dead in this latest incident. We do not know because the military has not announced it. We do know these Sea Knight helicopters—they are called CH–46s—are used by the Marines primarily as a cargo and troop transport, and they carry as many as 25 combat-loaded troops.

We also know that the administration submitted its budget, requesting another $245 billion in the war in Iraq and other matters relating to the military, bringing the total to well over

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$500 billion. In fact, we learned yesterday that the United States had shipped money to Mr. Bremer, Ambassador Bremer, to disburse money to Iraqi ministries. How much money? It was 363 tons of money in hundred-dollar bills—363 tons. There is some dispute as to how many hundred-dollar bills it takes to make 363 tons, and they really don't know exactly how much money that is, but it is around $12 billion, most of which is not accounted for. I guess $12 billion, when you compare it to $500 billion, is not very much, but I think the American people understand that 363 tons of cash, hundred-dollar bills, is a lot of money.

We also know from reading the morning paper that the Associated Press reports:

> More Americans have been killed in combat in Iraq over the last 4 months than in any comparable stretch since the war began.

To say the war isn't going well is an understatement. To say there is a civil war going on in Iraq is an understatement. I really think it is unfortunate that we have been unable to vote on whether the surge should take place. Senators have not been allowed to cast their vote on this issue, and because of that, we are going to move on to the continuing resolution this afternoon—late this evening, I should say, after we finish these two important Executive Calendar matters.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

INSIST ON A FAIR PROCESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Listening to my good friend, the majority leader, should remind us all that the debate we had anticipated having this week—and I might say Members on our side were certainly prepared to have the debate—would not have had any impact on the surge. These were nonbinding resolutions. I would not argue that they were not significant, because Senators would have been put on record. But we were certainly prepared for the debate. What we were not prepared to do is to have a process that denied our side other options in addition to the Levin proposal.

As we were frequently reminded last year by Democratic Senators, the Senate is different from the House. In the Senate, a minority of at least 41 can insist on a process that is fair.

Senate Republicans were united, including members of our conference who support the Levin proposal, in insisting on a fair process. We started out with five different options, gradually pared them down to two—the McCain-Lieberman-Graham proposal and the Gregg proposal relating to supporting the troops. My good friend, the majority leader, objected to allowing us to have two proposals. He only wanted us to have one proposal. So we narrowed it down to one and picked the Gregg ''support the troops'' proposal as our one, and the majority leader objected to that unanimous consent request as well, leading us to believe that not only did he want us to limit ourselves to one, he wanted to pick which one. Of course, in the Senate, that is just not possible. This is a deliberative body. It insists on having votes on a wide variety of proposals. Certainly, when we were in the majority last year, we had to vote on a lot of things we might not have liked to have voted on in order to advance a particular proposal. That is the way the Senate works.

At whatever point the majority would like to begin the debate again on Iraq, we will certainly be happy to have it. I particularly wish to thank Senator GREGG for his very important contribution to this debate. That is a vote we will have at some point, on some measure, when we return to the subject of Iraq.

With regard to the continuing resolution, let me just say to the majority leader, he has suggested that I survey our members and see what amendments we might like to offer, since he has indicated amendments may or may not be allowed on that proposal. I would say to him we are paring that down and hope to be able to get him—we have about seven; we are going to try to pare that down to three, submit those amendments to the majority leader, and hope they might be allowed when we do move to the continuing resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I say to my friend, we would also see what amendments, if any, we want to offer on this side—maybe three and three or whatever we can come up with that appears to move the ball along.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip is recognized.

RESOLUTIONS PROCEDURE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I was pleased to hear just a moment ago the suggestion that maybe we go to the Omnibus appropriations bill in such a way that would allow some amendments to be offered on both sides. That is good. That is the way it ought to be. That is why I have been surprised and, frankly, disappointed that we have not been able to come to some sort of agreement about how to proceed to these resolutions dealing with the President's plan to take action in Iraq and have a full debate on the substance.

Of the plan and the resolutions, I don't think there is any excuse for the fact that we have come to the point where we are throwing up our hands and saying: I can't have it my way, you can't have it your way, therefore, we will have it no way.

If this were the Super Bowl, whether you were Grossman or Manning, you would call a time out and say, wait a minute here, there has got to be a way we can get a plan to go forward. I know how difficult it is to do this because our leaders on both sides of the aisle get pressured from all sides. They are pulled. Don't agree to that, you have to agree to that.

In the end, the leaders have to decide how we go forward in a fair and an open way, and the rest of us have to support that decision. The majority has strong power in the House of Representatives, and a good bit in the Senate. But I think the most difficult job in the city is the job of being majority leader, the job that Senator REID has right now because he doesn't have a Rules Committee. He is not the President. He can't give an order and have the bureaucracy move, not that the bureaucracy ever moves. He has to work with the minority. He has to find a way to move things forward.

Some people say: Oh, that is the process. Look, the process is substance because if you can't figure out how to get it done, you never get to the substance. This is not an autocracy. No one person possesses unlimited power. You have got to give to get a little. You can't have a deal where you say: No, no, you can't offer but one amendment; and, by the way, it has to be this.

If we were going to do anything, we should have gone with more, not less. So I don't get it. If this is the big, important, serious issue we all say it is, surely we could have worked out a way to proceed. Well, I guess the one thing we could say is, we will get back to this. We are going to get back to it in many different ways. But at least in the future, when we get to the debate, it is going to be a serious debate about something that is real.

We were talking about taking up resolutions that had no binding effect. It was a feel-good deal. Yeah, we are going to take a pop at the President. Yeah, we support the troops, but no, we don't support the troops.

Oh, yes, thank you very much, General Petraeus, 81 to nothing, you are confirmed. Go over to Iraq. Oh, and by the way, we don't agree with what you are going to try to do. We don't support the plan. How did we get into that?

At least at some point, men and women of strong principle and beliefs are going to offer up amendments that are going to say: Support the troops, stick with the plan or pull out. High tail it out. Get out of there now. And then we will have a real debate and we will have real votes. That is what, under our Constitution, we should be doing, actually.

I think the proposal that Senator GREGG had, made eminent good sense. Let's show we support the troops. Gee whiz, why is that a bad idea? The American people don't want to send our troops into harm's way around the world or even in Baghdad without knowing we are behind them.

So what is the problem? The problem is that it was able to get 80, I don't

know, or 90 votes. We can't have that vote because later on we may want to actually cut off the funds to the troops. There are some little, bitty twists of language, too, such as we support funding for the troops in the field. What does that mean, ''in the field''? What if you are on the way? What if you are in a brigade that is pulling out of Texas now or pulling out of Kentucky or that has landed in Kuwait? We don't support them. There are too many nuances.

Let me get away from process and talk about substance. We have a problem in Iraq. A lot of people now have shifted their position and are saying: Well, I voted for it earlier, but I am against it now. Yeah, it has gotten tough, so I don't like it.

Everybody says change the status quo. I had a chance to talk to some world leaders recently in Switzerland and they were saying: My goodness, you can't do that, can't do this, can't do something else.

I said: Here is the choice: Stay, leave or do what?

They said: No, you can't leave. You have to stay. Well, what do you propose? Deafening silence. The President understood we had to change the status quo. Action had to be taken. A plan had to be developed. He proposed a plan. He met with us. He came to the Congress. He spoke at the State of the Union: Here is what I propose to do. Give this plan a chance. Give the plan a chance.

And General Petraeus, maybe the General Grant of this war, or the General Washington of a previous war—this is the man of the hour, and I hope and pray the good Lord will guide him in the right way because he has a serious challenge before him.

But this is not just about a surge, although that is a part of the plan. This is a plan with at least three other key components. But ask yourself, we say to the Iraqis: You have to get a political solution. Everybody is saying: No, we will never get a military solution without a political and economic solution.

Well, yeah. But how do you get a political solution in chaos? How can you get a political solution when your capital is being blown up every day by insurgents of all stripes? You have got to get a grip on security. It is similar to here in our Nation's Capital. We couldn't have orderly Government if we didn't have order. So we are going to try to send in the best we have, under the best general we have, and get some control of the violence and the chaos in Baghdad and then give the Iraqis a chance to deal with the politics.

Am I convinced all of this is going to work? I don't know. I am not the best expert in the world. I have been on the Armed Services Committee, I have been on Intelligence. I have been around awhile. But I am not going to impose my military judgment on a man such as General Petraeus. But let's see if the politics will not work. There is a lot of pressure. They know, they know.

I met with the Vice President of Iraq recently and he was talking about: Well, what is your strategic plan? I said: No, sir. Excuse me. With all due respect, it is not about what is our plan. What is your plan? It is your country, your Government. When are you going to ante up and kick in, in a way that brings leadership and order out of all of this?

So the second part of the President's plan is for different rules of engagement. It is for a requirement that some political achievements be reached. That is why I like the McCain-Lieberman-Graham proposal. I like benchmarks. So the question is: It is one thing to lay down benchmarks, but what if they don't meet them? Then, you decide. If we conclude it would not work, that they can't govern themselves, then we have to go with the next plan. Somebody said: Well, this is the last plan. It is never the last plan. There is always another plan.

But the politics, I think, we can be successful. We certainly have to try. I do think that regional solutions—getting particular provinces under control or particular sectors under control, getting generals in for different sectors—makes good sense. But also the economy. Look at America where you have people who are not working. Their life is insecure. They get into trouble. I understand that 40 percent of the young men in Baghdad don't have a job. There has to be a better job done of getting the money—the oil money—fairly distributed and done in an economic way that will create jobs so that these young men and women will not be bored and looking for ways to kill themselves.

Mr. President, we should have found a way to go forward with this debate. I don't quite understand what is going on. Maybe we are all having to learn a little different roles of who is in the majority and who is in the minority and how it works. I know for sure that in some respects it is easier to be in the minority than to in the majority.

The majority leader has to be—he has to be tough. He has to eat a little crow every now and then. He has to be prepared to say to the Republicans: We will find a way to work this out. You have to keep poking at it. Somehow or another, we didn't want to do it this time. I don't know. Maybe everybody is going to leave the field and say we won. This is not about winning or losing. This shouldn't be about the political winner or who won the PR battle.

We are playing with lives. America's finest. I think we should support them, as Senator GREGG proposes. We need to give the plan the President has developed a chance because nobody else has come up with a better plan, other than pull back at the borders. What good is that? Which way are we going to shoot? To me, that is the worst of all worlds.

We can make this work, but the President, General Petraeus, our troops, the American people need our support and our confidence in what we are attempting.

We can go on and have the debate today about these nominees—two good men. We can turn to the omnibus appropriations and find a way to get it done with order.

Nobody wants to play games. Nobody should be trying to say: Oh, if you don't do it this way, or my way, you are trying to shut down the Government. Nobody should be saying we are going to filibuster if we don't get everything we want.

This is the Senate. You have got to give everybody their chances. You have to have some order out of the chaos. This is sort of similar to Baghdad. Sometimes we get divided up into provinces. I appreciate the efforts that have been made, but the important thing is not the process in the Senate. The important thing is what our men and women are going to be trying to do in Iraq. Let's give this plan a chance.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I appreciate the advice and counsel of my friend from Mississippi. He certainly has the experience to offer suggestions, having served in various capacities in leadership. I have been with him. He is a pleasant man to work with, and I like him very much. But I would suggest, this morning, that we not use Super Bowl terminology and Manning and Grossman because I think, if we do that, we would find we would have a lot of objection if suddenly we looked around and Grossman was using a baseball or basketball rather than a football. I think what they have tried to do is change the rules in the middle of the game, and they are playing around with this procedural argument.

I have to acknowledge to my friend from Mississippi that the people over there who are trying to make the President not look bad had a little victory because they have been able to stall and stall. As a result of that, soldiers are being shipped, as we speak, without the Senate having to take a vote on whether that surge should take place. So in that respect, their stalling has probably benefited the President.

As far as process, we have worked through the ethics bill, the minimum wage bill, and even though there were cloture motions filed and cloture not invoked, finally, we were able to get those things passed. But I think debate on the surge would have been very important. We have been denied that. I understand the rules of the Senate.

My friend from Mississippi also says we should be doing something that is real. I tried to talk about something real this morning. More American troops were killed in combat in Iraq over the past 4 months than in any comparable stretch since the war began—334 dead American soldiers,

men and women, with mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters and husbands and wives.

I think over the last few days, though, there has been a deafening silence, and people standing here and saying what the President is doing is the right thing to do, because it hasn't been the right thing to do, what the President has been doing, and he wants to continue more of the same.

I understand we are now at a point where we are going to talk about a couple of important nominations. We are going to try to get our fiscal house in order, which is not in order, because unless we do something by February 15, basically the Government closes. This is very unusual. I have spoken with the distinguished Republican leader, and one thing we are going to work on together this year, once we get out of this situation with the continuing resolution, is to work together to try to pass appropriations bills. That is good for the institution and good for the country. We are going to try to do that. It may require some late nights and long weeks, but we are going to do that. We have 13 appropriations bills, and we are going to work very hard to get them passed.

So I am terribly disappointed we haven't had the opportunity to vote on Senator WARNER's and Senator LEVIN's resolution, and on the McCain resolution, but we have heard enough about that. We are not going to be able to do that, and we will move on to other things.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Briefly, it is hard for me to remember how many times we were told by the other side last year that you come to the Senate to cast tough votes, but I don't think Senator GREGG's vote was a tough vote. Why would it be a tough vote to vote on supporting the troops? To me, that is an easy vote. We all will be forced, because of the process in the Senate, to cast votes we don't like. If you are in the majority, you get more of those than when you are in the minority. I can't imagine being, in effect, afraid of voting on the Gregg amendment to support the troops. That would be one of the easiest votes we ever cast around here.

Let me conclude by saying I am disappointed, as other members of my party in the Senate are disappointed, we are not having the Iraq debate this week. The distinguished minority whip, in his remarks, summed it up quite well. We will continue to talk about this important subject. There is no more important subject in the country right now. I know we will be debating other proposals in the coming months.

Mr. GREGG. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. MCCONNELL. I yield.

Mr. GREGG. I was just wondering if the Republican leader, and I ask this question through the Chair, believes that the Democratic leader is correct in his characterization that we have stopped this in a procedural manner. Is it not true that the Democratic leader controls the procedure as to whether there would be a vote? And is it not true, also, that we agreed to the Democratic leader's request that we offer only one amendment but that we just ask we be able to choose our amendment, and they be able to choose their amendment?

Mr. MCCONNELL. The Senator is entirely correct. We kept paring down the options that we wanted to offer in the course of this debate on the most important issue in the country. And at the end, as the Senator from New Hampshire just suggested, we were down to two: one that the majority leader and most of his party favor—and some of ours—and the amendment of the Senator from New Hampshire in support of the troops.

Apparently, the majority wanted to tell us which amendment we would offer.

Mr. GREGG. I thank the Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I thank the Senator from New Hampshire.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business until 2 p.m. with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, alternating sides when appropriate, with the first 30 minutes under the control of the minority, the second 30 minutes under the control of the majority, during which the Senator from New York, Mr. SCHUMER, and the Senator from Massachusetts, Mr. KENNEDY, be recognized for 15 minutes each.

The Senator from New Hampshire.

IRAQ

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I want to, once again, state the situation. It has been very well stated by the Republican leader. The simple fact is, we, as members of the minority, requested the right to offer an alternative to the proposal of the majority. That is not an unusual event in the Senate. In fact, it is the purpose of the Senate to debate different approaches.

What we asked as an alternative was very simple, straight forward language. Let me read it again. It simply stated:

It is the sense of the Congress that Congress should not take any action that will endanger the United States military forces in the field, including the elimination or reduction of funds for troops in the field, as such action with respect to funding would undermine the safety or harm their effectiveness in pursuing their assigned missions.

All this language says is that whether you agree with the President or whether you disagree with the President, whether you support a commitment of more troops or you don't support a commitment of more troops, once the troops are on the ground in the fight, we are going to give them the financial support, the logistical support, the equipment that they need in order to protect themselves and pursue their mission effectively.

Members do not have to support the President to support this language. It is not designed to state the President is right or the President is wrong. It is simply language designed to say that an American soldier deserves the support of the Congress of the United States. That is an elementary responsibility of this Senate.

The fact that the Democratic leadership will not allow Members to vote on this simple statement of support for American troops is a transgression on the purposes of the Senate, which is to express itself relative to the actions of our soldiers in the field and how we will support them.

It is literally impossible to address the debate on Iraq without addressing the most fundamental issue, which is whether our troops are going to be supported when they are asked to defend us in the field. The idea that we can decouple the support for the troops from the issue of policy is absurd on its face, and the position of the Democratic leadership that we should not address the issue of supporting the troops when we address the issue of whether the tactics being pursued by the military commanders in the field are correct—which doesn't happen to be the responsibility of Congress; that is the responsibility of the commanders—is by nature inconceivable, inconsistent, and simply not defensive.

In fact, it is so absurd on its face that I would simply quote the national commander of the American Legion, Mr. Paul Morin, who says:

We will not separate the war from the warrior.

That is what this is about: whether the Democratic leadership takes the truly indefensible position that in a debate on the issue of Iraq, we do not discuss the support for the person we are asking to go out and defend this Nation.

What this really comes down to is very simple. This resolution would have received broad bipartisan support in this Senate. That is because there are very few Members in this Senate—I would guess virtually none—who don't believe that our obligation as a Senate, as a legislative body which funds the military, that our obligation is to give the soldiers in the field what they need in order to defend themselves and carry out their mission.

So rather than have a vote on our amendment which would have received a large majority in this Senate—much

larger than the proposal put forward as their proposal—they decided not to have a vote at all. Then they claimed that we were responsible for slowing the process.

How inconsistent and indefensible is that statement: I don't have the votes; therefore, I will not allow a vote to happen. But it is your fault that I am not allowing the vote to happen. Really? That only makes sense if you happen to be a true partisan and believe this debate should be a partisan debate.

Somehow my language has been described as ''partisan,'' and the other language has been described as ''bipartisan,'' but the other language has fewer votes than my language. No, this is not true. It is simply a fact that the other side of the aisle does not wish to put their membership in a position of voting for a simple resolution that calls for the support of our troops.

That is an unfortunate statement on where the Democratic Party is today relative to support for the efforts of soldiers in the field. It is hard for me to conceive that there are folks within the community of interest in Washington who feel so strongly about their dislike for the President or his policies that they are unwilling to go on record in support of the soldier who is fighting for us on the streets of Baghdad. But that is the essence of the problem. That is why we are not going to have a vote in the Senate. It is not that the Republican membership has in some way stalled this process. The Republican leader has gone out of his way, he has gone well beyond what many in our party believe maybe we should have done in trying to be accommodating to the insistence of the Democratic leadership that there be no opposition to the one item that they want to bring to the Senate floor.

In my experience in the Senate, when something is brought to the floor of the Senate as controversial as the discussion of how we pursue a war and a war policy, there are going to be a lot of amendments. But the Senate leadership, under the Democratic leader, has said, no, not only will there not be a lot of amendments, there will only be one amendment from our side, and we on the Democratic side will pick the amendment on the Republican side that they can offer, and we will let them offer that but nothing else.

The Republican leader, in an attempt to be responsive, said, OK, if there are only going to be two amendments, we will pick the amendment. And the amendment will simply say that whether you support the President, whether you support his policies, at least you can say you support the troops, the soldiers who are asked to go out and protect America and walk the streets of Baghdad.

But that was a bridge too far for the Democratic leader, a bridge too far for the Democratic membership because they did not want to take that vote even though that would have been a bipartisan vote and would have received significantly more votes than the Democratic proposal.

I don't think there should be any confusion about why we aren't having a vote. We are not having a vote because more people would vote for my amendment than would vote for their amendment, and they don't want to embarrass their membership by having to have them vote for my amendment even though there is nothing controversial about it, unless you consider supporting troops in the field, giving them what they need to fight and defend themselves, to be controversial.

It is an ironic situation. I thank the Republican leader for having offered me the opportunity to bring this amendment forward and for making it fairly clear that we as a membership are willing to be reasonable; that we only ask for a vote on something that we think is important while they ask for a vote on something they think is important.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MCCASKILL). The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. How much time does the minority have remaining in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Twenty and one-half minutes.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, would you advise me when I have used 6 minutes, and I will defer to my other colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair will advise the Senator.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, the majority leader this morning said within my hearing that there is no support for the surge. I don't know why he would say that because, in fact, not only have Members of this Senate unanimously supported, through the confirmation hearing of GEN David Petreaus, one of the people who certainly will be instrumental in executing that surge, but that is what we have been debating for these last weeks, indeed, months: what the new plan should be in Iraq, to deal with what is, obviously, an unacceptable status quo.

I am tempted to wonder out loud if, rather than talking about issues that really matter—such as the issue that the Senator from New Hampshire has asked for a vote on but been denied, whether we will support our troops and refuse to cut off funding while we send them in harm's way—we are seeing a bunch of spin doctoring going on.

But when the majority leader says there is no support for the surge, I would simply disagree because, in fact, at least one of the amendments that has been offered that we have been denied an opportunity to vote on, as the majority leader has done what he is entitled to do, which is to move on to other subjects and to set the Senate agenda, one of those amendments would, in fact, support General Petreaus and the plan he has taken upon himself to execute in Iraq that we are sending, over a period of time, additional reinforcements to secure Baghdad.

So there is substantial support for this plan. The problem is, I am tempted to believe there are some who have simply given up, who don't believe there is any chance of success in Iraq. The problem is, those who have expressed such defeatism, who in this contest of wills say we simply lost ours, have not talked one bit about the consequences of giving up, the huge humanitarian crisis that would occur, the ethnic cleansing that would occur, the fact that another failed state in the Middle East, as in Afghanistan before it, could serve as a launching pad for recruiting and training and exporting of terrorist attacks.

Standing here and suggesting that defeat is something we will accept is, to my view, not a responsible position to take.

So I disagree with those who simply say we have no chance to turn things around. There are those who say ad nauseam that there is ''no military solution in Iraq.'' I would commend to them an article that was written by Victor Davis Hanson that is entitled ''Give Petraeus a Chance.'' Mr. Hanson says:

> . . . in fact, only a military blow to the insurgency will allow the necessary window for the government to gain time, trust, and confidence to press ahead with reform and services.

So, as General Petraeus said, we are engaged in a test of wills. How could it possibly be that we have lost our own will to protect America's national security, to prevent a regional conflict that will inevitably, if it occurs, cost us more in treasure and blood? How is it that America could possibly have lost its will?

I think the Senator from New Hampshire made a good point a moment ago when he said the reason why the majority leader has now taken us off of this issue—which, again, is his sole prerogative as majority leader; that is the power a majority leader has—that the reason we have not been given a chance to vote on the Gregg amendment that says we will not cut off funds, we will not fail to support our troops on the mission they have volunteered to undertake, and which we have sent them on—the real reason, as the Washington Post reported, Senator GREGG's amendment was not allowed to be voted on is because his amendment is likely the ''only measure that could attract 60 votes.''

The USA Today said the majority leader opposed allowing a vote on the amendment because it could have resulted in a situation where the Senate would have been on record opposing cuts in funding for the troops but not the President's policy.

I think it is absolutely imperative—whether it is today or tomorrow or next week or next month, or all of the above—we make it very clear we will not ever cut off our support for the men and women who have undertaken this dangerous mission.

When I went out to Walter Reed on Monday to visit some of the injured veterans of the Iraq conflict, I could not help but be struck by the sort of surreality of that. Here are young men and women who have lost limbs, and many, unfortunately, have lost their lives volunteering to protect us and to bring stability to the Middle East and to allow the Iraqis a better life. They have risked it all, and some have paid that ultimate sacrifice. Yet here in the Senate——

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has used 6 minutes.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I would ask for 1 remaining minute by unanimous consent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. And here we are in the Senate this week debating about nonbinding resolutions and avoiding the tough votes on whether we will cut off funds to support this mission. Instead, we engage in the continued surreal environment of this Senate by saying: OK, now we have confirmed General Petraeus, one of the people who is going to execute this plan in Iraq. But now, today, we are going to also vote on Admiral Fallon, the head of Central Command, General Petraeus's commander, who will also be in charge of this mission, and GEN George Casey, who has been in charge of coalition forces. Do you know what I predict? We will confirm, as we did General Petraeus, Admiral Fallon and General Casey, and yet there are some who stand up here in the Senate and elsewhere and have the temerity to say: We support you, but we do not support the mission we have asked you to execute.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I ask that the Chair inform me when I have used 6 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will be notified.

Mr. VITTER. Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, clearly, without doubt, without question, the war in Iraq is the leading concern of the American people, as well it should be. It is a very difficult situation, and a situation that will define our future and our security for years to come. Because it is the dominant, the leading concern of the American people, without any close second, I think it is imperative we have a debate and votes on this crucial question.

I would urge the majority leader to come back to the floor and engage in this debate and move forward with this discussion and accept the very reasonable compromise of the minority leader in narrowing down all of the universe of ideas and resolutions to simply two.

I will freely admit that is not my first preference in terms of this debate. I had always heard before coming here 2 years ago that the Senate was about open debate, unlimited debate, the ability to get your ideas and your amendments and your resolutions to the floor with very few limits. So I thought, particularly in the context of this very serious situation in Iraq, we needed an open debate, we needed more ideas, not fewer, we needed every significant vote that should be taken.

So that was my preference: unlimited debate. But the majority leader rejected that, only would allow very limited votes, very limited debate. At the end of the day—again, it was not my first choice, but at the end of the day, the minority leader said: OK, you want two votes—only two votes—OK. Let's focus on two proposals. Let's have just two votes. But our choice for our one proposal will be the Gregg amendment because we feel so strongly about supporting our troops in the field. And then the majority leader said no, I can't accept that. I need to choose your proposal. I need to choose what you want to put up for a vote.

That is not the tradition of the Senate. And, more importantly, that is not treating this very serious issue, the dominant concern among all Americans, bar none, properly. We need to debate this issue now. We need to vote on this issue now. Again, I urge the majority leader to come back to the floor and engage in this debate this week—now—because the country is concerned now about Iraq. The country has questions, understandably, now about the President's plan. And our troops in the field have questions and uncertainty now about whether we will be standing shoulder to shoulder with them no matter what policy is adopted.

Again, I think the minority leader's proposal yesterday bent over backwards—compromise and compromise and compromise—to reach an ability to have this debate we must have on the floor of the Senate. We wanted far more than two proposals debated. We wanted far more than two votes. But we accepted the majority leader's number. We accepted the majority leader's parameters of just two proposals, just two votes. But surely the minority gets to choose one of those two proposals to discuss, particularly given that this Gregg proposal has broad bipartisan support.

So let's have this Iraq debate that we must have. Let's have key votes that we must have. And let's do it now. I urge the majority leader, again, not to give up, not to reject this very reasonable compromise, bending over backwards by the minority leader to agree to his number of two. Let's take that up. Let's have this debate. Let's have crucial votes. The American people deserve that, given the very tough situation in Iraq. And our men and women in uniform sure as heck deserve that. They sure as heck deserve to hear from us: OK, we know some of you are for the President's surge plan; we know some of you are against it. But what about supporting whatever troops are put in the field? They sure as heck deserve an answer to that question. And they certainly deserve that reassurance.

Let's have that fair debate, and let's have it now.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Madam President, it is interesting that we would be preparing today to have a debate that will not be taking place, and it will not be taking place because it is the prerogative of the leadership to set the agenda of what we do discuss and debate.

I agree with my colleagues who have requested an opportunity to have a full airing of the views, to have a full debate, to have an opportunity to express our support for the men and women in the field, in addition to whatever else we might want to debate on this topic of the most important issue facing our country today.

But getting beyond the procedural and the tit for tat that so often signifies what Washington is about, what fundamentally is this debate about? It is about the global war on terror. It is about the events that unfolded in our country on the morning of September 11, 2001, and the aftermath of all of that, the things that have occurred as our Nation has responded to the attacks that were brought upon our shores, as we have sought to carry out this difficult mission, but one in which we must not waiver, which is this war on terror.

As a result of this war on terror, our troops are in Iraq today, where they have removed a dictator from power and where they have confronted the enemy, which regardless of how someone might have felt about the original decision to go into Iraq, today we are there and we are engaging an enemy that is the very enemy that attacked us here on 9/11.

It is known that in Al Anbar Province it is fundamentally an al-Qaida operation. So to send additional reinforcements to Al Anbar Province to defeat al-Qaida in Iraq is in the best interests of this Nation. It is in our national interest to pacify, to bring some peace to Baghdad, which is the capital city of Iraq, which is essential to the peace and security of that nation, of that budding democracy that is attempting to put itself on its feet, and to bring some stability to that capital city by additional reinforcements of American troops in a new plan I think is reasonable.

We cannot get so focused on whether some in this body cannot work with this President, do not want to support any of his policies. But let's look at the people who are going to carry out this policy, the generals who are going to be in the field.

In the past few days, as has been stated, we have approved by a near—well, I guess it was unanimous; it was 81 to 0, I believe—the sending of General Petraeus as our new commander of

allied forces in Iraq. I recall his testimony in the Armed Services Committee where he clearly said he believed in this plan and thought it had a reasonable chance of success. Why would we not give a reasonable chance of success a chance to succeed? Why would we not stand behind our men and women who are willing to go into harm's way to carry out this plan and see if they have an opportunity to succeed?

The goal of this new plan is threefold. First, we have to have some stability in Baghdad. We have to continue to defeat al-Qaida in Al Anbar Province. But then beyond that there are other elements to the plan. There obviously needs to be a political reconciliation. There needs to be a political settlement. But that will never take place if there is not some modicum of stability, if we do not bring down the sectarian violence and other violence in Iraq to a manageable level.

We then have an opportunity for the political settlement to take place between the Shias and Sunnis, and the Kurds in the north, so they can all come together and begin to bind as a new nation, as a new country, as a new government—a government, by the way, that has only been in place about 9 months.

In addition to that, we then have a third angle to this, which I think is so vitally important, which is the economic reconstruction, the economic development, the opportunity for there to be jobs, for there to be opportunities for folks to find a way to make a better life for themselves and their children, so they can reach their aspirations, and do it in an atmosphere of freedom, do it in an atmosphere of democracy and respect for one another. That is the goal.

What would happen if we do not give this plan a chance, if we do not see if it has an opportunity to carry out and have an opportunity for success? What is the alternative? Well, we would then have failed in this test of wills. Our enemies have clearly stated they believe if they kill enough Americans, if they cause enough grief to our mothers, if they cause enough harm to our troops, we will not stand up, we will move on, we will find an easier way, and we will not resist those who would bring the destruction of our country upon us.

Their stated aims are very clear. They want us out of the Middle East. They want to be able to get America out of the Middle East. They do not want us there because they know we are what stands between them and the opportunity of creating a radical Islamic new caliphate in that region of the world, and the danger that would all bring about.

The new intelligence estimate on Iraq we have seen gives a window into what would happen if we had a precipitous withdrawal over the next 12 to 18 months. It would not be a pretty picture. Sectarian violence would ensue. Unquestionably, we would have a Shia-dominated Middle East. Already they are, through their proxies, in Lebanon, in Syria. They have a strong alliance with them. They are trying to take over the Palestinian movement.

Over the next 12 to 18 months, the assessments would be very dire of what would take place if we were to be out of the region: an escalation of violence, a diminished chance for stability, no chance for positive change.

The estimates suggest that a key aim in Iraq is to stabilize the situation from the standpoint of violence, enough to let the political changes that have to happen take place. I am going to quote from the estimate. It says from the public version:

> If strengthened, Iraqi security forces more loyal to the government, supported by coalition forces, are able to reduce levels of violence and establish more effective security for Iraq's population, and Iraqi leaders can have an opportunity to begin the process of political compromise necessary for longer-term stability, political progress, and economic recovery.

Isn't that a better way? Isn't that what we all want, what the Senate should be on record as supporting—this opportunity for our troops to be successful, and not only to be in harm's way fighting for our country, but also to know that the Senate stands behind them, will not cut off their funds, will stand with them as they go into battle, and will stand with them as they do the hard work of freedom—work done by many other generations of America any time they have been called upon to stand for freedom, stand for the rule of law, and to give this budding new democracy an opportunity to take hold and take root.

Madam President, I am disappointed that today we will not have an opportunity to have a fuller debate, that I won't have the opportunity to be on record with a vote reflecting where I stand, which all of us should be willing to do—take a stand, take a position supporting our troops.

I personally would also be in support of this plan which I believe gives us the best opportunity for success, which is the only plan out there. Those who would not give this plan a chance owe the American people an alterative but one that would have a reasonable chance for success. Success is what we are after. A victory in this part of the world would send a strong message to our enemies. So I am disappointed we will not vote today.

I hope the majority leader will reconsider and come back to have an earnest debate and take the votes that are necessary to be taken.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, we have heard a debate over the last hour about where we stand on the resolutions and debating the escalation of the war in Iraq. Here is where we are at the end of the day. We can dot all the i's, cross all the t's, and do all of the legalistic parsing that we want. The minority is blocking a vote on the issue that the American people wish to hear us on: Do you support or oppose the escalation? It is that simple.

The minority's action ratifies the President's escalation. And any Senator who voted to prevent the Warner resolution from coming to the floor is saying to his or her constituents: I support that escalation.

We know what is going on. The minority is torn between loyalty to their President and following the will of their voters. I have not seen a single State where, at least from the polling data, the public supports the escalation. There should be a simple vote, and not as an end to this debate but as a beginning to this debate. The minority is tying itself in a pretzel so that there will not be a vote.

Now, the Gregg resolution is missing two words. Look at it. Read it. It doesn't have the word ''surge,'' and it doesn't have the word ''escalation.'' It is ambiguously worded so that it tries to tie support for the troops with the escalation, but without saying so. It is a resolution that is intended to befuddle, perplex, obfuscate, and to hide.

The good news is that the American people don't follow the details of all of this debate. They don't have the time. They are busy with their lives, their families, their jobs, the joys and sorrows of life. But they follow the big picture. The big picture is simple: Senator REID has labored mightily to have a clear, unobstructed, unobliterated vote on whether you support or oppose the escalation.

The minority leader, backed by all but two of his membership, has said we do not want to vote; we want to let the President go forward with the escalation, without taking responsibility for it. The public is seeing that. The public understands.

My good friend from Mississippi was talking in the hallway. He said the job of the Senate is to take the tough votes. You bet it is. It is not whether we are saying we support the troops—which everybody agrees that we do—in an ambiguously designed amendment to support escalation and get their way, and those against it get their way. The bottom line is simple: the tough vote is ''yes'' or ''no'' on the escalation.

Again, I salute our majority leader. He has done everything to try to bring that vote to the floor. The minority leader has done everything to obstruct that vote. The good news is that we will have plenty of further opportunity to get that vote and, make no mistake about it, this majority, in the belief that the escalation is wrong, in the belief that there is no strategy in Iraq

other than to police a civil war, which no one bargained for, will be resolute and we will find ample opportunities to not only get a sense-of-the-Senate vote on whether you support or oppose the escalation, but to move further and ratchet up the pressure on the President so that he changes his strategy.

The number of people in America who believe that our strategy in Iraq is succeeding gets smaller every day. I think it is below 1 in 4 right now, which means that close to a majority of Republicans don't agree with the strategy. Obviously, if the President came here 3 years ago and said we are going to have our troops on Haifa Street patrolling a civil war between the Sunnis and Shiites—how many people would have voted for that? How many Americans would have supported it? But that is exactly what we are doing. The vast majority of the troops that the President is asking for will continue to do just that and only that.

So this debate is coming only to a temporary close. One thing stands out clearly: the Republican minority is allowing the President to go forward with the escalation. It is supporting the escalation but doesn't want to vote to say so. My colleagues, that will not wash. The American people are too smart. They are too concerned. They are too worried about the brave men and women over there risking their lives as Sunnis shoot at Shiites and Shiites shoot at Sunnis. To hold the minority's feet to the fire, we will be resolute in making sure that happens.

The Gregg resolution is obfuscatory. It is designed to give people cover who don't want to say yes or no. But make no mistake about it, the people want a yes or a no. They want us to act on that yes or no as we come forward with the supplementary budget request next month. And this majority, limited as it may be, will endeavor to do just that.

Mr. KENNEDY. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. SCHUMER. I am happy to yield to my colleague from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. First of all, I commend the Senator from New York for an excellent presentation. As I understand it from his comments, the principal question before the country now is the whole issue of a surge and the certain timeliness of it. We know that the President was able to extend, for example, marines in place over there and get a certain number of troops over there, but we know this is something that is going to happen in the future. A chunk of the troops are going over in February, another group in March, and another group in April.

In the Armed Services Committee yesterday, we learned it is not just the 20,000 the President talked about, but that number is going to be exceeded. We heard from General Pace.

As I understand what the good Senator has said, we have had four surges previously over there. This concept, this idea, has been utilized previously and none were successful. Secondly, as I understand what the Senator has said, the leading generals, General Abizaid and General Casey, previously suggested that this concept did not make sense; it only inflamed the insurgency. Is that the Senator's understanding?

Mr. SCHUMER. Yes, indeed.

Mr. KENNEDY. The third part of the Senator's speech, which I hope our colleagues will listen to, is the reference to the independent study by Baker and Hamilton, where a bipartisan recommendation said that such an activity would not make sense.

So does it make sense when we have that kind of lineup, so to speak, where we have the military, the background of surges, the independent study made by Republicans and Democrats alike—we are faced now with a surge, so we have to take action and express ourselves. Doesn't it make sense for this body to express itself on that particular policy issue? Isn't that the responsible thing to do?

Mr. SCHUMER. Indeed. I thank my colleague for asking the question. Again, the minority says it is our job to take some tough votes. Here, here. We want to take what is a tough vote for some: Are you for the surge? Are you for the escalation or are you against it? They are doing everything they can to avoid it. But as my good friend from Massachusetts has so aptly pointed out, the bottom line is that now is the time to go on record—now, before most of the troops are there; now, when we can ratchet up pressure on the President to change his policy, as the independent study group said, and so many generals have said. I might add, from the press reports, the Prime Minister of Iraq doesn't want them. We are almost in Alice in Wonderland here.

I will say one other thing. The good news is simple: the American people get it. They know that the war in Iraq doesn't have a strategy. They know it is headed toward a dead end. They know that policing a civil war makes no sense, and they know what we are trying to do, which is forcing a ''yes'' or ''no'' vote—get a ''yes'' or ''no'' vote and move forward to change that strategy. No amount of wordsmithing on the other side is going to change that fact.

Today, the Republican minority said: We are for the surge, and we will let the President go forward and do it.

I yield to my colleague for another question.

Mr. KENNEDY. Just a final point. Madam President, the Senator has stated it well. Basically, the recommendations of those generals I mentioned—and General Abizaid said he had inquired of all the combat commanders—all of the combat commanders—whether there should be an enhanced presence in Baghdad, and he testified before the Armed Services Committee that we should not.

But isn't the point the Senator is making is to underline what all of the generals have said and Maliki has said; that is, it is a political resolution, it is a political decision? What we are seeing now is resorting to a military solution when the independent study commission, the generals on the ground, and the political leaders in that country have said what is necessary now is a political resolution, a political decision, and we find an administration that has effectively discarded that as an option and is going to the military option.

As I understand, the Senator believes we ought to have a political resolution, political courage by the parties in power there; that we here and the U.S. troops can't care more about the freedom of the Iraqis than the Iraqi people and they have to stand up, step up, and be willing to make their judgments.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, the Senator is exactly right. And I will add one other point to his very prescient comments. Let us say we have this surge and then troops leave after a certain amount of time—some say the end of the summer, some say it will go on 3, 4, 5 years. What is going to happen then if we don't have a political solution the good Senator asks about? The Sunni and Shia will resume fighting, and we will have accomplished nothing. We will have seen the lives of some of our brave men and women be taken from them, American soldiers. We will have created more havoc in Iraq. And we will have, again, delayed the very political solution my friend from Massachusetts talks about, which is essential.

If there had been a change in Government, if there had been a change in strategy, perhaps—I can't say because I don't know what it would be, given this administration hasn't changed anything—maybe the American people, maybe some on this side of the aisle would say: Give it a chance. But to send more of our brave troops over there when there is no change in strategy, when it is just increasing policing of a civil war, and when, at the end of this so-called surge, this escalation, nothing will have changed, the American people have every right to ask: To what end?

That is what we are asking. That is why we want a simple vote. And that is why today is going to go down in history as a day when this Republican minority in this House said to the President: We are supporting your surge. We don't want to vote on it, but we are allowing it to happen. We are encouraging it to happen. And the very rubberstamp nature, when the minority was in the majority, that brought them to such trouble in November of 2006 is simply continuing.

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, will the Senator yield for a final point?

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield to my colleague from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I had the opportunity to read the national intelligence report on Monday. There has been both an intelligence report and a declassified report. Even in

the declassified report, would the Senator say, in his evaluation of the best of the intelligence community that has been reviewing this situation that every aspect of that intelligence report is basically in support of the conclusions the Senator has outlined here? This is not something just the Senators from New York or Massachusetts are making up. This is a conclusion which has been made by the intelligence agencies about what the nature of the battle is in Baghdad today.

Mr. SCHUMER. I thank the Senator. Once again, he is right on the money. He is right on the money.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has consumed his 15 minutes under the order.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be given 1 more minute to finish my point, and then I will yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. The Senator is right on the money, and it is, again, a pattern. The experts—intelligence, military, diplomatic—tell the administration what they are doing is wrong, tell the administration that all the signs on the ground point to a policy that is failing, and they keep their head in the sand and just go forward. It is a tragedy. It is a tragedy when truth is not exalted and when there is a desire to stifle debate, as has happened in the administration and is happening on the floor of the Senate today.

We all love this country, everyone in this Chamber, regardless of politics, but at least for me—and I dearly love America—every day we delay hurts us a little more and a little more and a little more. We dig ourselves deeper in a hole from which it will be harder and harder to extricate ourselves.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. KLOBUCHAR). The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, how much time do I have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 14 minutes.

Mr. KENNEDY. I thank the Chair.

Madam President, to pick up where the good Senator from New York stopped, we had yesterday at Saint Francis Xavier in Hyannis, MA—I was unable to attend because I was here in the Senate—the funeral of a young serviceman who was lost. At the end of last week, a young serviceman named Callahan from Woburn, MA—his fourth time in Iraq, a father of four—was lost.

Woburn, MA, is a very interesting blue-collar community. They had the highest percentage of casualties in the Vietnam war of any community in my State. They had high school class after high school class that joined the Marines and suffered devastating casualties in Vietnam. It is also a storybook community on civic action—water contamination in that community resulted in the deaths of a number of children there. But the community is made up of extraordinary men and women and families. They are weathering through this extreme, extraordinary tragedy.

Sixty-four brave soldiers from Massachusetts have been lost, killed, and this is the overriding, overarching issue in question: What can we do after 4 years where our service men and women have done everything we have asked them to do? They have served in Iraq longer than it took to end World War II, to sweep through Africa, to cross Western Europe, cross through the Pacific, and they are still out there. Many of us believe, as we mentioned a few moments ago, that the solution lies not in the increasing surge but in a political resolution and determination and decisions made by the Iraqis for their own future. It is, after all, their country.

Let me talk for a few minutes about the other costs of this war, the $200 billion which is in the President's budget for the war in Iraq and what the implications of that will be, so that Americans can understand more completely the costs.

It comes from children's health, as the President's budget underfunds the CHIP program by $8 billion. That program has been extremely successful in providing health care to low-income children.

Will the Chair let me know when I have 2 minutes remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will be so notified.

Mr. KENNEDY. Yet there are still more than 8 million children in America with no health coverage, and there is a health care crisis for our Nation's children. But what does the President propose to do about it? His budget will make the crisis even worse by cutting 400,000 children from the Children's Health Insurance Program.

It comes from our seniors and our disabled citizens. The President's budget cuts $66 billion from Medicare, which is a lifeline to millions of retirees and disabled Americans. If the President has his way, more than 700,000 people in Massachusetts who rely on Medicare could see the quality of their care go down.

It comes from those battling mental illnesses. Each year, 25 percent of Americans suffer from some sort of mental illness. We owe it to them and their families to do all we can to ensure they are able to lead full and productive lives. Yet the President's budget cuts mental health assistance by $159 million.

It comes from Hurricane Katrina victims. Despite massive ongoing needs on the gulf coast, the President's budget offers no additional assistance to help people rebuild their lives.

It comes from the Nation's defense against epidemics, such as the flu, as the President proposes to slash funding for the Centers for Disease Control by $165 million.

It comes from Medicaid, our health care lifeline for the poor, which the President intends to cut by $50 billion over the next 10 years. In Massachusetts, 880,000 citizens depend on Medicaid, and this budget places them at risk.

It comes from our children's education. The President's budget underfunds the No Child Left Behind reforms by almost $15 billion. In my State of Massachusetts, these cuts would leave behind more than 51,000 children. Nationwide, we have 3.5 million children who are not participating in the program whatsoever. Yet they will have a requirement to meet sufficiency in the year 2012.

It comes from our youngest children. By cutting $107 million from the Head Start Program, the President fails to give the youngest children a strong start in life. This is a program which is tried, tested, and true.

It comes from our students with special needs. When we passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, we made a promise to disabled children and their families that they were to receive the education they deserve. President Bush's budget breaks that promise by cutting funding to IDEA by $290 million. We made the commitment we were going to provide 40 percent of all the funding. We are now at about 18 percent of funding, and we are reducing that. It is shifting the burden onto the families and the local communities.

It comes from school safety. Our children ought to be able to go to school without fearing violence, but this budget cuts funding for Safe and Drug-Free Schools. With all the challenges of schools and violence in schools, it cuts back the funding for Safe and Drug-Free Schools.

It comes at the expense of our teachers. Over the next decade, this Nation will need to hire 2 million more teachers, but this budget cuts funding for teacher quality grants.

It comes at the expense of students. At a time when college costs are skyrocketing, the President's budget completely eliminates the Perkins Loan Program, which over 500,000 students depend on to help them afford a college education. We know that a college degree is a ticket to a bright and better future, but this budget closes the college door instead of opening it wider. There are already 400,000 young people who are qualified to get into our fine community colleges, public colleges, and private colleges and don't do so because of a lack of funding.

It comes from our workers who are looking for good jobs to support their families because the President's budget slashes $1 billion from programs that train Americans for jobs. Madam President, listen to this: In Massachusetts alone, there are 25,000 people waiting to be enrolled in job training programs.

In Boston, there are 25 applicants for each job training slot. There are 78,000 jobs that are out there today that are looking for trained people, 25 people for every training slot, 275,000 people who are unemployed. What is wrong with

this picture? We are cutting back on the training opportunities for those individuals to be able to pay more in taxes and provide more hopeful futures for their children.

This budget can find $200 billion more for the war in Iraq but not a dime for people at home trying to better their lives. They come from families who need help putting food on the table. The President wants to cut the Food Stamp Program by $600 million, leaving nearly 300,000 families wondering where they are going to find the next meal for themselves and their children.

I have had the chance to visit our absolutely spectacular food bank in Boston, and they talk about the increased numbers that they already have. This is going to even put more pressure on those food banks and more pressure on those families. It comes from the poor struggling against the bitter cold, as the budget cuts 17 percent of the funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, which helps low-income families afford to heat their homes.

In my State, if you use home heating oil you need to fill your tank generally three times a winter—three times a winter. Families are down now where they are only able to fill—the needy who qualify for this—less than half a tank for the whole winter. We know what is happening. People make the choices between the prescription drugs they need, the food they need, and the heat they need for their homes. We are cutting that program by 17 percent.

Perhaps most tragically of all, the money for the war in Iraq comes from our veterans themselves. Nearly half the troops returning from Iraq will require health care services to cope with the physical or mental toll of the war. Yet the President's budget underfunds veterans' health. It provides only half the increase in funding required for the VA to keep pace with the needs of our veterans.

In Massachusetts alone, there are 453,000 veterans who have served our country when they were called to duty, and we have a moral obligation to do all we can for them.

This is the cost of this war. This is all for a war that never should have happened, for a war that should be brought to an end. Yet this administration is allowing it to go on and on, with mistake after mistake after mistake. This terrible war is having an effect not only on our troops, who are paying the highest price, but on our children, our elderly, our schools, our workers, and the poor here at home.

While the President forges ahead with a surge in Iraq, the American people need a surge here at home. Americans see the cost of health care and the cost of college going up. What about a surge in our health and education policies to meet those needs? Americans here at home worry about their economic security, about their jobs and stagnant wages, how they can support themselves on their wages. How about a surge here at home to help meet their needs?

Last week, we met with our Nation's mayors. They described the problem of school dropouts, how these young people are turning to crime in our communities, the proliferation of murders and youth homicides and suicides. Where is the surge to address that problem? No wonder the American people are growing angrier and angrier as the war wages on. They expect Congress to be an effective restraint on the President and his abuse of the War Powers Act.

Opposition to the escalation is clear already. How much clearer does it have to be before Republicans in Congress and the President finally respond to the voice of the American people? When will this war be brought to an end? An escalation now would be an immense mistake, compounding the original misguided decision to invade Iraq. Public support for the war does not exist. There is no support for this escalation. We have surged our forces four times in the past, and each time the situation hasn't changed.

The President cannot continue to unilaterally impose his failing policy on Americans who have already rejected it. Congress has the responsibility to stop the President from sending more of our sons and daughters to die in this civil war. The legislation on which the Democrats seek a vote is our first effort to meet that responsibility. It is our chance to go on record in opposition to the surge. It is a clarion call for change.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. KENNEDY. I thank the Chair.

Last week, the new National Intelligence Estimate confirmed the nightmare scenario unfolding for our troops in Iraq. The country is sliding deeper into an abyss of civil war, with our brave men and women caught in the middle of it. The prospects for halting the escalating sectarian violence is bleak, with greater chaos and anarchy looming and many additional U.S. casualties inevitable.

It is abundantly clear that what we need is not a troop surge but a diplomatic surge, working with other countries in the region. Sending more troops into the Iraq civil war is not the solution to Iraq's political problems. Not only does President Bush fail to see that reality, but he is also going out of his way to deny and defy it.

Congress needs to express its opposition to this strategy. If the President refuses to change course, we must act to change it ourselves to protect our troops and end this misguided war. The war today is not the war Congress authorized 4 years ago. It is now a civil war. The war today is not about Saddam's weapons of mass destruction or alleged relationship with al-Qaeda, it is Iraqi against Iraqi. Iraq is at war with itself, and American soldiers are caught in the middle.

Madam President, it is time for the Members of this body to stand up and take a position on the issue of the surge.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I rise for a few moments to address the subjects that have been discussed for the last 30 minutes. First of all, I rise in particular to lend my support to Senator MCCONNELL who has seen to it that the Senate is able to fully express itself on the issues before us in Iraq. No one should be confused about this debate. There are many opinions here, and every one of them deserves the right to be expressed.

Secondly, I rise in support of the President's plan, and I am going to explain why in just a second. First, however, the Senator from New York made a statement a minute ago that I want to open my remarks with.

The Senator from New York said not many people are paying attention to what we debate on the floor of the Senate, that they are too busy working in their daily lives. That may very well be right, but I want to tell you who is listening to every word. First, it is the men and women in our Armed Forces, their families, and their loved ones. All you have to do is go to Iraq, where I have been many times, go to any mess hall or almost any command post, and CNN and Fox are streaming constantly. Our men and women watch what we say, so what we say on this floor is important. The resolutions we send, binding or not, should not send mixed signals.

There is another audience that listens to what we say, and they are our enemies. They listen as well. Those networks are their intelligence agencies. The messages we send should not be a message which relays a lack of confidence to our troops or to our Commander in Chief.

I am on the Foreign Relations Committee. I have spent 20 of the last 28 hours of committee meetings listening to experts from a variety of resources, and two things became quite clear. There were varying opinions on whether a surge would work. Some thought it would conclusively; many thought it would not. Most gave it varying degrees of potential success. Without exception, however, everyone I heard testify, when asked the question: What would be the ramifications of withdrawal or redeployment, everyone, in one degree or another, said there would be tens of thousands of lives lost, and possibly millions, and the sectarian violence that we are trying to quell now could spread through the region.

The way I see it, we have two choices right now at this stage of the game. Choice one is an opportunity for success. Choice two is a recipe for disaster. I choose the opportunity for success. I think the message we ought to send to our troops is that we support them, we wish them Godspeed, and we pray for their success.

A second message we need to send, which this debate has very helpfully done, is a message to al-Malaki and the assembly in Iraq and the people of Iraq that we came to their country with three objectives, two of which we have secured. One objective was to seek out the weapons of mass destruction the entire world believed were there. Second was to allow a constitution to be written and a free election to be held. Both of those things have been accomplished.

The last most elusive goal that we had was to secure the nation and train the Iraqi military so it could carry on that security and let that fledgling democracy go forward. That third goal, which has been elusive, has gotten closer. The President's strategy to send additional troops to Anbar and to Baghdad requires the absolute cooperation of the Iraqis and the commitment of their military to assist side by side. If they blink and look the other way, they will have failed themselves. If we blink and we look the other way, we will have failed not only them but we will have failed the people of our country.

Make no mistake about it, the war in Iraq that we are now in is not the war we entered, but it is the war we are in, and those are the words of our President. Regardless of where mistakes may have been made, those of us, and I am one of those, who voted to support this when we went into Iraq did not vote for failure. I hope and I pray that our soldiers will be successful, that al-Malaki and the Iraqi military will come through and perform, and I am going to do everything I can to give them that support because I choose an opportunity for success over a recipe for failure.

With regard to the mistakes that have been made, I want to be crystal clear because there are some awfully selective memories on the floor of the Senate. I remember what I believed when I voted to go into Iraq. I remember what the National Intelligence Estimate said. And I remember the horror of 9/11 and the fear of weapons of mass destruction. We voted to do what every other member of the United Nations voted on in Resolution 1441, and that was to seek out what the world thought was there. While we didn't find the smoking gun, we found a lot of the components and a lot of the evidence. We found the 400,000 bodies in mass graves and the tyranny of a horrible dictator in Saddam Hussein. We accomplished our goal of deposing him and allowing the Iraqis to determine a free democratic society.

In the critical days of this battle, it is time for us to stand forward and stand strong and give this opportunity for success that the President has proposed a chance to succeed, rather than subscribe to a recipe of failure. These are trying times, and I respect the opinions of every Member of this body expressed on this floor, but remember who our audiences are and how important it is that the message that we send not be mixed, not be one of a political message but be a message of commitment and resolve.

I will support the President not out of partisanship, not out of blind loyalty, but I will support the President because the evidence submitted in all of the hearings in the Foreign Relations Committee told me we have two choices: We can choose an opportunity to succeed or we can subscribe to a recipe for failure. I choose success, and I pray God's blessings on our men and women in the Armed Forces of the United States.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland is recognized.

Mr. CARDIN. Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, as a new Member of this body, I must tell you that I am frustrated and disappointed. I am disappointed that the Republicans are blocking a vote on whether we support or oppose the President's plan to add additional troops to Iraq. I can tell you that is the issue of the day. That is what my constituents are asking of us, and I think they have a right to expect that the Members of this body are willing to go on record either for or against the President's plan to add additional troops to Iraq.

I have listened to my colleagues. I have listened to my colleagues in committee, and I have listened to my colleagues on this floor, and I think the majority of us want to go on record opposing the surge. Both Democrats and Republicans oppose it. I think there is a bipartisan group that can provide the consensus in this body to go on record against the surge.

Several months ago, the President said we were going to have a new plan in Iraq. Shortly after that, the Iraq Study Group came out with its report. To me, this has been the best analysis of the situation that we have before us. The study group is composed of distinguished members, and it was a creation of the Congress. Secretary Baker, who cochaired the group, served in three administrations and has broad experience in government. Mr. Hamilton, who served in the other body on the Foreign Relations Committee, the Committee on International Relations it is called over there, has served with great distinction both as chairman and ranking member. The other members of the committee—they said we cannot win in Iraq through our military efforts. That is not going to bring success in Iraq. The Iraqis must step forward and defend their own country and we must move forward with new diplomatic efforts. We need ''a new diplomatic offensive'' is what they called it, and they said: We need to start that before December 31, 2006. The ability of the United States to influence events within Iraq is diminishing. We still have not seen that new offensive diplomatic effort.

GEN George Casey said, ''It has always been my view that heavy and sustained American military presence was not going to solve the problems in Iraq over the long term.''

We got the President's plan and the President's plan was more of the same, stay the course but with more U.S. military presence. We had 3 weeks of hearings before the Foreign Relations Committee. Military expert after military expert, foreign policy expert after foreign policy expert, told us that there is a deterioration in Iraq and our policies are not working and we need to move in a new direction. We need to come to grips with the fact that the Iraqis must stand up and defend their own country and we must engage the international community much more aggressively.

I congratulate Senator WARNER and Senator LEVIN for coming forward with a compromise resolution that allows us to go on record opposed to the increased American military presence in Iraq. I do not agree with everything that is in that resolution, but I do think it clearly puts the Senate on record against the increased surge of American troops in Iraq, and that is our responsibility. That is what we should be doing. We should not hide behind procedural roadblocks to avoid voting on that issue. That is the most important issue facing this Nation today, and we should be willing to vote on that issue. It is not about the President of the United States. It is about this body carrying out its responsibility. That is what each of us has a responsibility to do.

Why am I so much against the increase in the U.S. military presence in Iraq? Let me first start with the numbers. The President said the surge would involve 21,500 additional American troops in Iraq. That is not the case. Michael Gilmore, the Assistant Director for National Security at the Congressional Budget Office, testified yesterday before our Budget Committee, and he said it is not going to be 21,500, it is going to be closer to 48,000 additional American troops because the 21,500 are the frontline combat troops. You need the support staff in order to support the 21,500.

The budget the President submitted to us said that is going to cost about $5.6 billion, but CBO now says it is going to be closer to $20 to $27 billion of additional cost, just with the surge, in addition to what we are already spending. The President claims his budget is to balance in 5 years, but he has no cost for the Iraq war beyond 2008.

The numbers speak for themselves. The President is asking us to go along with stay the course but at a higher cost, both in American military presence and the costs to American taxpayers in this country.

The situation in Iraq is deteriorating. Every person who has come before us who is an expert in this area has acknowledged that. There is a civil war in Iraq, and Americans have paid a very heavy price for our commitment

in Iraq—over 3,000 dead and many more with life-changing injuries. There have been hundreds of billions of dollars spent. That represents missed opportunities in America—money we need to strengthen our military and national defense. We have used our National Guard and reservists. We should be supporting them, improving the quality of life for our soldiers and for our veterans. Our soldiers have served with great distinction and valor. We owe it to them to get it right. We owe it to them to do everything we can for a successful outcome in Iraq. That is why it is our responsibility, on behalf of our soldiers, to take up this issue.

We have lost our focus in the war against terror, we have weakened U.S. influence internationally, and, yes, we have lost other opportunities beyond defense because those hundreds of billions of dollars we spent could have been spent to balance our budget, could have been spent to increase our commitment to national priorities such as education and health care and the environment. But we have lost those issues.

The first order of business for us should be to go on record against increasing the American military presence in Iraq. That should be our first order of business. But then we need to do more. I opposed the war from the beginning. I voted against it in the other body. I have been a critic of the President in the management of the war, in his failure to properly engage the international community both before and after going into Iraq, and the decision made by someone in the White House to take out the Iraqi security forces when we went in, that was a mistake. I have been pretty consistent against the President, but we need to do more than pass this resolution. I think we should take up this resolution first. This is the first order of business. But then we need to do more.

The Iraqis have a responsibility to take care of their own security needs in the midst of a civil war. We need to engage the international community with a diplomatic and political initiative so the Government of Iraq has the confidence of the ethnic communities. This is sectarian violence. We need to change the way the Iraqis are doing business and help them through diplomatic efforts. We need to engage the international community. We need more assistance in training Iraqi security forces. You can't do it all by Americans; we need the international community. We need the international community to help us with the humanitarian crisis that is in Iraq. The number of refugees, displaced individuals, is in the millions. We need the help of the international community to deal with the humanitarian crisis. You are not going to have peace in Iraq until you deal with that.

We need the help of the international community on the infrastructure improvements, the economy of Iraq. The American taxpayers cannot do it alone, and we have wasted a lot of our taxpayer dollars in Iraq. We need the international community to help us. In short, we need a new direction, a plan that includes bringing some of our combat troops home, to make it clear to the Iraqis we are not going to be there indefinitely, to make it clear to the international community we expect the Iraqis to take care of their own security needs. That is what we need.

But first things first. Let's take a vote on the President's plan. Let's get that done. Let's stop using procedural roadblocks to prevent a vote in this body but to vote for or against the President's plan to bring more troops to Iraq.

Then we should consider additional options to make it clear it is our responsibility to help bring about a new direction for American involvement in Iraq.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho is recognized.

Mr. CRAIG. Madam President, I have been on the floor of the Senate for the last half hour, listening to my colleague in what is, in fact, a very important debate for this country. I say that, even though the wringing of hands would suggest that somehow the debate is being blocked and the will of the Senate has been thwarted. I suggest quite the opposite. It has become a finger-pointing in a procedural way.

I believe the Republican leader came to the floor yesterday and said let's have a couple of votes, several votes; you can vote up or down on the Levin-Warner resolution; you can vote up or down on the Gregg resolution. It was then the leadership on the majority side, the Democratic side, blocked it. I think the American people are wise to the tactics at hand. They are not unaware, and they are frustrated by what is going on in Iraq today. Clearly, we are focused. Whether it is the Congress of the United States or a vast majority of the American people, we are becoming increasingly critical of a war that has frustrated many of us.

The Senator from Maryland voted against it. He said so a few moments ago. I voted for it. At the same time, I grow increasingly critical, as do many of the citizens of my State, as to what will be the future, what will be our success and/or failure and at a cost of how many more American lives.

I am critically concerned that this Government in Iraq now stand up. We have allowed them to form and to shape and to vote. They now have a Constitution. They now must lead. In leading, I hope it could be to stability to the region and that it will not offset and throw out of balance what the free world looks at and says is very important and that is, of course, the war on terror and the general stability of the Middle East.

Indeed, I think much has been lost in the debate around this country as to the significance of the Middle East itself. I was extremely pleased last week when that kind of an elder statesman of our country, Henry Kissinger, came before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and in a very real and important way, and in a bipartisan way, said: Let's not forget our perspective. While for the short term and for the moment we are focused on Iraq, as we should be, let's not fail to recognize that since World War II, we have been in the Middle East to bring stability to the region for a safer, more stable Western World.

I don't think there is any question about that. He was frank about it when he stressed diplomacy as an important tool. I have long advocated frank, open talks amongst our friends and neighbors around the world, not only about the region but about the role of Iraq within the region and what we must do. However, Dr. Kissinger also stressed that, under the present conditions in Iraq, withdrawal or the signs of withdrawal is simply not an option for America's forces. So anyone who comes to the floor today and says: Oh, but it is an option and we ought to start now, or we ought to send all the signals to our friends and neighbors around the world that we are beginning to pull back, is going against a trend that I think is critically important. They could set in motion the kind of activity in Iraq that could bring about a phenomenal genocide and the possibility of neighbors tumbling in on top of neighbors to create conflict in the Middle East that could bring down the whole of the region. If that were to happen, then I am quite confident that those who want to withdraw would find themselves in a very precarious situation. What do we do? Do we go back in with greater force to stabilize the region, when friendly, moderate Arab nations are now tumbling into war because we would no longer stand or we would no longer force, through a diplomatic process, those countries of the world to come together to work with us, to cooperate?

While most agree that the current situation in Iraq must be dealt with politically—and we have heard that time and again—and economically, our military involvement is critical to provide the Iraqis the stability they need in this new democratic process. I don't mind pegging timelines a little bit and I don't mind thresholds and measurements and I think it is important we not only send that message but that we get it done, we get it done for the sake of our position in Iraq and certainly forcing the Iraqi Government to move—those are all phenomenally important issues.

Let me stress two last facts. It is quite simple. The 116th from Idaho, the largest deployment of Idaho's troops in this war, was there and served and served honorably and proudly and the work they did was phenomenally important and we are proud of them. Let me also suggest that while many will say the general we now send to Iraq is the best military mind we have available at the moment, the author of the

Army's war handbook on terror, we are saying to General Petraeus: You are the best there is, go forth and be successful, but, oh, by the way, we don't agree with the mission—what kind of a mixed message is that we now send to our military?

The Senator from Georgia was right. The world is listening to this debate. Our men and women in uniform are listening to this debate. The enemies of the cause are listening and saying: Oh, the Senate of the United States is getting cold feet. Our opportunities are at hand. All we have to do is wait them out. All we have to do is accelerate the violence, and they will turn out the lights in the green zone and go home.

Then the world, at least the Iraqi world, will erupt in a civil conflict, a civil war of phenomenal proportion.

Those are the realities we deal with today. I hope this Senate stays on point. This is an issue that is critical to the future of our country, to the future of the free world, to the region of the Middle East, to any kind of stability we hope could be brought there. I hope we have the votes—and they ought to be up or down—and I don't mind being on the record at all. They need to be substantive, they need to have the force and effect of law, just not the ring of the politics of the Chamber, because that is what we are getting today—a heavy dose of politics and very little substance.

We hide behind procedure? I don't think so. Let us bring these issues forward. The Craig resolution? Up or down. Levin-Warner? Up or down. What is wrong with those votes? That is what we were sent here to do. I would hope our leadership could bring us to that.

So, to reiterate:

Many people around the country, including myself, have taken a much more critical look at the way the war in Iraq has been handled. However, through all the hardships our soldiers face day-to-day on the streets of Baghdad and elsewhere in Iraq, it still remains evident to me that our success in Iraq and the success of the current Iraq government, is critical to the security of our Nation, the stability of the Middle East, and the fight against terrorism worldwide.

Indeed, much has been lost in the debates around this country as to the significance of the greater Middle East stability when looking at the situation in Iraq. Our country has maintained a presence in that region of the world since World War II, and it should not be a surprise to anyone that many countries there depend and rely on our presence there, both economically and for their own national security. After reviewing the recent transcript of Dr. Henry Kissinger before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I agreed with many of Dr. Kissinger's views on the current situation in Iraq as it relates to the Middle East as a whole, and the severe consequences the international community will face should we fail in Iraq.

Dr. Kissinger stressed diplomacy, something I have long advocated in this conflict and frankly for any conflict. I don't believe there is one Member of Congress who takes the decision lightly to send out troops into combat unless we all firmly believe it is a last option. I know I certainly didn't, and I know that an overwhelming majority of both Senators and Congressmen believed that as well when we authorized the use of force in Iraq back in 2002.

However, Dr. Kissinger also stressed that under the present conditions in Iraq, withdrawal is not an option for American forces. Such a withdrawal would have long reaching consequences on the war on terror worldwide, could lead to widespread genocide in Iraq and possible neighboring countries, as well as severe economic consequences for all Middle Eastern countries. It is clear that such a circumstance would mandate international forces be sent back into Iraq, but the costs at that point would be grave.

While most agree that the current situation in Iraq must be dealt with politically and economically, our military involvement is critical to providing the Iraqis the stability they need to let their new democracy take root. If we pull our troops out of Iraq now, or deny them much needed reinforcements as some would like to do, we risk losing Baghdad and possibly the entire country to full blown civil war. Under those circumstances, the government of Iraq would fall, and Iran and Syria would strengthen their grip on the Middle East, endangering the national security of America and our allies worldwide.

It is my hope that diplomatic efforts will continue in a more aggressive fashion to bring the international community to the realization of a failed State in Iraq, and the real consequences that we all face should our efforts fall short of stabilizing Baghdad and the country as a whole. Because the consequences are so high, I do not believe that our soldiers' withdrawal from Iraq should be placed on any timetable, and we need to reassure our soldiers and commanders in Iraq that we will continue to support their efforts. After all, they are operating in Iraq, but the work they are doing will have a far reaching effect to stabilize the Middle East.

Over the past few weeks, there have been many who have been outspoken about their disapproval of the President's new plan for Iraq. Not being an expert in military tactics, I do not believe it is my role as a U.S. Senator to play general for our soldiers as some are. Instead, I believe it is my duty in Congress to provide our soldiers with the resources and funding they require to do their job with the best equipment possible, while also pledging my unending moral support for the work they do each and every day to keep Americans safe both at home and abroad.

Every 4 years the citizens of America go to the polls to elect a commander in chief, who is responsible to the American people to lead our military in times of peace and times of war. It is no mistake that the founding fathers gave the power to declare war to the Congress, but the power to lead the military to the President. Our soldiers should not have to follow 535 Congressional ''generals'' who hold up critical funding while they second-guess tactical decisions of the commander in chief and military leaders.

Over the last few weeks a lot has been made of the troop reinforcement President Bush outlined to the American people. Prior to his speech, I and several other Members of Congress met with the President to discuss the current situation in Iraq. I made it very clear that Idahoans and I cannot continue to support the status quo; and he agreed. President Bush has spent the last many months working with his national security advisers, commanding officers in Iraq, Members of Congress and experts in the field of military issues in order to revise our national strategy with regards to Iraq and come up with a new strategy for victory.

Make no mistake, the onus is now on the Iraqi people and the Iraqi government to act, and I was extremely pleased to hear President Bush reiterate that fact. The efforts of our soldiers have given the Iraqi people a great opportunity to live in a free and stable country, but they must stand up and accept that responsibility.

My home State of Idaho has shared some of the burden of this war in Iraq. The 116th Brigade Combat Team served courageously for twelve months in Kirkuk and surrounding areas, and they have since returned home to their families. I had the opportunity to visit them in Iraq and was extremely proud of the feedback on these soldiers I received from Iraqi government officials, civilians, and U.S. military leaders. I would also like to spotlight all Idahoans who are serving in the Armed Forces in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. I am eternally grateful for their service and I will continue to provide them with all the support I can give.

It is my hope that Members of Congress will not pursue antiwar politics to the detriment of our soldiers in the field. Our soldiers have been fighting courageously in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere around the world to protect each and every American life, and I believe it is incumbent for the Congress to stand behind them. Numerous bills and resolutions have been proposed in the Senate to disapprove of their mission, cap troop levels, withhold funding for the reinforcements, or even completely de-fund the troops serving in Iraq. I cannot and will not support any legislation that I see as unproductive to our current efforts in Iraq, because I believe it places our forces in greater danger and could embolden our enemies to continue their attacks against innocent Iraqis, Americans and our allies.

In testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee in January of this

year, General Hayden, the Director of the CIA, responded to a question regarding what would happen if we pulled out now from Iraq. Director Hayden responded, Three very quick areas:

No. 1, more Iraqis die from the disorder inside Iraq. No. 2, Iraq becomes a safe haven, perhaps more dangerous than the one Al Qaeda had in Afghanistan. And finally, No. 3, the conflict in Iraq bleeds over into the neighborhood and threatens serious regional instability.

He went on to state that this directly and immediately threatens the United States homeland because it:

provides Al Qaida that which they are attempting to seek in several locations right now, be it Somalia, the tribal area of Pakistan or Anbar province—a safe haven to rival that which they had in Afghanistan.

During his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee, GEN David Petraeus supported President Bush's plan to increase troop levels in Baghdad and Anbar province. In response to questioning before that committee, General Petraeus made it clear he believes that the reinforcement of soldiers into Baghdad and Anbar in Iraq will bolster the Iraqis' ability to stabilize their government and defeat the insurgency, instead of allowing them to continue to buck that responsibility, as some have asserted.

Many in Congress have stated publicly that this is the last chance the United States has to get it right in Iraq. If that is the case, I feel there is no general better qualified to be in charge of our ground forces and get things turned around on the ground than General Petraeus. I recognize that the American people have grown weary over the last months since the violence has escalated in Iraq, but I remain optimistic that the Iraqi government, with the aid of our soldiers, can turn things around.

I had the pleasure of meeting General Petraeus during one of my two trips to Iraq and was very impressed by his knowledge of the situation and his expertise in counterinsurgency. I have no doubt that General Petraeus is the right man to lead our forces in Iraq and I believe that he will overcome the new challenges he now faces. Let us not send the right man and then tell him it is the wrong job.

In closing, while I share the concerns of many of my colleagues regarding the situation in Iraq, I will support the President's plan to provide the reinforcements necessary to provide stability in Baghdad and Anbar province. I am hopeful that this plan will give the Iraqi government the best chance to stand on their own two feet and make the positive strides necessary to take control of the security situation and function as a stable government. It is this Senator's personal opinion that resolutions condemning the President's new way forward send the wrong message to our soldiers, the Iraqi people, and especially our enemies.

I certainly appreciate and support the role of Congress to provide oversight with respect to U.S. military engagements. However, I do not believe we should cripple the Commander in Chief's ability to work with our military leadership to defeat our enemies, and passing a resolution condemning the President's new plan for Iraq would do precisely that. Instead, I support resolutions that call for the support of the American people and Congress to give the President's plan a chance to work. Mistakes have been made, unquestionably, and the violence in Baghdad and Anbar province has grown to a level that few predicted, but I am not yet ready to throw in the towel on this President's new plan and our soldiers' ability to assist in stabilizing Iraq before they even get a chance to try.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

PROCEDURAL TACTICS

Mr. SPECTER. Madam President, thank you for the recognition. I have sought recognition to discuss the procedural situation which confronts the Senate at the present time and to discuss a proposed rule change which would deal with this kind of a problem.

We have pending a motion to proceed on S. 470, which proposes a disagreement with the President's plan to send 21,500 additional troops to Iraq. Under the Senate rules, a motion to proceed is debatable, and when we deal with an issue of the magnitude of what is happening in Iraq today and the President's proposal to send additional troops, it is obviously a matter of great moment. The eyes and ears of the country are focused on the Senate. The eyes and ears of the world are focused on the Senate.

So far, what is happening is largely misunderstood, but the starting point is that a motion to proceed is debatable. But before debate even began, the majority leader filed a motion for cloture, which means to cut off debate. Now, a cloture motion would be in order, but why before the debate has even started? The cloture motion is designed to cut off debate after debate has gone on too long. But what lies behind the current procedural status is an effort by the majority leader to do what is called filling the tree, which is a largely misunderstood concept, not understood at all by the public generally and even not understood fully by many Members of this body. But the Senate is unique from the House, and the Senate has been billed as the world's greatest deliberative body, because Senators have the right to offer amendments.

In the House of Representatives they established what is called a rule, and they preclude Members from offering amendments unless it satisfies the Rules Committee. In the Senate, generally a Senator doesn't have to satisfy anybody except his or her own conscience in offering an amendment. But if the majority leader, who has the right of recognition—and that, of course, is not understood either—but if the majority leader is on the floor and seeks recognition, he gets it ahead of everybody else. And if the majority leader offers what is called a first-degree amendment to the bill, which is substantively identical to the bill but only a technical change, and then again seeks recognition and gets it and offers a second-degree amendment to the bill, which is substantively the same but only a technical change, then no other Senator may offer any additional amendment. That is a practice which has been engaged in consistently by both parties for decades, undercutting the basic approach of the Senate, which enables Senators to offer amendments and get votes.

The Congressional Research Service has tabulated the statistics going back to the 99th Congress in 1985 and 1986 when Senator Dole used this procedure on five occasions. In the 100th Congress, Senator BYRD, then the majority leader, used this procedure on three occasions. In the 103d Congress, the next majority leader, Senator Mitchell, used this procedure on nine occasions. When Senator Dole became leader again in the 104th Congress, he used this procedure on five occasions. In the 106th Congress, Senator LOTT, then the majority leader, used it nine times. In the 107th Congress, Senator Daschle, then the majority leader, used it once. He was only majority leader for about 18 months. In the 108th Congress, Senator Frist used it three times, and in the 109th Congress five times.

Now, my suggestion is that the parties ought to declare a truce on this procedural war of filling the tree which undercuts the basic thrust of Senate procedure to allow Senators to offer amendments. But the majority leaders continue to use it, which they have a right to under the current rules, which is why I am suggesting a change in the rules. But it will take a little time to change the rules. We can't do it immediately for the Iraq debate. But it would be my hope that there would be a public understanding of what we are doing, because the most effective process in our governmental operations is public understanding and public pressure. We call it a political question. We call it public understanding to have transparency or an understanding of what we do, and then the public can say yea or nay with what is happening, and that is a tremendous force to lead Senators and Members of the House of Representatives to take action, to call it the right thing, or to take action consistent with sound public policy.

Now, what is happening today is that charges are being leveled on all sides. There has been a lot of finger-pointing with most of the Democrats saying the Republicans are obstructing a vote—a debate and a vote on the Iraqi resolutions. And Republicans are saying: Well, we are insisting on our right to debate the motion to proceed. We don't think you should file cloture before the

debate even starts, to cut off debate before you have debate, but the reason we are doing it is so this procedural device may not be used on what is called in common parlance to ''fill the tree.'' But if you ask virtually anybody what is filling the tree, they are going to think about an orchard; they are not going to think about Senate procedure. But it is called filling the tree. I have described it succinctly and briefly to outline exactly what the procedure is to stop Senators from offering amendments.

There is a clue here that Senator WARNER—who is the principal proponent of the Warner resolution, the Warner-Levin resolution, which picks up the substance of the bill which is currently pending, S. 470—Senator WARNER votes against cloture, and he is the principal proponent of disagreeing with the President's plan. Well, that ought to tell us something: that Senator WARNER is not trying to stifle debate on a vote on his own initiative, on his own resolution. Senator HAGEL also—who has been characterized as the most outspoken critic of President Bush's plan to have a surge—voted against cloture. That ought to tell us something: that Senator HAGEL is not trying to defeat debate on a vote on what he seeks to accomplish.

So it would be my hope there would be a truce. Let me say candidly that I think there is very little chance there is going to be a truce in the Senate on using this procedural rule. It has been used on both sides. It has been used by Democrats and Republicans when it suits the partisan advantage of one party or another, and suiting the partisan party advantage of one party or another is not consistent with sound public policy and the public interest.

Right now this debate is being waged in the newspapers, it is being waged on the talk shows, it is being waged on the Sunday shows, even some of it is being waged on the floor of the Senate, but by and large not understood.

I spoke on the subject on Monday, outlining the rules morass, and largely misunderstood, even by senior members of my own staff not understood. You have the Democrats—and I think we ought to rise above the partisanship, Democrats and Republicans—saying they have the high ground and they intend to keep it. Well, I think they are winning the public relations battle. Let's be candid about it. Democrats are winning the public relations battle. Most people think what is going on, because we are opposing ending debate, Republicans are opposing ending debate, is that we do not want to have the debate and we do not want to have the vote.

That is not factually correct. Senator WARNER, who is proposing it, and Senator HAGEL, who is one of the sharpest critics of the President's plan, and other Senators who are critics of the President's plan, have voted against cutting off debate because it is a big issue which ought to be debated, and because what is going on behind the scenes, under the surface, is an effort to have agreement on how many votes there will be to have a fair airing of the subject matter, and to have an opportunity for Senators to vote on a variety of resolutions or amendments. Ordinarily, we come to agreement on those matters. Right now we are up against the continuing resolution, which is about to expire.

I would suggest we have plenty of time to do it all if we start to work a little earlier. We are on morning business until 2 o'clock, which means we can express ourselves and it is not wasted time, but it is not the most productive time. We don't come to work until late on Monday. We don't work on Friday. Most Americans work a 5-day week. Some Americans work 6 and 7 days. So we have time. And we could work in the evenings, too, when we are facing a time limit, or we could have a continuing resolution which was extended, so that debate could be put off. But now it is in doubt what is going to happen. It is controlled by the majority, and by the majority leader, and that is the right of the majority and the right of the majority leader.

There have been pronouncements that we are not going to come back to this debate and that it is politically advantageous for the Democrats to blame the Republicans for blocking debate on the vote, and that will be the public posture. But it is my hope there will yet be a recognition of what is going on. I would be glad to debate anybody who cares to discuss the issue as to whether my representations are accurate or inaccurate; that the majority leader has the right exercised by majority leaders of both parties for at least the last two decades to preclude amendments being offered and to preclude any consideration by what Republicans have to say on this issue.

We have a Member of the opposite party on the Senate floor. I would be glad to debate that subject with him now.

Before the week is up, I will offer a resolution to change the Senate rules to preclude this procedure in the future, but in the public interest, there ought to be a truce declared on it that won't be used by either side to the disadvantage of the other. The real party being disadvantaged is the party of the American people. That is where the impact is.

In conclusion—the two most popular words of any presentation—I hope we can explain, as a starting point, discussions we have in the Senate and follow up with explanations in the media, which really carries the message to the American people. Some people are watching on C–SPAN. I have a family very interested in the speeches I make from time to time—two sisters and a brother-in-law. I talked to them Monday night, and they had no idea what I was saying. My staff does not understand what I am saying.

The essence is, the rules being exercised by the majority, by the Democrats today, will preclude Republican amendments if they fill the tree by the procedure I have described. I do not want to stop debate. Senator WARNER, who is the principal proponent of the amendment to debate and vote, Senator HAGEL, an outspoken critic of the President—doesn't that say something?

I hope we can bring sufficient public clarity to the issue that the majority leader and the Democrats will rethink their position. As long as the Republicans are being blamed for not having debate and a vote, we are not going to have debate and a vote. If the public understands both parties are at fault, equal blame on both sides, then there may be some movement and some accommodation.

It does not take long for the American people to see the morass and procedural shenanigans going on and say: We don't care whether you are a Democrat or Republican, the American people are sick and tired of the bickering that goes on in this Chamber and in the House of Representatives. They expressed themselves in the last election. If we cannot do a better job in explaining ourselves and finding a way to work through and address the substantive problems, the enormous problems facing this country—and the No. 1 today is Iraq—we may all find ourselves seeking new employment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey is recognized.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Madam President, we just heard a debate about debates. It strikes me that this word war we are conducting here doesn't get to the fact that we are losing people every day in Iraq—27 Americans died in a weekend—and our friends on the other side want to discuss the rules and the process instead of being able to agree that there was a nonbinding resolution being proposed about whether you want to see this surge—a la escalation—of the war in Iraq. Our friends were so conscience-stricken that they wanted to resort to more words and amendments. Why couldn't we have just passed or discussed that nonbinding resolution, let it go, and let the debate then continue? Bring on the debates. But, no, this is the press relations battle which was just discussed by our colleague.

That is not what we are looking for. We are looking to save lives, American lives, but we can't get to the subject because there is a question about what the rules ought to be. The rules ought to be the decency of our consciences—let us make decisions that will save lives and ease the pain on American families.

This was an unfortunate dynamic we saw this week: Republican colleagues determined to block the opportunity for the Senate to vote on the President's war escalation policy for Iraq. Just when the American people want this Congress to stop the President's misguided plan, our colleagues on the other side are hard at work to shut

down that opportunity. What they are afraid of is that we will confirm our support for the troops who are there now, and any insinuation that isn't the truth is a foul lie. We are just as anxious to support the troops. We are more anxious, in many ways, because we called for equipment to be available to protect our troops. We called for vehicles to be properly armored. We called for the body armor to be developed. But we didn't hear any complaints about the misdeeds of the contractors who weren't doing what they were supposed to be doing. They were not even monitored. We are going to talk about that.

Our friends in the minority can delay this debate, and I hope the American public understands what is going on—delay the debates, don't let us come to the conclusion, don't let the President see that a majority of this Senate does not want this escalation to take place. They will delay this debate and vote for now, but it is going to happen eventually. It will happen because the American people are understandably frustrated with the President's conduct and mishandling of this war.

Our children are taught a lesson in school: If you do things wrong and you don't pass your courses, don't change your ways, don't listen to advice, you get an F on your report card. In the view of many of the American people—most of the American people—President Bush has gotten an F on his report card on the handling of the situation in Iraq. But he and the Vice President refuse to be held accountable, and his allies in the Senate are blocking us from holding him accountable. It is not a good lesson for our Nation's young people. They see that if they don't do their work, they fail the course, and the President has not done his work, and he ought not to get a positive grade for his job thus far.

The American people don't want Congress to grant unlimited power to the President and his incompetent crew. Our troops have done a magnificent job, but it is the President and failed leadership at the Pentagon that have let them down.

Who can forget Secretary Rumsfeld's quote:

> You go to war with the Army you have, not the Army you might want or wish to have at a later time.

Frankly, it is a slur, in my view, against the troops we have, those courageous people over there fighting right now or at that time. It is a terrible message to send to our soldiers.

Who can forget when the insurgency first started and our troops were getting attacked with roadside bombs, when President Bush said ''bring 'em on''? I wore our Nation's uniform in World War II, in Europe, and I can say none of us wanted our Commander in Chief taunting the enemy, inviting them to come on out and fight and maybe kill us. No. To be in harm's way and have your commander make such a statement from the safety and security of the White House is appalling.

Now the President wants a so-called surge. Does he want to surge our way to more problems? Does he want to surge our national debt by spending billions more every week in Iraq? Anybody who understands English knows that the real definition of ''surge'' as used here means ''enlarge'' or ''escalate.''

From this war, we have more than 700 Americans who have lost limbs, more than 29,000 suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, and over 3,000 have perished in Iraq, 74 of whom have ties to my home State of New Jersey. Yet President Bush dismisses the incredible cost of this war in lives, injuries, and resources essential for the health and well-being of our people at home, domestic programs.

After all the previous failures and incompetence by this administration, why should the American people allow the President to do whatever he chooses in this war, this war which has destroyed thousands of families' lives? Look at the President's record on Iraq: false intelligence on weapons of mass destruction; no posted invasion plan because the administration was convinced that we would be greeted with sweets and flowers in a Utopian celebration. The President's team decided to fire the entire Iraqi Army, dismissing 500,000 trained troops who might have been helpful to us in fighting this insurgency. Then the Bush administration helped create further sectarian division by simply banning members from serving in the new Iraqi Government. The administration has allied itself with an Iraqi Prime Minister who supports a militia leader named Sadr who controlled a terrorist militia which disagrees with the formation of a stable government.

We all saw the waste, fraud, and abuse of taxpayer funds by contractors such as Halliburton. The Iraqi reconstruction inspector general said that nearly $3 billion in U.S. taxpayer dollars for Iraqi reconstruction has been lost—lost, vanished, $3 billion. That is not sloppy, that is incompetence. So it is understandable that a giant majority of the American people are against this escalation. The other side of the aisle obviously does not want to vote consistent with the American people's wishes or their prayers. Taxpayers are footing a massive bill for these mistakes.

The administration gave Halliburton a no-bid contract thought to be worth $50 million—well, it surged to $2.5 billion—to operate Iraqi's oil infrastructure. And what has that contract yielded in oil? Less oil 4 years after the invasion than Iraq was producing before the war. Halliburton was forced to pay back $50 million after a fine was leveled against them by the Department of Defense. That is why the American people say no surge for Halliburton.

I was a member of the Department of Homeland Security committee in the previous Congress. I wrote five letters to the chairman asking we have hearings, oversight hearings, on the Halliburton behavior in the war. I was told that it would be duplicable, and we couldn't get a review of Halliburton's behavior.

When the Republicans were in the majority, they said a vote against the President's policy was cut-and-run, but now the American people are asking the question, What is the alternative? Stay and die?

In November, the American people spoke with the most effective means they have; that is, the ballot box. They said no. They said they want a change. They voted for a voice against the President. Now the Republican minority is blocking Congress from speaking.

The President and the minority in the Senate cannot continue to ignore the will of the American people. We already saw the President ignore his own chosen Iraqi Study Group. First he appoints them; then he challenges them or ignores them. He ignored the advice of GEN John Abizaid, who thinks this escalation is a bad idea. He ignored former Secretary of State Colin Powell, who said more troops are not the answer.

When do we say enough is enough? Well, I think that time is past due.

Outside my office, to remind us all—I am very sensitive to veterans matters, to our military, not just because I served but because they are there to protect us. And they do a splendid job, even when they are asked to do more than the numbers they should have are not in place, and the equipment has not been quite what it ought to be, delays in producing that. We display a memorial outside my office showing the ''Faces of the Fallen,'' which says: ''Let Us Never Forget.'' There are almost 3,000 faces outside the door to my office. We have them on easels. It was our construction. The name, age, rank, battalion affiliation, and the cause of death of each of these Nation's fallen servicemembers is inscribed with their photo on the memorial. If you look, you see the ages and how young they were and what they must have meant to the families they left behind.

Friends and visitors search these photos daily for knowledge of people they might know and miss. As they search, as they review these pictures, some write notes in a book of reflections that we have out there. A woman from Englewood, NJ, wrote:

> How do we measure their sacrifice? We are so fortunate to have these brave men and women.

A woman from Minnesota says:

> This display brings tears to my eyes, to see how many lives have been lost. Please stop more boards from being added and bring those who would find themselves memorialized here home safely.

A Californian simply wrote:

> Bring them home!

These are what the American people want, and we ignore them at our own peril. We prevent a vote on this momentous issue at our own peril as well.

I close, saying to my colleagues on the other side, please stop the insinuations that we on this side of the aisle do not want to support our troops. Nothing could be further from the truth. Many of us, myself included, have been there to meet with our troops and see what they need and see what they want and listen to their tales of the days they spend in harm's way. We want to support them. We salute them. They honor their obligation to their country, even though we, in many cases, disagree with the mission.

And when we fool ourselves into believing that all we have to do is to put more people in harm's way and we will get a stabilized government there, we find, in many instances, the recruits they have in the army there are just not capably trained, don't have the will, in many instances, to take up the fight. And we want to put more of our people in there?

I think what ought to be done—as many others here do—is to start to whittle down our presence, leave enough of a resource there to help train those people, maybe instill some courage in their view of what their responsibilities are, get enough people in the flow—the Iraqi people—and plan to get them home as soon as we practically can.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MENENDEZ). The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I wish to share some thoughts about the situation we find ourselves in. I do feel some obligation to comment on the nature of the debate we are having, although I do not want to descend into partisanship.

I would say that Senator SPECTER, I believe, is absolutely correct when he says the Republican Members of this body are not afraid to vote. They are prepared to vote on the Warner resolution. They are prepared to vote on the McCain resolution. They will vote on the Judd Gregg resolution. But the problem is the Democratic leadership only wants one vote, and that is a vote on their resolution. So we have had a vote. Less than 50 voted to go forward. So I do not see how we are at a point where it can be suggested the members of this side are afraid to have a vote.

Why are they afraid to have two more votes, I would ask? I am not afraid to vote. I know how I would vote on those amendments. I am going to vote against the amendment that disapproves of the policies we are sending our troops to execute. And I am going to vote for the other amendments of MCCAIN and GREGG—if I had the chance. That is a minimum. There may be others. Senator SPECTER indicated he would like to vote on something else.

But in truth, as I have said before, I am not happy about this whole resolution process. We are not in the business of resolutions here. We are in the business of funding or not funding the policies of the United States of America. We have committed to funding the policy that is now being executed. We have confirmed the general who will execute that policy. Therefore, that is what we are about. That is the action we have taken.

But, in general, let me say this one more thing because it touched my heart. Less than 30 minutes ago, right out here, I met an Alabamian whose son is at Fort Benning, a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army, an infantry officer. He thanked me for not going along with this negative resolution idea, and said: Senator, these soldiers are ''watching what you do like a hawk.''

Don't think what we do is just a gambit to embarrass the President. We face many difficult decisions, pressures. We wrestle with competing interests and emotions in this Senate. We have high hopes and dreams for America. We do not all agree, and we should not. Ours is, at its best, a democracy where robust and intelligent debate informs our decisions. It makes us better. And we should respect one another even while we disagree. But this is a big deal. Lives are at stake. But this is what democracy is about. I want to be sure that when I say I believe someone is making a mistake, I am not attacking their character.

In the end, if a democracy cannot reach a decision on important issues, act decisively and execute those decisions, it will be weak and it will fall prey to the cruel, the despotic, and the strong. In order to avoid indecisiveness and weakness, there are some important common principles we must share. They are built, I believe, on love of country and a sincere belief in and admiration for this great Republic we serve. That is the unifying principle.

An extended, dangerous, and costly war in Iraq is not what we had hoped would occur when over three-fourths of the Members of this body—and I was here—voted to authorize the use of force against Saddam Hussein. Certainly, I had hoped and have always favored bringing troop levels down as soon as we can. The difficulties we face have caused, understandably, much unease and frustration in our country. Things have not been going well. That is a true fact. The circumstances are grave, and our efforts in Iraq could fail, as General Casey and his replacement, General Petraeus, have made clear, although, in truth, these professionals have also made it clear they believe we can and will succeed if we carry out the new policy that is now being projected in Iraq.

A congress of a nation, constructed like ours, that aspires to be a great nation and a great congress must consider how it should respond to such difficult circumstances in this winter of our discontent. How, now, should we think about the tough challenges we face?

First, I believe the results of a failure and a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq are grave and ominous. No one disputes that. Chaos and ethnic cleansing, death to those who put their lives on the line for freedom and democracy would likely result, and more. Bad things would occur. We have had testimony on that.

So to even those few now here in this Senate who voted against the use of force, and to our newer Members of the Senate who are on record as being opposed to the policy, I say let's get together. Let's see how we can deal with the problems we now face so our Nation and its policies can be successful.

Few decisions are totally right or totally wrong. Sometimes things go better than expected. Sometimes they do not go as well. The test of a healthy and strong nation is how it handles adversity.

To those who oppose our efforts in Iraq, I would say that it would be a defensible position, I have to say, if you feel that strongly about it, to vote to cut off funds that would in effect force an immediate withdrawal. But, in truth, even when Senators truly believe our efforts in Iraq were a mistake, a mature patriotic assessment of the short and long-term consequences of such a withdrawal must be considered.

Immediate withdrawal is not a good option. It is not a good option. That is obviously why so many of our Democratic colleagues who are not happy with this war have not proposed such a step.

The one thing that is not acceptable is to take action—to take any action or concrete steps—to further the President's policy and then to vote for a resolution that makes it less likely to succeed. This is especially true when this Congress has committed our military personnel to this task, placing them in harm's way to execute the mission this Republic has given them.

Our military personnel have placed their very lives, their every waking moment, on the line to achieve the mission that is assigned to them. They are doing that every day. I have been there five times. We have a moral responsibility to them that must not be lightly broken.

That commitment also goes to those many allies who have supported us, our friends in the region, and the good and decent Iraqis who voted for and stood up for democracy and freedom.

If this is a true concept—and I believe it is—then I urge, with respect and with deep sincerity, that my colleagues do not give their support to any resolution that is likely to make our praiseworthy goal of a free and stable Iraq more difficult to achieve.

A resolution that is not binding but adversely impacts our efforts, with all due respect, is a vote that cannot be justified. Other than perceived personal political benefits, or ''making a statement,'' what benefit does such a vote provide our Nation's efforts? It has no impact. Negative resolutions, therefore, can only place our soldiers, whom we sent to execute this policy, at greater risk. It can only place them at

greater risk and make their task harder. Those in harm's way deserve our total support, and the policies we have asked them to execute should also have our total support, until such time as we withdraw it.

I urge my colleagues to think this through. Let's pull back from this precipice—not just from this vote but from votes in Congress that may come in the future. Let's reassert our time-honored tradition that ''politics stops at the water's edge,'' that politics must never place soldiers at unnecessary risk. Let us not go down the road of passing resolutions whose only purpose is to emote, to express doubt about our Nation's decided policy during a time of great challenge and risk.

A Senate of a great nation doesn't use a toothless resolution to vent. What good does such a thing do? Surely, we all understand, as did our Founders, that there can only be one policy, one Commander in Chief, and one Congress. The Congress can cut off funds and stop it, if they are so strongly committed to do so. But we are not doing that.

How have we slid into such a muddle? The answer is that politics seems to have taken over everything around here; it infects our very being, even during war. It is a dangerous trend. We are used to ''splitting the difference'' here. Compromise is the nature of the game, we are told, and indeed it is. You favor a $100 million program, perhaps, and I oppose it; and maybe we end up compromising on $50 million. The thing may have worked at $50 million, or it might have been a failure at $50 million. Who knows? But we compromise. But that is about money. This is about war, about the life and death of people, as fine as you can find in this country, who volunteered to serve us.

Some may say it is not certain that negative resolutions will weaken the resolve of our friends and hurt the morale of our soldiers and embolden our enemies. Logic, however, says it will. Maybe you disagree. But how can it be otherwise? Logic says it will. General Petraeus said it well a few days ago. Negative resolutions will likely have negative consequences on our policy and place at greater risk the lives and health of our soldiers. What other purpose is there for this resolution, other than to somehow ratchet up the effort to force an abandonment of the policy we have funded and we are now executing.

Indeed, the whole world will think such a resolution that expresses only ''feelings'' represents a weakening of American will, even while the actual policy we are funding is to increase our strength and commitment to the Iraq effort. Think about it. As their foundations, these negative resolutions can only be described as totally contradictory to our policy that we are at this moment executing. New troops are moving there right now. Some have already arrived in Iraq. Have you not heard that?

For those unhappy and worried, I say let's get busy, all of us, and do a better job. Let's find out more about this difficult struggle that we are engaged in, find out more about Iraq, find out more about what our troops need, what their challenges are and what can and cannot be done. Let's meet with General Pace and General Casey and Secretary Gates; let's read the periodic reports that General Petraeus will be sending and spend more time keeping up with the situation on the ground in Iraq, rather than on polling numbers in our States. If we then reach a point of no return, when our honest and best judgment is that success is not possible, then we can join with those few who are prepared to cast votes to force an end to our deployment in Iraq. That is what we are supposed to do.

Certainly, at this point, none can honestly say that we know what the outcome will be. I wish I could give full assurance of success, but I cannot. We do know this is a very difficult time. Al-Qaida is still active, despite heavy losses and an inability—we may thank the Lord—to attack us again on our homeland, so far. The Iraqi Government has not been strong and decisive, and violence, especially in Baghdad, has steadily increased. The al-Qaida attack on the Samarra Mosque last February, designed to create sectarian violence in the country, succeeded in sparking a spate of sectarian killing and reprisals that continue today.

Still, General Abizaid and General Casey, our former commander, and General Petraeus, our new commander, know the true situation there better than we do. General Abizaid has been there four years, I believe, and General Casey, 30 months. They have lived it. They have studied it. They sincerely believe and have publicly stated, under oath, that this surge of American troops, with a surge of Iraqi troops and the new tactics to be employed, can lead to the goals that we seek—a stable, peaceful, and prosperous Iraq. It can be successful. We should not be overly negative. Indeed, I asked this question of General Petraeus. A few days ago in his testimony, he said he would not take this job if he didn't believe he would succeed. General Petraeus commanded the 101st Airborne Division when they went into northern Iraq, in Mosul. He did a fabulous job. They jokingly called him the ''mayor of Mosul.'' We toured the area the projects he had worked to establish. He understands the need of walking the streets and talking with the Iraqi people and encouraging them to take over their country. He came home, and then they asked him to go back and train the Iraqi security forces and he agreed to do so. He left his family again and went back and spent a year in Iraq. I am sure he knows every top general by name in the Iraqi Army, or virtually all of them. He spent another year there doing that. Then he came back and he spent a year drafting and writing the Department of Defense counterinsurgency manual. It is 100 or more pages, a big document; it is a very important, complex, carefully worked out document that tells how to confront and defeat an insurgency operation. That is the plan we have asked him to go back with now. I believe we need to give General Petraeus a chance.

We have lost over 3,000 lives in our Iraq effort. The losses, in my view, are less than expected during the initial assault on Baghdad in Iraq and far more than I expected in the aftermath. Much of this, I am sure, was the result of errors we made. Much arises from the inherent difficulties of the tasks that were underestimated. Of that, there can be no doubt. But no Government agency even comes close to our military in being brutally honest and doing after-action reports and self-evaluations. That is going on now and will continue for years. They are a magnificent force. I can only believe that if we truly support them, as a great Senate and a great Congress should when they are executing the policies we have directed them to execute, they will be successful. I further believe it is premature for us to withdraw. We owe it to those State Department officials, other Government agencies, NGOs, patriotic Iraqi civilians who voted for a new and better Iraq, to the Iraqi security forces who have taken more casualties than we have, to those international allies who have stood with us in Iraq and, most of all, to our military personnel who have given their heroic best to accomplish our Nation's just and decent goals in Iraq, to give this new policy and General Petraeus a chance. I think they can and will do it. But I do not doubt the difficulties and I do not doubt there is uncertainty.

If, heaven forbid, our efforts do not prevail, it will be appropriate to completely rethink our commitment to Iraq. So why do we want to pass a resolution? Senator REID says he wants to provide Senators a chance to show their disapproval of the President's policy. With respect, Senator REID has—I know it is unwitting and unintentional—crossed the line there. It is clear that this resolution, which has no binding effect and is only a political document, is not necessary, does not help, and I totally oppose it. It is wrong, in my view.

While our soldiers are courageously placing their lives on the line for us, and while there is no serious suggestion that we should cut off the funds for the surge the Commander in Chief has ordered and which the Baker-Hamilton group suggested might be necessary, a toothless resolution is the wrong thing to do. I am certainly glad it did not garner many votes.

So can we, for a while at least, stand united in our good and worthy efforts to help the people of Iraq achieve a decent, peaceful and stable Government? Can't we do that? The challenge remains great. The costs are high. I say

let's follow through, united, on this new strategy under our new general. I believe we can be successful. If the Iraqis fail to respond and if the new strategy is not effective, we will know soon enough. And an honest, professional, and realistic evaluation of what to do next will fall into our hands. We should complete that task effectively, giving our best effort and judgment to it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Montana be recognized next for up to 15 minutes, to be followed by myself for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. INHOFE. Reserving the right to object, I further ask unanimous consent that after the completion of the remarks of the Senator from Nevada, and after one other Democrat, I be recognized for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana is recognized.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I rise today on behalf of the thousands of Montanans who have lost faith in the way this administration is conducting the war in Iraq.

Our troops have given more than most of us can imagine. This administration has asked much of them. They should be commended for their performance in a war that has been mismanaged from the get-go.

In 1972, deep into the Vietnam war, the great Senator, the great statesman, Senator Mike Mansfield, whose seat I am now honored to hold, spoke of a great nation. When times demand it, it is wise for us to take a step back and look at those who served before us.

Standing not far from where I stand today, Senator Mansfield said:

> Mr. President, it does no great nation any harm to admit that a mistake has been made. And sometimes when nations and men will do so, they will be the bigger and the better for it.

Many years later, Mansfield would say that when he was gone, he wanted to be forgotten. We have not forgotten Mike Mansfield, and we must not forget his measured approach to diplomacy, his steady hand, and the lesson that admitting a mistake is the first step in correcting it.

It is time we debate the facts of this situation so this country's leaders can make the right decisions.

I have said for more than a year that this war is being conducted without a plan for success and there is no end in sight. For too long, this body has refused to ask the tough questions, to debate the merits of this war, and has not held the President accountable for the deteriorating situation in Iraq.

Disturbingly, recent reports confirm that our invasion of Iraq has created more terrorists than it has eliminated. Yet the terrorist who plotted the most deadly attack on U.S. soil—Osama bin Laden—remains at large and ignored by the administration.

In addition to the more than 3,000 killed since the war began, 17 of whom are from Montana, there have been more than 23,000 wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many will come home missing one or more limbs. Others will return home to battle posttraumatic stress disorder.

Last week, I joined several of my colleagues, along with two Iraqi war veterans, and called on the administration to get serious about funding for veterans health care. I renew that call today for permanent mandatory full funding of VA health care. There is no reason veterans should be forced to come to us every year hat in hand and beg for funding. It should be permanent, and it should be fully funded. Right now, it is neither.

Our country's veterans do not seek, nor do they expect, recognition from their Commander in Chief, nor the American people. But we owe them not only the recognition but also the promise that we will care for them and their families when they return.

Following the gulf war, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, GEN Colin Powell, outlined his plan for efficient and decisive military action, now referred to as the Powell doctrine.

The Powell doctrine clearly outlines what U.S. military action should look like:

Military action should be used only as a last resort and only if there is a clear risk to the national security by the intended target.

Force, when used, should be overwhelming and disproportionate to the force used by the enemy.

There must be strong support for the campaign by the general public.

And last, there must be a clear exit strategy from the conflict in which the military is engaged.

One by one, this administration has violated every principle of the Powell doctrine and, as a result, we are lost in Iraq and alone in the world.

Clear risk to national security? Prior to the invasion, the administration claimed that Iraq's nuclear capabilities made it a grave threat to America's national security, allegations that proved to be false.

Overwhelming force? The administration was unprepared for the dangers of urban combat, for improvised explosive devices, and continues to send troops into harm's way without proper armor. It is unconscionable that these soldiers are being sent into battle without all of the tools they need to be safe and successful. It is unacceptable to send them there with no plan for, or definition of, success.

Public support? Perhaps the most significant difference between the first gulf war and the war in Iraq is the lack of support from our allies. Like World War II, the gulf war was successful because America built a strong coalition and did not force our troops to carry the burden alone.

As support for this war continues to erode, so, too, does our standing in the world. Just a few years ago, nearly the entire world stood at America's side following the attacks on September 11. That good will has long since been squandered.

And finally, an exit strategy? The President has proposed sending 21,500 more troops into Iraq as a strategy for victory. Staying the course by escalating this war only spells disaster.

This country should no longer tolerate, nor can it afford, an open-ended conflict that has claimed more than 3,000 lives, injured more than 23,000, and cost the United States taxpayers $2 billion every week.

Recently, the President proposed sending 21,500 more troops into downtown Baghdad. But according to the Congressional Budget Office, that actually means almost 50,000 additional troops when you include the 28,000 troops needed to provide critical support to those combat troops. This could cost up to $27 billion to sustain over the next year. That would be more than three times the largest estimate of troop escalation costs provided by the Bush administration.

The addition of almost 50,000 American troops means more American young men and women without adequate body armor riding in ill-armored humvees into one of the most dangerous combat zones in history. Historical data from this war tells us that sending 21,500 troops into Iraq will mean that between 300 and 500 additional soldiers will die in Iraq than if this escalation were not to occur.

Adding more troops is not a strategy, it is a tactic, and it is not a new one. There have been four such troop escalations in Iraq so far, and to what end? What benefit has been realized by this country, the Iraqi people, or the region?

The long-awaited National Intelligence Estimate, prepared collectively by 16 intelligence agencies for the President, was released last week. It paints a bleak picture of the deteriorating situation in Iraq, and it describes the urgent need for conditions to be reversed measurably to stop the violence and widespread polarization of the Iraqi society.

So I call on the President to heed the grave warnings of the National Intelligence Estimate, to listen to his own Iraq Study Group, the Congress, and the American people.

Last month, my colleague Senator BAUCUS called on the administration to map a new course in Iraq. Senator BAUCUS said we must not escalate the conflict, we must train Iraqi troops to stand up for themselves, we must start bringing our troops home as soon as possible, and we must engage Iraqi's neighbors and the world community. He was right then; he is right today.

The solution for a new course in Iraq will not be solely a military one.

Switching to political and diplomatic solutions involving our allies in the region is not a defeatist strategy, but instead an appropriate course for a war of this complexity and magnitude.

The President needs to set a timeline to give the Iraqi people military control of their country. It should be the Iraqi Army—not Montanans, not Americans—disarming bombs and guarding bridges. The administration needs to reinvest in special forces and human intelligence if we are to win the real war on terror.

Nearly 4 years have passed, more than a half a trillion dollars have been spent, more than 3,000 American soldiers have died since the President announced that major combat operations in Iraq had ended and told us: ''Mission Accomplished.''

Funding for this war and its success or failure should have been debated long ago. It is time for a real debate on the direction and strategy of this war, starting with the President's proposal for escalation.

The President must also tell the American people what success means and how it should be quantified. If success is free elections in Iraq, then we should have been gone 2 years ago. If success is toppling Saddam Hussein, then we should have been gone 3 years ago. If it is something else, then the administration needs to be honest with the American people and identify a clear and achievable outcome.

I support the Warner-Levin resolution opposing the President's plan to escalate the war in Iraq. But I want to be clear: I view the Warner-Levin resolution as only a first step. We have a duty to debate the escalation on its merits and let both sides be heard.

This week's efforts to delay a vote on Warner-Levin do nothing to make our troops safer. Blocking an up-or-down vote on this resolution does nothing to bring this bloody war any closer to its close.

I have been here not too long—just a month—and I am still learning the ropes, but make no mistake, we should deliberate, we should not rush to judgment or sentence, but that does not mean we should not debate.

For 3 days we have been debating about whether we should debate the President's plan to escalate the war in Iraq. I have been all over Montana in the last couple of years, and everywhere I went people were and continue to be deeply concerned about the war. They didn't all agree, but there was always a lively and passionate debate. Not a single person told me we should debate about whether to have a debate.

Our troops, the American people, and the Iraqi people deserve an open and honest discussion. We need to ask the tough questions, we need to demand the answers, and we need to bring our troops home as safely and as quickly as possible.

I thank the Chair.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, this afternoon, I rise to add my voice to the current debate on the President's announced plan to reinforce coalition forces in Iraq by sending additional American soldiers and marines to Baghdad and Al Anbar Province in an effort to bring stability to that volatile part of that country.

For some time now, Senators have been clamoring for President Bush to send additional troops to Iraq. They criticized him for trying to accomplish our goals in Iraq without committing sufficient resources to get the job done.

Look, the President has recognized that a change in strategy is absolutely necessary. Many have previously called for this same strategy. But it appears to this Senator that because it is the President's plan, some Senators are predisposed against it.

A simple review of newspaper and Sunday talk show transcripts reveals some Senators appear to have supported the surge before they were against the surge. Senator KERRY on NBC's ''Today'' program on June 29, 2005:

> We don't have enough troops in Iraq. . . . There aren't enough people on the ground. . . . The way you honor the troops and the way you provide a policy to America is to do everything possible to win.

Senator DURBIN on December 21, 2006:

> If we need initially some troops in Baghdad, for example, to quiet the situation, make it more peaceful so that our soldiers start coming home, then I would accept it.

Mr. President, that is exactly what General Petraeus has said, and Secretary Gates before the Armed Services Committee said the same thing. It is an initial surge to try to get Baghdad under control so we can begin bringing our troops home.

Senator DODD on December 18, 2006, said:

> I'd be willing to support some additional people if we needed it in order to get the job done.

He further said:

> Show me some demonstrable evidence that they are coming together as a people—Shias and Sunnis—sitting down and recognizing that they have an obligation to come together as a people. Then I'd be willing to support some additional people if we needed it in order to get the job done.

Senator LEVIN in January of 2007 said:

> A surge would be worth considering. The American people are skeptical about getting in deeper . . . But if it is truly conditional upon the Iraqis actually meeting milestones and if it's part of an overall program of troop reduction that would begin in the next four to six months, it's something that would be worth considering.

Once again, in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee yesterday, that is exactly what Secretary Gates said, that it is a temporary surge in order to try to bring the troops home.

Senator BIDEN on June 29, 2005, said:

> There's not enough force on the ground now to mount a real counterinsurgency.

Senator JACK REED, in a press conference on November 29, 2006, said:

> If the military commanders in Iraq said, we need, for X number of months, 20-plus, 25,000 troops, to do this mission, I would have to listen to that proposal. I think I responded to the question before: That if the military commanders in Iraq said, we need, for X number of months, 20-plus, 25,000, troops to do this mission, and with a reasonable certainty of success, I would have to listen to that proposal, certainly.

Well, Mr. President, within the last 2 weeks, there have been additional developments that would seem to add weight to the argument that this temporary reinforcement of our troops currently in Iraq is not only warranted but necessary to the overall national purpose. Those developments are the unanimous confirmation by this Senate of General Petraeus, who is to become the new commander—he is the new commander of the Iraqi multinational force—also, the testimony of the Iraq Study Group cochairman, relative to the President's plan, before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, and the public release of the National Intelligence Estimate report on the prospects for Iraq's stability.

During his confirmation hearing, General Petraeus, also the author of the Army's new counterinsurgency manual, stressed the fact that he could not succeed in providing needed security for the citizens of Baghdad and Al Anbar Province without the additional troops called for in the President's plan.

General Petraeus further testified at his hearing that it was his opinion that any resolution which stated the Senate did not support the strategy to be carried out by our men and women in uniform in Iraq would be harmful to their morale. Are we going to support General Petraeus or not? The one resolution before us, I believe, is not supporting General Petraeus and the troops.

Last week, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations held a hearing on America's interests in Iraq, at which the witnesses were the Iraq Study Group cochairman, former Secretary of State James Baker, and former Congressman Lee Hamilton. Secretary Baker referenced the Iraq Study Group's report in articulating that group's position on additional troops to Iraq. He stated:

> We could support a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad or to speed up the training and equipping mission if the U.S. Commander in Iraq determines such steps would be effective. The only two conditions are short-term and commander in Iraq determines it would be effective. Both of those conditions have been met.

Mr. Hamilton made it clear his belief that the President's plan ought to be given a chance. He said:

> We did not, in the Iraq Study Group report, come to the conclusion that it was hopeless and, therefore, we should just pull out immediately.

The much anticipated and just released National Intelligence Estimate report entitled ''Prospects for Iraq's

Stability: A Challenging Road Ahead'' was quite candid in its assessment that if coalition forces are withdrawn within the next 12 to 18 months, we will see significant increase in the scale and scope of sectarian conflict in Iraq.

Mr. President, we need to accept the fact that we are engaged in a struggle of biblical proportions. In true American fashion, though, we are doing the right thing. We are attempting to free a people from a life of tyranny and violence. We are also in a struggle against the forces of evil who are bent on our destruction. Do we pack up and leave, even though every voice of reason tells us that Iraq would implode into a terrorist state used by al-Qaida as a launching pad against the infidels, reminiscent of Afghanistan under the Taliban? And those infidels, they think, are us.

As Senator MCCAIN has reminded us time and again, Iraq is not Vietnam. When we left South Vietnam, the Viet Cong did not pursue us back to our shores. Al-Qaida is not the Viet Cong. Al-Qaida has sworn to destroy us and is committed to bringing their brand of terror to America.

President Bush never said the struggle for freedom in Iraq would be easy. But since the President is the one who said that, maybe it doesn't ring quite as true to some. Maybe by quoting another who spoke passionately about similar struggles for freedom, the point could be made more clearly. Back in 1857, Frederick Douglass spoke about the struggle he knew for freedom. He said:

> The whole history of the progress of human liberty shows that all concessions yet made to her august claims have been born of earnest struggle. If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters.

We are introducing freedom to a country and a region that has no history of such freedoms. We cannot expect to spread freedom and democracy to this region simply by wishing it so.

We currently have soldiers and marines in harm's way. We have a plan before us that will aid their mission. That mission is to achieve success and leave behind a stable and democratic Iraq. Yet there are those among us who want to cut and run. There are some among us who simply want to cut and walk. And then there are others who want to have it both ways. They want to express their opposition to the idea of sending additional troops to Iraq without having to do anything that might actually translate their opposition to a reality on the ground.

I belong to another group of thinkers. I belong to a group who believes General Petraeus's plan deserves a chance. I believe the temporary surge in the number of soldiers and marines in Baghdad and Al Anbar is our best chance at getting this right. None of us knows for sure whether it will work. There are always uncertainties in war. Let us all pray, for all our sakes, that this new way works.

Last week, I stood here and spoke about what I thought needed to be done in Iraq. I acknowledged that mistakes have been made in this war and that I did not believe we should be playing politics while our soldiers and marines are deployed and fighting against an enemy bent on destroying our country and our way of life. I called on my fellow Senators then to set party differences aside and focus on winning this war. I am here again this afternoon making that same plea.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I notice there are no other Members here, so I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized for up to 15 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, the Senator from Nevada expressed my feelings in a much more articulate way than I ever could, and one of the last things he said is: Mistakes have been made in this war. I would suggest mistakes have been made in every war. Winston Churchill once said:

> Never, never, never believe any war will be smooth and easy. Always remember, however sure you are that you could easily win, that there would not be a war if the other man did not think he also had a chance to win.

This statement was made many years ago, but it is relevant today. Today, we face an enemy who is determined, adaptive, and willing to go to any means of terror and violence to win. He cannot be negotiated with, and he will not be satisfied until the entire world is brought under his dreadful ideology.

We have seen this kind before. We saw it with Stalin, with Pol Pot, and with Hitler, but never before has an enemy metastasized this way. There is no centralized headquarters we can bomb, no one leader we can eliminate. We will continue to strike terrorism where it appears and track down its leaders but know this will not end the conflict. Victory will come the way it always has. We will destroy the enemy's belief he can win.

Any resolution against the President's plan does two things: It tells the enemy, No. 1, that they have been successful; and, No. 2, it gives them patience to wait us out. They are a very patient people. We have already done ourselves damage by bringing the issue to the public eye. Do you believe they do not watch our news; that they are not scouring our media for any hope or any chink in our resolve? Don't be so naive. Their very survival depends on it. This is the only way they can hope to win. If we cannot destroy their will, we will destroy them.

This sounds brutal and not very reconciling, but I intend it that way. There is a clear choice and no other option. If we do not fight them in Iraq, we will be fighting them in Philadelphia, in Pittsburgh, in Kansas City, in Los Angeles, and in Seattle. We will be playing defensive until, once again, just as occurred after 9/11, our resolve hardens and we summon up the courage to destroy the enemy. And we must because the alternative is what happened to Rome: Factions of internal strife kept the great power tied up for so long that it lost its strength, its will, and its resolve. The period following was known as the Dark Ages, and this is indeed what al-Qaida seeks.

Our country represents the light of freedom and democracy. Yet I fear we have begun a terrible introspective and downward cycle. Our resolve lasts for a few months, maybe a year, but all it takes is enough time and then we break. Our enemy knows this. We can look to our mission in Somalia in 1933, at our reaction to the bombings in Lebanon at the Khobar Towers and in Vietnam. I am not saying we necessarily should have stayed in Vietnam, but I am saying we must recognize that while this introspection guarantees our freedom, it is also our greatest weakness.

There have been no major terrorist attacks on U.S. soil since 9/11. There have been attempts, and we know we have thwarted over 10 operations. However, we also know these were relatively underdeveloped and small in scale. I wish to ask a dark question: Why has al-Qaida not struck again? Because they cannot? We have stepped up our security, but they have shown their destructive creativity in the past. Because they are focused on Iraq and Afghanistan? Perhaps. But I would suggest another option. What if they have chosen not to. What if they have realized the strategy of restraint, pricking us just enough to launch ourselves at them, and then they fade back. We expend ourselves attacking new enemies, building countries, and undermining each other. Politics and personal reputations create an impetus of their own.

We should debate. That is exactly what the Senate body is intended to do. But do not undermine. The new commander in Iraq, General Petraeus, has stated that a resolution of disapproval would hurt his efforts. This is the new guy. Let us keep in mind that we voted unanimously to confirm General Petraeus to take over that very difficult job. When asked by Senator LIEBERMAN about the effect a resolution of disapproval would have on our troops and our enemies, General Petraeus stated that:

> This is a test of will at the end of the day. A commander in such an endeavor would obviously like the enemy to feel there is no hope.

That is what General Petraeus said. He went on to say he does need more troops and he believes the new plan can work.

I recognize there have been mistakes made in Iraq, as we have talked about. The President has also recognized this.

Everyone has recognized this, and the President has taken full responsibility for it. Yet we still find ourselves in a difficult situation, with hard decisions to be made about the best way ahead. These decisions affect many lives, both our soldiers in harm's way and the American people they are pledged to protect. I think we all agree it would be disastrous to leave Iraq precipitously. If we do, we know we can expect increased levels of violence, the spread of extremist ideology, and Iraq itself collapsing into anarchy.

A personal friend of mine, who actually was a commander at Fort Sill in Oklahoma, General Maples, stated that:

> Continued Coalition presence is the primary counter to a breakdown in central authority. Such a breakdown would have grave consequences for the people of Iraq, stability in the region, and the U.S. strategic interest.

John Negroponte and the CIA Director, General Hayden agree with that, as does General Petraeus. So it is not too late to avoid this. I don't think it is time to start cutting our losses and just hope it goes away. We have heard the President ask for our support.

Let me share, on a personal note, that I have had the occasion to be in Iraq more than any other Member of either the House or the Senate, some 12 times now, and the first thing I do is talk to the troops. The troops come up to me, and the first question they ask is: Why is it the media doesn't like us? Why is it they are constantly undermining our efforts here? Why is it the American people don't understand or appreciate what we are doing? I say, yes, the American people do, but a lot of the politicians don't act that way.

I have been very much concerned about this, and I believe any resolution, and we are talking about five or six resolutions now, any resolution that is a resolution of retreat would be a resolution of surrender.

I think it is ludicrous for any Member to say I support the troops but I don't support their mission. You try to explain that to them. I talked to the troops in Fallujah. In all this discussion about, do we need to be training the Iraqis to be fighting their own war—sure we do. That is what we have been doing. We have been doing that since we arrived on the scene in Iraq, and they are very proud and they are taking the frontal positions right now. The Iraqis are doing a good job. Their training has been good. Their equipment is not good, but it is getting better, it is improving.

I stood there at the last election in Fallujah when our marines were there and I talked, through an interpreter, to the Iraqi security forces, and they said they are very proud. We are going to be in a position—please stay with us until we can hold our own here, and that won't be too long. I know that is true. I know they have come up with the numbers, now, that would be equal to about 10 divisions. I believe this can happen.

This is very serious. Politics has crept into this thing. But any support of a resolution of surrender not only is undermining our troops and saying to our troops: We don't support you, but also saying to the loved ones of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice that they have died in vain. We can't let that happen.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, we have come to a critical crossroads with respect to our operations in Iraq. After the Iraq Study Group spent months considering the issue of the best policy going forward, suggesting a phased redeployment along with other measures, diplomatic measures that would enhance the security of the United States and protect our soldiers there in Iraq, the President had the opportunity to accept those recommendations. It was a bipartisan panel of eminent Americans—James Baker and Lee Hamilton and so many others. The President specifically rejected them, not just in substance but in tone. In his speech a few weeks ago, he declared that he had learned very little from the Iraq Study Group, that he was not committed to a phased redeployment, he was committed to an escalation of approximately 20,000 troops and a change in tactics in Baghdad.

I think he had the opportunity at that moment to do several things. First, he could have accepted the wisdom of the Iraq Study Group. But, more important, he could have communicated to the American public that his policy was based on the reality in Iraq, that he had learned from a series of mistakes he and his administration had made, and that he could have sustained a way forward in Iraq. He didn't do that, and I think the American people reacted as they should have reacted, with declining confidence in his leadership and, frankly, posing the fundamental question of, How does one sustain any policy when 70 percent of the U.S. population considers it to be erroneous and not in the best interests of this country going forward? I believe the President squandered the last opportunity he had to rally people behind his policy.

Now we are in the midst of a debate, we hope, about that policy. We are being stymied in terms of bringing this to the floor in a clear and clarion vote that tells the American people where we stand as individual Senators with respect to the President's plan for escalation. We are being frustrated in the sense that there is an attempt to present other issues and not the issue of the moment, the issue under debate. There is no debate about our support for American soldiers around the globe and marines and sailors and airmen and airwomen. We support them. We think their mission should be changed to protect them and to advance the interests of our country, but there is no stinting in our support of these valiant young Americans.

The issue which divides this Senate and the issue which captures the feelings and the passions of the American public is whether we will stand in approval or disapproval of the President's proposal to escalate forces in Iraq. I believe that vote should come. That vote should be clear. The vote should stand by itself, not shrouded by other measures that are designed not to address the concerns of American people but simply to give the President additional cover.

What has happened since the last 3-plus years, from the invasion of Iraq—indeed, preceding the invasion of Iraq, in this Senate, under the control of the Republicans, has not done a good job at all of oversight, of investigation, of asking critical questions. Where was the Republican leadership, in the fall of 2002 and early 2003, when they should have been asking a simple question: What if we win the conventional battle? What about the occupation? Where is the plan? Where are the resources? How many Americans will it take to secure a large country with a population of about 26 million people, with a history of intersectarian tensions, with a history of a colonial past under the British that has established, some would say artificially, the boundaries of this nation? Those questions were not asked seriously and consistently and, as a result, this administration made huge mistakes when it came to the issue of how to successfully translate a conventional victory against the Iraqi military forces into a successful transition to a stable country. Now we see Iraq enthralled in doubt and violence that seems to be unable to be quenched. Our American forces are in the middle of that.

It is interesting, when we come to this point, to look seriously at the National Intelligence Estimate. One of the grave deficiencies we recognize today—some of us recognized it in October of 2002—is that the intelligence being used to sell this operation was flawed. Now I think we have a much more precise and carefully adjusted view of what is happening in Iraq today.

If you look at the NIE, it presents to us some profound contradictions.

First, and I agree with this assessment, is that the violence today is principally the result of sectarian conflict. The accelerators that raise the tempo of this violence can be found in the insurgent groups, al-Qaida in Iraq, some of these Shia militias, but the underlying battles today are between sectarian groups. The NIE describes this as a winner-take-all approach, as an existential battle between Shias—who feel a sense of insecurity given the history, particularly the last decade, of total oppression by a Sunni minority—and Sunnis, who feel a sense of entitlement that is going to be frustrated by the new, emerging order in Iraq. These existential battles, as the NIE indicates, are in a sense self-sustaining.

But here is where the confusion, the conflict, the contradiction comes

about. Most of the remedies we are all talking about involve reconciliation—political sectarian reconciliation. The issue—and one which will be decided in the next months and weeks in Iraq—is, can any existential conflict ever be reconciled? Has this conflict reached a point where it is truly self-sustaining and our forces in the middle of it are unable to be a moderating force at all?

My view and the view of so many others is that when you look at this situation on the ground and you consider what can be done, the decisive actions must be those of the Iraqi Government. They are political actions; that the presence of our military forces is important but not decisive. Certainly the size of our military forces is probably not as decisive as actions that must be undertaken by the Maliki government reining in the militias, truly trying to reach out beyond this huge sectarian chasm for reconciliation. These political, economic, and social decisions are not going to be made simply because we have increased our presence in Baghdad by 20 percent or we have changed the tactics.

Another aspect of this debate is the concentration, almost exclusively, on the military aspects of the President's plan. That, frankly, has been one of the great shortcomings and faults of the administration—and of this and previous Congresses, I should say—in terms of our approach in Iraq. Any military commander on the ground will tell you that they are buying time and that time has to be used for economic progress and political progress. The component in the President's plan that I heard stresses an increase of 20,000 soldiers, but where is the progress in terms of not only Iraqi decisionmakers making tough decisions but American advisers—State Department officials, USAID officials, Justice Department officials—going over there to help start the other side, the other part of the process, the economic progress, the social progress, the political mentoring? That has never been the case. As a result, our strategy has failed consistently.

Unless this plan has complementary and reinforcing elements—military, political, and economic—it, too, will fail. I do not see, frankly, the complementary political and economic support necessary to carry off this plan.

What we have is 20,000 troops. If you look at the doctrine—and it is interesting because General Petraeus, the designated commander, is one of the principal authors of this new doctrine—that doctrine today would call for 120,000 troops in Baghdad based upon the size in Baghdad. We are sending an additional 20,000, which means our presence, American presence, is about 30,000 troops. The Iraqis have committed to roughly 55,000 troops, which brings us to a total of 85,000, but that still is roughly 35,000 troops short of the doctrine.

In addition, I don't think anyone considers that the Iraqi forces can truly muster 55,000 effective troops. We have already seen the reports come in that brigades, Iraqi brigades, are showing up at 50 percent strength, and of those, one has to ask seriously how many are effective fighters. Where are the shortcomings? If it is half a brigade and they are all privates and corporals, that is not an effective fighting force, or if it is half a fighting brigade and they are all majors and lieutenant colonels, that is not an effective fighting force. So we are seeing a situation, even in military terms, where this surge is probably lacking significantly in terms of the size of the force.

In addition, we all understand that there is a divided command. One of the key issues in any military operation is unity of command. There is an Iraqi commander who is selected probably for his political reliability more than his tactical or technical skill. There is also a situation in that our new tactics require significantly more enablers. These enablers are the translators, the civil affairs officers, the combat service support officers to supply these outposts now in each neighborhood. In fact, the Government Accountability Office has done a report indicating that if a 21,000 increment is made, it might turn out to be closer to 50,000 if you truly have all the support troops you need to get the job done.

There are so many shortcomings in just the political and military aspects of this plan. So I believe, again, this is an opportunity, a moment we have to address this plan, this proposal of the President's, in a very serious way and take a stand on it one way or the other. I hope we can do that. I hope we can do that in the intervening days, certainly before the end of this month, or the end of, I hope, this week.

Now, I think there are other aspects that are important to consider when we talk about the situation as we go forward. I will go back to the point I think hindered us consistently throughout our operations in Iraq, and that is despite the extraordinary valor and technical skill of our military forces, they have never been truly complemented by non-Department of Defense personnel, by the State Department officials, by the Agriculture officials. I can recall visiting Fallujah twice in the middle of Anbar Province. Those marines are doing a magnificent job along with many Army units that are there. There is one State Department official in Fallujah who is charged with mentoring, with advice, with reconstruction, with all of these things. That is not adequate, and I don't see any indication in the President's proposal that is going to change. This is all about, again, trying to take a military solution to what is a complicated military, political, and economic problem. It hasn't worked for 3 years, it is not likely to work, and I think we have to take a stand on that proposal.

One of the other consequences I think that is ensuing from this focus on a purely military approach is we are losing out in terms of diplomatic leverage in the region. Just this week, the Saudis are meeting with delegates from Hamas and Fatah and the Palestinian Authority because the American leadership has been so lacking. We have to, I think, have a diplomatic policy to complement anything we do within Iraq. We haven't done that and it does not appear to be part of the President's agenda.

We have a situation which is grievous and which I think requires something more than simply more of the same, and that is just about what the President is offering. This is not a brand new diplomatic initiative; this is not a large-scale economic push to complement military action; this is a modest increase of forces, although I think this increase is not justified, together with new tactics in Baghdad. But again, I don't think that is going to be sufficient action. We have to start looking beyond the next several weeks and down the next several months and, indeed, the next several years.

The strategy that I think is inevitable is a phased redeployment of our forces and renewed diplomatic activity. It represents a focus on missions that are more central to the defense of the United States. The first is continue to aggressively go after those international terrorists, the al-Qaida units. We have done that. We continue, as the military indicates, to obtrude them very successfully. In fact, there are similarities of that mission to the recently conducted operations in Somalia where we sent in aircraft with some liaison from local Ethiopian forces on the ground to go out and take out identified terrorists there. That mission should continue in Iraq and frankly in Somalia and many other places where we can identify and find international terrorists.

Second, we have a continuing obligation, I think, to strengthen the Iraqi security forces. Ultimately it is their battle. We have made some progress with the Army, but we have to make more progress. That is a mission we should undertake and continue.

Third, there is the obligation, I think, to maintain the territorial integrity of Iraq, to make sure the locals do not take advantage of what is a tumultuous situation within Iraq. That, too, I think, is a valid mission, and it can be performed much differently than we are proposing to conduct this mission in Baghdad, by redeploying forces within Iraq. In fact, it was interesting yesterday before the Armed Services Committee when Secretary Gates was asked, and I think it was by Senator WARNER: Is this the last chance? If this fails, then all is lost? I think he quite authoritatively and thoughtfully said: No, of course, we have to have contingencies. Of course, there are other approaches we can take. Of course, there are other missions that can be assigned.

One of the dangers and one of the persistent aspects of the President's

rhetoric has been always summoning up the false dichotomy. Recall, back in October 2002, what was the choice the President proposed? Invade Iraq or do nothing and let Saddam and the terrorists win. We recall the rhetoric. It seems hollow now when we think back to it. What was left out of the equation, of course, was what was already being done: international inspectors of the United Nations on the ground in Iraq looking for weapons of mass destruction, supposedly the source of our great conflict with the Iraq regime.

There are other things that could have been done, too, much short of an invasion. There were, in fact, reports of terrorist activities. Zarqawi was in the Kurdish region. What would have prevented the United States from launching a very discrete military operation against Zarqawi in the fall of 2002 in the Kurdish area, an area we were helping to protect by our overflights of aircraft? Nothing, except, I believe, the administration didn't want to give up a good rhetorical device: this supposed terrorist presence in a part of Iraq that Saddam did not control.

Again, here now, it is back to the false choices: Surge 20,000 troops or watch the country collapse as we leave precipitously next week. That is not the choice. The choice is missions that are more effectively aligned with our national security interests: going after terrorists, training Iraqi security forces, protecting the territorial integrity of Iraq, complemented with active diplomatic actions, complemented with, we hope, progress by the Iraqis themselves in political decisionmaking. That, I think, is the way to go.

We have, again, I think a very difficult situation before us. It requires not only debate, but I think it requires at this moment a decision by the Senate on a very simple proposal: where we stand with respect to the President's proposal for escalation. Now, others have come to the floor and pointed out past statements that have been made with respect to increasing American forces. I have been open to these arguments. Frankly, at this juncture I don't feel persuaded. In the past, when someone had asked me: Would you increase the size of forces in Iraq, certainly in those first few days after the invasion, and after July of 2003 when I visited Iraq and found there were thousands of weapons dumps that were not being protected, I came back here and I think, along with Senator HAGEL, was one of the first to call for an increased size of our Army so we could deploy more forces to Iraq. But that window has closed very dramatically and nothing, frankly, was done by the administration to respond to those concerns.

I have said publicly that if a commander in the field came to me and said: We need additional forces, I would look at that proposal very carefully. In fact, in a press conference I was asked:

So in no way would you be on board with the McCain plan to surge in with, you know, 50,000 strong additional forces on the ground, you would not be in favor of that?

My response:

I think I responded to the question before, that if the military commanders in Iraq said we need for X number of months 20 plus, 25,000 troops to do this mission and within reasonable certainty was assessed, I would have to listen to that proposal, sir.

Well, I have listened to that proposal and I find it wanting. I find it wanting, based on the doctrine of the U.S. Army as it has evolved today. I find it wanting because of the lack of complementary and civilian support for that proposal. I find it wanting because of the lack of any serious indication that the Government of Iraq will make those tough political decisions. So I have considered it as I said I would, but I don't think it is the right way to proceed. Not at all.

Now, I am not alone, and I don't think it would be a shock to anyone to suggest this issue of escalation has prompted criticism from a wide group of individuals. GEN Colin L. Powell, former Secretary of State, said in December:

I am not persuaded that another surge of troops into Baghdad for the purposes of suppressing this sectarian violence, this civil war, will work.

Again, I think General Powell's insights and experience are very critical at this moment.

The Joint Chiefs indicated, at least as reported in the Washington Post in December, using anonymous White House sources, that they were opposed, that White House officials are aggressively promoting the concept over the unanimous disagreement of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. That is in December.

Time Magazine reported that General Abizaid said he opposes more troops because it would discourage Iraqis from taking responsibility for their own security. Here is a general, an officer who has served for decades, the most knowledgeable individual when it comes to Middle East military-political issues within the United States Army, within the Department of Defense, and that is his opinion.

Robert Gates—before he became Secretary of Defense, or before he was confirmed, according to two administration officials asking not to be named—Robert Gates expressed his skepticism about a troop surge in Iraq on his first day on the job—excuse me; he was Secretary of Defense—at a Pentagon meeting overseeing the Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marines.

We are not alone. There have been some perhaps eleventh-hour conversions for this surge, but I think there are a number of individuals with significant experience and insight, unquestioned patriots, who question this proposal.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. President, I see there are other speakers on the floor, so at this time I ask unanimous consent that at 2 p.m., the period for morning business be extended for 60 minutes, with the time divided and controlled as follows: 30 minutes each for Senators MENENDEZ and ROBERTS or their designees; that the Senate then proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of GEN George W. Casey, Jr.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas is recognized.

IRAQ

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, last Friday I had the privilege of attending and speaking before a ''Farewell Dinner'' in honor of LTG David Petraeus at the Command and Staff College of the U.S. Army at Fort Leavenworth, KS.

To say the least, it was quite an evening of tribute in behalf of the general and his wife, who has become admired and beloved serving as the Commanding General of the Army's Intellectual Center. I estimate there were around 250 officers and their wives and many from the Leavenworth community to pay tribute to General and Mrs. Petraeus, to wish them well, and to express pride and confidence in the general's immediate mission. He left for Iraq this past Monday, 2 days ago.

Throughout the evening I had the opportunity to again visit with David Petraeus, his feelings about his new mission, his impressive knowledge with regard to the war in Iraq, the history of the region, and his understanding with regard to the nature of past wars of insurgency and the insurgency we face in Iraq. While at the Command and Staff school, he wrote the Army's new manual on counterterrorism. Let me say as a former marine who helped write a similar manual years ago for the U.S. Marine Corps, I find this man unique in his knowledge and his command ability.

I made a few remarks at the dinner, and being a Senator, why, the remarks turned into a speech with some additional strongly held beliefs that I had penciled out in addition to my prepared remarks in behalf of General and Mrs. Petraeus. I thought twice about saying some very frank and candid views, but as everybody knows, marines don't hold back. So concluding my comments, I was glad I said what I said in that virtually everybody in the room—all 250—told me that I had said what they could not say. Those who wear their officer rank on their shoulders or their enlisted stripes on their sleeves in most cases do not comment on policy decisions or politics no matter how strongly they feel. They follow orders and they serve their country.

I feel somewhat the same trepidation today. However, I believe my remarks to the general, his officer corps, veterans of previous wars, are dead on to

the issue we face in this debate that we have been talking about here on the floor of the Senate.

Before I express my views, I would stress I regret that we are at a stalemate in this body allegedly debating the issue of vital national security, and I think most in the Senate wish we could do just that and do it with comity, cooperation and, yes, in bipartisan fashion. The American people, who are concerned and frustrated and angry about the war, would certainly appreciate that, but that is not the case.

This issue is wrapped around a partisan and political axle procedure. My friends across the aisle insist that we debate and vote on one of the three nonbinding resolutions regarding the war in Iraq, and only that resolution. They wanted to debate and vote on the Warner resolution and call it a day. The Warner resolution supports the troops but not the mission. Let me repeat that: It supports the troops but not the mission. That is a most unique position, to say the least, and that is about as far as my colleagues across the aisle wish to wade in the waters of withdrawal at this particular time.

I also mention it might be helpful if we could consider the Feingold resolution. Senator FEINGOLD's resolution actually does something and should be considered in the Senate, as well. Others wish to debate and vote upon the McCain resolution and the Gregg resolution, but we are being denied that opportunity.

Now, to those in the press—of which I see none—those covering this debate within the media, how on Earth can you describe this situation by writing headlines in 15-second news sound bites, stating Republicans had voted to stifle debate on the war? Yes, let's debate and vote on the Warner resolution. That is entirely proper and right. But let's also debate and vote on resolutions offered by Senators MCCAIN and GREGG and, perhaps, FEINGOLD. By the way, I intend to vote for McCain and Gregg if I get the chance. I do not share the resolution in regard to Senator FEINGOLD, but I defend his honor to introduce it and to debate it.

We are not stifling or shutting down debate. They are. Hello up there. Is there any way you can discern that? I can help you. I majored in journalism. I used to be a newspaper editor. This is like playing baseball with one strike and you are out. What happened to my other two strikes? Well, sorry, back to the dugout. We are going to go to the continuing resolution. We run this ball game.

In any case, in my remarks last Friday at Fort Leavenworth, I said to General Petreaus and the crowd that was assembled in his honor:

Throughout our history as a Nation there have been numerous times when a Commander in Chief badly needed a Commanding General with keen intellect and raw courage. However, I do not think that it is a slight exaggeration to suggest the last time one was this badly needed was 144 years ago, the year 1853, when President Lincoln covered General Grant.

There are other historical allegories of tremendous consequence. General Washington selected Nathaniel Green at a crucial time in our Revolutionary War. Mr. Green was a blacksmith's assistant. There was no understanding of rank at this time. And he reputedly stuttered badly. He must have led by example.

As most military historians know, Grant was discharged from the Army for drinking. He went back home to Illinois. He failed in farming. And he failed in running a mercantile store. Four months into the war, he joined the Illinois Volunteer Regiment, was reinstalled as an officer. Lincoln chose Grant over many, many others.

As an aside, Sherman was a good friend of Grant and was discharged for ''insanity.'' When he came back to the Army, he made a famous remark about his friend: ''He was with me when I was insane and I was with him when he was drunk.''

Then, of course, there was Ike. Selected by General Marshall and agreed to by Franklin Roosevelt, he was picked due to his particular talent of getting people, some with tremendous egos, to come together in common cause. Eisenhower was picked over 30 to 40 senior officers.

Then, just as now, our Nation stands at a critical crossroads. Now, just as then, the freedom of many thousands of people is at stake. Also at stake is the safety and security of the United States of America.

Now, remember, these remarks came at a dinner for General Petreaus at the U.S. Army Command and Staff College at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas. So I said to the general: General Petreaus, you and I have not been personally acquainted over a long period of years. Yet in our relatively short span of time I have come to know you well. I have had many stimulating and enjoyable conversations with you over a wide range of issues—Lawrence of Arabia, the British experience in Iraq—so I know full well you are exactly the right man for the job at the right time.

Our brave young men and women in uniform deserve nothing but the very best leadership, and they are getting it with General Petreaus.

I told him: You have captured America's imagination and enter this job with an enormous reservoir of goodwill.

However, it is a paradox of enormous irony that the Senate confirmed General Petreaus without a dissenting vote—not one—a vote of confidence unique given today's controversy, turmoil, and times.

Yet, at the same time, the same Senators who give you their vote of confidence are now in the business of proposing what I call ''confetti resolutions,'' supporting you and the troops but not the mission you are about to undertake. That, to me, is unprecedented for the Senate and, to me, it is astounding. These resolutions are nonbinding. They have no legislative impact. They are the so-called sense-of-the-Senate resolutions—meaningless except for the message you wish to send to the Executive and the folks back home or for whatever purpose you might have a sense-of-the-Senate resolution. With all due respect, we have crossed the Rubicon with regard to sending mixed messages to our allies, our troops, the American people, the media, and, yes, our adversaries. Don't forget our adversaries.

Words have consequences. Rest assured, unlike some of my colleagues, our adversaries will read every word and try to figure out and analyze each sentence of these resolutions. And I suspect they will scratch their heads and try to discern the sense and the reading of a resolution that states support for the troops and our new commander with new rules of engagement with a limited timeframe for achieving and reporting benchmarks of progress but that opposes the mission. That mixed message should cause quite a bit of head scratching among the estimated 31 terrorist organizations we have planning various attacks around the world.

However, my real concern is that the Senate is not considering or even talking about the probable consequences of these actions, let alone our responsibilities should they happen. I make it clear, I don't question the intent, purpose, or patriotism of any Senator, regardless of the resolution, but I do question judgment and the law of unintended effects. Bluntly put, with all of this debate with regard to nonbinding resolutions, we appear like lemmings, splashing in a sea of public concern, frustration, and anger over the war in Iraq. I understand that.

In this regard, I should stress, I do not know of anybody in this Senate or the House of Representatives or anyone in America who does not want our troops home at the earliest possible date, and stability in Iraq, if possible. That is not the issue.

When all of this confetti settles—and it is settling, apparently, because we are going to a continuing resolution and we will not have a vote on any of the resolutions—the end result of all this frenzy will be: General, you and the troops have our solid support, but we don't support your mission. However, press on, and good luck.

What kind of message is that? This is not a profile in courage. This is not the Senate's finest hour. If we are going to debate and vote on nonbinding resolutions, let's at least consider resolutions that will send a clear message or that can be of useful purpose. In that regard, we should consider the McCain resolution that lists benchmarks of progress, that General Petreaus has told me would be useful in his discussions with Prime Minister Maliki, certainly the Gregg resolution that supports funding for our troops in harm's way. But that is the killer in this debate because my colleagues across the aisle do not want to vote on the Gregg resolution. Now we are not going to vote on any resolution. The only thing we voted on was cloture.

As a matter of fact, I think we should vote on a resolution, as I said before, proposed by Senator FEINGOLD, a resolution that certainly does something. I do not agree with his resolution, but he is at least forthright and has the courage and sends a clear message.

As the former chairman of the Intelligence Committee in the Senate, let me stress what has not happened in the Congress or the media and has received very little public discussion regarding this challenge that we face in Iraq. No one is talking about the consequences of what will happen if we simply withdraw. And we may just do that because I do not believe this war can or should be sustained if we do not see progress in the next 6 months.

I would also like to point out that most of the time deadlines for withdrawal that have been proposed or are in the nonbinding resolutions mirror exactly the same time period that General Petreaus told the Committee on Armed Services he would follow in reporting whether this new effort is making measurable progress along the lines of the benchmarks within the McCain resolution. The obvious question is, Who can make a better judgment? Who can better make that judgment, General Petreaus, in theater, or Senators conducting theater?

We have not discussed the difficult policy decisions that will confront us if it becomes necessary to withdraw or even how to withdraw. The reality is, what will we do when certain consequences take place? These are the possible, if not probable, consequences we should be confronting, debating, and explaining to the American people and the media, even if some have a deaf ear. First, a dramatic increase in sectarian violence quickly escalating to a civil war, not the civil war that people say exists today but a real civil war and a humanitarian disaster far more devastating than what is happening now; Shia versus Shia, Sunni versus Sunni, Shia versus Sunni. What do we do?

Second, given a civil war and a struggle for control, we can expect an incursion of Sunni troops from other Middle Eastern countries to prevent an Iranian takeover of Iraq and the very real possibility of an Iraq led by Muqtada al-Sadr whose street appeal will endanger their own governments. When that happens, the war becomes regional. What do we do?

Third, we can expect an Iraq dominated by Iran, thus completing a Shia crescent with Iran and Iraq and Syria and Lebanon—and Lebanon is going through its own problems, to say the least. Today, countries such as Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt are talking about building their own nuclear programs, given Iran's nuclear ambitions and their progress. Iran just refused inspectors from the IAEA. With the possibility of Shia Muslims and Sunni Muslims each working to achieve nuclear capability and weapons, what does Israel do? What do we do?

Fourth, Iraq will become a safe haven for terrorists. This time, it is for real. No, not the 2002 NIE, National Intelligence Estimate, that we all agree was an egregious error. What do we do?

Fifth, in their eyes, with defeat of the ''Great Satan'' only months away—a clear signal by this body and perhaps inevitable—terrorists around the world are already emboldened, waiting us out and planning more attacks. That is, of course, if you believe what they say. So what do we do?

Sixth, we can expect a perceived, if not real, lack of American resolve in the eyes of adversaries and potential adversaries around the world, resulting in additional national security threats. Read Putin and Belarus; Kim Jong Il, with his penchant for missile launches on the Fourth of July; read Hugo Chavez—the Southern Hemisphere's new Castro—nationalizing his oil production and directly involved in five different countries. What about American resolve? What do we do?

I realize in today's climate the obvious answer to ''What do we do?'' is simply to blame President Bush. But the point is that globally and over the long term, this is not a Bush issue or a Democratic or Republican issue or even how you feel about Iraq or the views of the so-called international community.

Even as we argue about whether we debate and vote on one resolution or three—or apparently just have a vote on cloture and say that is the end of it—terrorist organizations and their second-generation affiliates—guided and inspired—are plotting attacks against the United States and throughout the world, even as I speak. It is obvious we cannot really sustain the status quo in Iraq. But while we debate how to proceed, they are not giving up.

Now, given the fact there were at least five successful attacks killing Americans—and others that, thank God, were not successful—before President Bush came to office and before military action in Iraq and given the fact that this threat will face the next President—yes, the next President—and future world leaders, surely, surely we can figure out it makes no sense to fight each other when the terrorists, then and now and in the future, do not kill according to party affiliation, nationality, race, age, or gender. If you were on one of those planes the terrorists were planning to send—nine of them—over the Atlantic to American cities, and they went down and exploded in an American city or simply went down in the ocean, it would not make any difference if you were Democratic, Republican, liberal, conservative, or anything—you would be dead. It would not make any difference.

We do not need a Republican approach to national security and the war. We do not need a Democratic approach to national security and the war. We need an American approach to our national security and the war and our individual freedoms.

This is a time to engage in honest dialog to work together and think through and agree on strategy that will defeat our enemies and make the American people safe—look at those consequences of our actions that we have not even discussed on what may happen—and, yes, bring our troops home but in a way that we do not have to send them back.

My colleagues, I started my remarks by saying the majority of these comments came from a speech I gave at the dinner honoring GEN David Petraeus and his wife Holly at our Leavenworth Command and Staff College in Kansas last Friday prior to David Petraeus leaving for Iraq this Monday. I closed those remarks by saying I was confident that under his leadership, this new mission with new rules of engagement, our chances of success were greater because failure is not in David Petraeus. It never has and it never will be. So America's destiny and God's blessings are riding on the shoulders of GEN David Petraeus. And I closed by saying I was proud to offer him my full support and to call him a friend.

So I say to the leadership, with all due respect, and to all of my colleagues, let us end this business of nonbinding resolutions and get these confetti resolutions behind us. Vote on all four. Vote on all three. But let's not have the headlines that Republicans are trying to shut down debate on Iraq. That is just not the case. We should vote in regard to the Warner resolution, the McCain resolution, the Gregg resolution, and as far as I am concerned the Feingold resolution, if we must. We have all had a chance now to discuss the war. We need to vote on the three resolutions—maybe four—and come together with bipartisan commitment—a difficult and perhaps impossible task but a task that must be undertaken for the sake of our national security.

Mr. President, how much time do I have remaining?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has 10 minutes 23 seconds.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I yield the 10 minutes 23 seconds to my colleague and my friend, Senator THUNE.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from South Dakota is recognized.

Mr. THUNE. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Kansas for yielding and commend him on an incredibly eloquent and insightful explanation of the events of the day, why what we are doing in Iraq is so important. He is someone who has 10 years of experience on the Armed Services Committee. Has served as chairman of the Intelligence Committee. He has a great depth of knowledge when it comes to national security matters, foreign policy, and particularly with respect to the current debate about the Middle East. So I thank him for his great comments.

I just want to point out that with respect to this debate, I had watched, as everyone else did, I think, yesterday what unfolded on the floor. I believe what happened in the last 24 hours has demonstrated what a charade this whole Iraqi resolution process has been.

This is serious business. This is the most serious business we will deal with in the Senate. Young Americans are fighting and dying in Iraq. I would say, having been to Iraq on three different occasions—most recently about 6 weeks ago—things in Baghdad are not going well. There are other parts of Iraq where we have made much better progress, even in some parts of western Iraq where we have gotten some buy-in from some of the local sheiks who have decided to participate in the democratic process and support the effort to provide security in that region of Iraq. But the fact is, things in Baghdad are not good.

What that has prompted is a change in strategy. We have undertaken a new strategy. That strategy, of course, is something where the Democrats in the Senate—less Senator LIEBERMAN—and a handful of Republicans have decided to put together a resolution to oppose. That resolution, in my view, is an absolutely wrong way to approach what we are trying to accomplish in Iraq today, but it is obviously their prerogative to be able to do that. I think they ought to get a vote on it. I will not vote with them. I disagree, as I said, intensely with that resolution and its message. I know many of my colleagues on the other side intend that message to be different than it is perceived by our troops and by our enemies, but I think what we have to contend with here when we send a message like that is, how is that perceived by those audiences that are going to be impacted by it and, namely, our troops, the young men and women who wear the uniform, and, of course, obviously, the enemy they are trying to fight? It is the absolute wrong message to send at the very time our troops are embarking on a new mission.

This may be our last shot at success in Iraq. We have a new commander, GEN David Petraeus, whom my colleague from Kansas just mentioned. We have new rules of engagement on the ground in Baghdad, and we have new conditions for the Iraqis to meet. They have to take on the militias. There are military benchmarks they have to meet. There are economic benchmarks. They have to figure out a way to divide the oil revenues. They have agreed to invest $10 billion in infrastructure. There are political benchmarks they have to meet, holding provincial elections.

There have been resolutions offered on the floor that address those benchmarks but at the same time express support for this mission. Everyone agrees on the consequences of failure. As, again, my colleague from Kansas so very eloquently pointed out, it would be a humanitarian disaster in Iraq—possible genocide, possible full-blown civil war at a minimum regional instability, Shiite versus Shiite, Sunni versus Shiite; an increase in Iranian power on the Arabian peninsula. I do not know if this new strategy is going to work, but I do know this: We owe it to those who have sacrificed so much to achieve success in that mission already to make sure we give this strategy an opportunity to work.

I mentioned yesterday that I attended a couple of National Guard welcoming-home ceremonies over the weekend in my home State of South Dakota, one of which was Charlie Battery, a unit which was deployed to Iraq for over a year and a unit which was hit incredibly hard. They were in a very dangerous area in Baghdad going about the mission of trying to train the Iraqi security police in that area. Because of some IEDs, we lost four of those young men. And their families—as I visit with them—cannot help but show the pain they are experiencing and yet the incredible sense of loyalty and duty they feel to their country and to the missions and what we are trying to accomplish in Iraq. Two others of those were soldiers, one seriously injured, another also injured, both recovering from those injuries. But the point, very simply, is there is a cost to what we are trying to accomplish in Iraq. Many of our troops have already borne that cost. The point, very simply, is their sacrifice should not be in vain.

The troops we are sending now into this region are going whether we like it or not and irrespective of what the Senate does. The Senate will be sending them a vote of no confidence if we adopt a resolution saying: We support you, but we do not believe you can achieve victory, we do not believe you can accomplish your mission there in Iraq, we do not believe you can win.

On the substance, that resolution is a bad idea, but, more importantly, it seems to me it was designed more as a political statement. That came into full view yesterday when the Republican leader gave the Democratic leader exactly what they had wanted, which was a debate here on the floor of the Senate on two resolutions. We insisted on more resolutions. As my colleague from Kansas said, we wanted to have a debate on the Warner resolution, on the McCain resolution, on the Gregg resolution, even on the Feingold resolution. As I said, we could all decide how we are going to vote, but we would enter into that debate. And there ought to be, if there is going to be a debate in the Senate, a full debate. But, frankly, the Democrats objected to even debating two resolutions, the Warner resolution and the alternative Gregg resolution, because that would have forced them to vote on funding, a vote they did not want to have.

The American people deserve a full debate, not a one-sided debate, not a debate in which one side dictates the terms. This ought to be a debate about the full range of options that are available, the full views of the Members of this body who represent their constituencies across this country.

I heard one of my colleagues say—last week, I think it was, on the Democratic side—they wanted a full-throated debate. Well, we saw what a hoax that was yesterday. The agenda was exposed, and the charade about a full-throated debate came to a crashing halt.

The American people and the Members of this body deserve a debate. This is the most important issue of our time. As I said earlier, young Americans are fighting and dying in Iraq. But if we are going to debate this issue in the Senate, let's make this debate about substance, not about political statements. Let's make sure all the views in this body are heard.

We tried to do that yesterday by essentially agreeing to what the Democratic leadership had asked for; that is, two resolutions, the Warner resolution, which I happen to disagree with and would vote against, and an alternative resolution that would address the issue of funding. The Democrats objected to that. I hope that if this issue reemerges on the floor of the Senate that it not be a one-sided debate, it be a full debate, so the American people and those families who have sacrificed so much for this cause get the debate they deserve and an opportunity to have their views heard on the floor of the Senate.

Mr. President, I thank you and yield back the remainder of my time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Jersey is recognized.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, the question that should be before the Senate is: Do you support the President's escalation of the war? Don't confuse it. Don't obfuscate it. Let's have a clean vote. The only charade that is being played is by those who do not want to have a clean vote on this most fundamental question.

As a Senator, John F. Kennedy wrote a Pulitzer Prize-winning book titled ''Profiles in Courage.'' His book told the stories of eight Senators from both sides of the aisle who took a stand based on principle and risked their careers to do so. Today, almost 50 years later, I believe we, too, must take a stand based on principle. Today, I believe all of us who walk on the same floor where Senator John Kennedy once stood should heed his words when he said:

> The true democracy, living and growing and inspiring . . . will not condemn those whose devotion to principles leads them to unpopular courses, but will reward courage, respect honor, and ultimately recognize right.

Today is an opportunity for every Member of the Senate to be a profile in courage. Frankly, I am disappointed in my Senate colleagues who voted against debating Senator WARNER's resolution on Iraq. With their vote, all they have done is delay honest debate on a failed foreign policy that has been misguided since the beginning. I don't believe this Senate should turn its back on the American people and cast their lot with the President in his escalation of the war in Iraq. I believe those who support the President's ill-

advised plan should be willing to stand behind that principle and go on record, rather than hide behind parliamentary maneuvers to avoid a vote.

Our colleagues should not be running interference for the President on the floor of the Senate. In fact, I never supported the administration's war—a war of choice, not of necessity; a war based on fiction, not on fact; a war fought without enough troops from the very beginning and designed with no plan to win the peace. I didn't vote for the war, and I certainly would not vote for an escalation of the war.

I was in the minority when I voted against the war in 2002. I was in the minority, again, when I voted last year to transition and bring our troops home over a period of time. But the majority of the American people sent a clear message this last November. They said the President's plan for the Iraq war has failed. The American people elected the Senate and this Congress to change the course in Iraq. It is about time we started listening because it is clear the President has not. He didn't listen to his generals. He didn't listen to the Iraq Study Group. He didn't listen to anyone who disagreed with him. And he certainly has not listened to the American people. That is the only explanation for an Iraq plan that is simply more of the same.

As one of the witnesses before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee said:

When you're in a hole, stop digging.

The President's escalation plan will not work. Look at the news over the past few days as the first wave of the new escalation troops has arrived. At least 130 people were killed and over 300 wounded on Sunday, in the deadliest single bomb blast since the U.S. invasion almost 4 years ago. The U.S. military tells us that the four U.S. helicopters that have crashed in the past 2 weeks were actually shot down, with a fifth one down today. And Iraqi insurgents are using new tactics to shoot down our helicopters. The Brookings Institute says the number of daily attacks by insurgents and militias has gone from approximately 32 in November of 2003 to 185 in November of 2006, with Iraqi civilian deaths going from 1,250 to 4,000 in that same period.

Michael O'Hanlon, an expert from Brookings, said that Iraq has become ''one of the 3 or 4 most violent places on earth.'' And this escalation and violence has happened while U.S. troops were there and in spite of previous U.S. troop surges. You only have to look to the past to see that the President's escalation plan will not work. In fact, this escalation plan is based on false assumptions and failed ideas.

To quote one of the witnesses who testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee recently:

This plan is just stay-the-course plus 20,000 troops.

The escalation plan will not work because it depends on Prime Minister Maliki to do the right thing. The Associated Press reported today that the ''long-awaited security drive'' is underway. ''The implementation of the prime minister's plan has already begun,'' said a military spokesman. Yet even the architect of the escalation plan for the administration, General Keane, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that he doesn't know if we can count on the Prime Minister, and he admits that Prime Minister Maliki is an unknown quantity.

I don't know and certainly don't believe that we should put the lives of the sons and daughters of America on the line based on the hope—the hope—that Maliki will do the right thing. The escalation plan will not work because it depends upon Iraqis, we are told by the administration, to take the lead. The administration keeps saying that is an Iraqi plan, with the Iraqis taking the lead. But the truth is, everyone doubts that the Iraqi troops will actually show up.

Many of the troops Prime Minister Maliki promised will be Kurds. Yet an NPR story quotes General Dennis Chapman, who is commander of a team of American military advisers in Iraqi Kurdistan, saying that there have already been desertions from Kurdish troops and that out of the battalion of 1,600 Kurdish soldiers going to Baghdad, he only expects a few hundred to report for duty.

Over and over again, we heard from experts testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that there simply aren't enough Iraqi troops who are loyal to Iraq as a nation and to Maliki as Prime Minister.

A recent New York Times article painted a frightening picture of what a joint American-Iraqi patrol looks like. The article highlights the lack of troop strength and training of Iraqi forces and the confusion that comes with having underprepared Iraqi troops take the lead. To quote from the article:

. . . As the sun rose, many of the Iraqi Army units who were supposed to do the actual searches of the buildings did not arrive on time, forcing the Americans to start the job on their own. When the Iraqi units finally did show up, it was with the air of a class outing, cheering and laughing as the Americans blew locks off doors with shotguns . . .

Many of the Iraqi units who showed up late never seemed to take the task seriously, searching haphazardly, rifling through personal CD collections in the apartments.

In the article, a lieutenant colonel of the Third Stryker Brigade Combat Team talked about the difficulty of conducting such operations. He said:

This was an Iraqi-led effort and with that come challenges and risks. It can be organized chaos.

The escalation plan will not work because similar escalation plans have already failed in Iraq, when the enemy simply waited us out. We tried a troop escalation and it didn't work, when we sent 12,000 troops to Baghdad last summer and death and violence on the streets of Baghdad actually increased. The escalation plan will not work because it has benchmarks but no consequences. And benchmarks without consequences are just aspirations. The plan doesn't hold the Iraqis accountable. We have seen countless plans from this administration with benchmarks after benchmarks that are never met.

The Iraq Study Group said, in recommendation 21, that if the Iraqi Government doesn't make progress toward milestones, ''the United States should reduce its political, military, or economic support for the Iraqi government.''

Yet when I asked Secretary Rice what would happen if the Iraqis failed to meet the much-heralded benchmarks, she didn't list any consequences. Instead she told me:

I don't think you go to Plan B. You work with Plan A.

Plan A hasn't been working. I will say it again: Benchmarks without consequences are just aspirations. And they are aspirations that have failed time and time again. The escalation plan, as a consequence, will break the back of our National Guard and Reserves.

Let me be clear: The President's escalation plan cannot be implemented without using the National Guard and Reserves far beyond what they already have been used. There simply aren't enough troops. We have already seen the tours of National Guard troops extended. A week ago, I was informed that the New Jersey Army National Guard troops currently stationed in Iraq will see their tours extended by 125 days as result of President Bush's policy. I fully expect to see more extended deployments in the future.

The escalation is going to hurt our security at home by keeping those National Guard and Reserve troops away in Iraq. Those who return home leave their equipment in Iraq, resulting in severe equipment shortages for our National Guard at home. In fact, Larry Korb, an expert from the Center for American Progress, says the units returned home so depleted that the Marines have been referring to this phase as ''the postdeployment death spiral.'' That is why it is time to transition our mission and set a timeframe to get our troops out of Iraq.

Staying in Iraq isn't in the national interest or national security interest of the United States. Our troops are caught in the middle of a civil war they can't solve. Increasing troops will only put more of them directly into a sectarian Iraqi fight. Keeping our troops there or adding more troops is trying to solve a political problem with a military solution.

In one briefing, General Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said: We need to get the Iraqis to love their children more than they hate their neighbors.

That is a powerful truism. The problem is, you don't get Iraqis to love

their children more than they hate their neighbors through military might. That is about reconciliation. It is about confidence building. It is about power sharing. It is about revenue sharing. It is about a host of other things, things that cannot be accomplished through military might.

Staying would only continue to empower and embolden Iran, a country that has turned out to be the biggest winner in our war with Iraq. Dr. Paul Pillar pointed out recently:

> Among the neighbors, the largest winner has been Iran. The war has not only toppled the dictator who initiated an earlier war that killed hundreds of thousands of Iranians; it has also crippled what had been the larger regional counterweight to Iranian influence. Meanwhile, the all-consuming preoccupation that the Iraq war has become for the United States, along with the growing unpopularity of the war among Americans, probably has made Iranian leaders less fearful than they otherwise might have been about forceful U.S. action, including military action, against Iran.

Our presence in Iraq only continues to serve as a battle cry for terrorists around the world. According to last year's National Intelligence Estimate on international terrorism, the war in Iraq has become ''a cause celebre'' for jihadists'' and is ''shaping a new generation of terrorist leaders and operatives.''

Let me be clear, because of how this war was entered into—weapons of mass destruction that never existed—because of how it was executed, there are now no good options left for us in Iraq. But I do believe the first steps toward stabilizing Iraq is to set a date certain for troops to leave. It is only by setting a date certain for our troops to leave that Iraqis will have to take responsibility for security in their own country and work out their political power struggles. Right now as much as they dislike us being there, we still bear the true burden for trying to stop the violence. The Iraqis have little incentive to work out their turf wars over political power as long as we are in the country. Iraq's political leadership will never make the hard choices, compromises, and negotiations necessary to achieve a government of national unity, as long as they believe we will stay in an endless occupation, in which the lives of Americans will be shed and national treasure will be expended.

It is only by setting a date certain for our troops to leave that Iraq's neighbors will start to take responsibility for ending the chaos inside Iraq. Right now the violence has not reached the tipping point to get Iraq's neighbors involved. Ultimately, it is not in their national security interest to have the conflict spill across their borders and to have Iraq disintegrate. But by setting a date certain to leave, we create a new incentive for Iraq's neighbors to help quell the violence. It is only by setting a date certain for our troops to leave that the international community will take a responsible role in Iraq. Right now the international community sees this as America's war. Once we make clear we will not be there permanently, they, too, will have an incentive to get involved and help preserve stability in a region much closer to Europe than the United States.

So by setting a date certain for our troops to leave, we actually motivate the Iraqis, Iraq's neighbors, and the international community to take the necessary steps to stabilize Iraq.

But setting a date certain and getting our troops out of Iraq in a safe and orderly way is not enough. I believe we must do more.

What we need now is a surge in diplomacy. That will involve much more than a few trips to the region. We must actively engage with Iraq's neighbors in the international community.

But I cannot close without discussing the cost of this war in Iraq. Some say they want to have a talk about, or votes, not about the escalation but about whether there are resources for the troops. I think we should have a real, honest debate that will come in the budget process about what this war is costing. Let's have a real, honest debate about the administration's lack of honesty in telling the American people what this war costs.

Our expenditures in Iraq will saddle our Nation's finances and our children's future. We spend over $8 billion a month in Iraq; we spend $2 billion a week in Iraq; we spend $280 million every day in Iraq; we spend $11.5 million an hour in Iraq.

The Congress has already appropriated $379 billion for Iraq, and President Bush is now asking for an additional $179 billion. Yet the Secretary of Defense announced to the Budget Committee, on which I serve, that he is not going to come before the committee to justify this spending. To me, that is simply outrageous.

The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction released a new report saying the Bush administration cannot account for critical defense materiel, including over $36 million in weapons. Hearings in the other body revealed that the administration cannot account for over $8 billion that was sent in cash bundles of $400,000 into a war region, without any controls. They cannot account for over $8 billion. Now the administration wants the Congress to hand over another blank check.

Let me put our Iraq spending into perspective.

For what we spend in less than 2 months for operations in Iraq, we could fully fund No Child Left Behind next year, ensuring that every school district in the United States has the funds promised to them to meet the goals of the law.

For what we spend in less than 2 months in Iraq, we could make up the shortfall in the SCHIP program to help cover children who would otherwise be uninsured.

For what we spend in 4 days in Iraq, we could substantially improve security at our Nation's ports with an additional billion dollars, including increased scanning of cargo containers.

For what we spend in 2½ months in Iraq, we could pay the $21 billion cost of implementing all of the remaining 9/11 Commission recommendations to secure our homeland.

Yet we need to look beyond the economic costs of this war at its true cost: 3,099 American lives, to date. That is invaluable. It is priceless. More will die in the days ahead if we do not change the course in Iraq. We now have more than 23,000 sons and daughters of America who are wounded in ways that will affect their lives forever. We have a real obligation to all of those who are wounded and their families, and to the survivors of those who suffered the ultimate sacrifice. Yet we look at a budget that does not meet that responsibility.

Today, we should be debating the President's escalation plan, particularly since we recently learned from the CBO that the escalation proposed by President Bush would easily cost more than triple what the administration has told us.

Let me be clear for those who may have not heard about the Congressional Budget Office report. That report says the President's escalation plan of 21,000 troops actually only includes combat troops and not all of the other troops necessary for force operations. The Congressional Budget Office estimates this could mean an additional 28,000 support personnel, and that the cost could go as high as $29 billion. Now, to deviate from that would be to deviate from every standard operating procedure the Defense Department has had to support the men and women in the theater; it would be to deviate from every historical perspective. Yet that is not what they included in the budget sent to the Congress.

I am also deeply concerned that the administration has left open the possibility of yet another emergency supplemental to fund this war in fiscal year 2008. All that means is we are putting it upon the next generation of Americans, which is how most of the costs of this war have taken place—we are putting it on the backs of the next generation of Americans and not even being responsible for paying for it. We do all of this while we have the greatest tax cuts for some of the wealthiest people in the Nation, and at a time when the Nation is at war. That has never been seen before in the Nation's history.

The administration has never been honest with the American people about the cost of the war. It is time for that to end. This Senate must demand an honest accounting before we hand this administration any more money or, even more importantly, any more troops.

In the end, it is in honor of those men and women who have given the greatest sacrifice in the line of duty that we must change the course in Iraq. It is in honor of their courage we

must ensure their comrades are not sent off to carry out a failing plan designed by their civilian leadership.

I ask each of my colleagues: Are you willing to look a young soldier in the eye and tell them you are sending them off to Iraq based upon a failed policy and a recycled plan and based upon the hope that Prime Minister Maliki will get it right? How many more American lives will we lose before we realize this plan will not work? And if it were your son or daughter, how long would you be willing to wait? How long would you be willing to listen to the counsel of patience, of delay, of only one more chance, of stay the course?

I know I certainly am not willing to wait any longer.

I believe there is a difference between deference to the Commander in Chief and blind loyalty. I cannot support blind loyalty that sends more of America's sons and daughters to die for a war of choice, to die for a continuing failed policy. In my mind, that is irresponsible and I believe the very essence of the constitutional framework this country was founded on requires us to act. That is what the majority leader wants to do. It is time for some real profiles in courage. I urge my colleagues to allow us to have an up-or-down vote on the President's escalation, and to support the Warner-Levin resolution. I hope, beyond that, at a later time, to support future binding actions to stop the failed policy in Iraq.

I started today by reminding all of us of the words of John F. Kennedy and the profiles in courage he detailed in this Senate. He said:

> In whatever arena of life one may meet the challenge of courage, whatever may be the sacrifices he faces if he follows his conscience—the loss of his friends, his fortune, his contentment, even the esteem of his fellow man—each man [and I add each woman] must decide for himself the course he will follow. The stories of past courage can define that ingredient—they can teach, they can offer hope, they can provide inspiration. But they cannot supply courage itself. For this, each man must look into his own soul.

I ask each Member of the Senate to look into your own soul and your own conscience, allow us to move to the Warner-Levin resolution, allow us to have a vote against the escalation of troops in Iraq. The Nation is waiting and they are watching, and there is accountability to be had.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SANDERS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF GENERAL GEORGE W. CASEY, JR., TO BE CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of General George W. Casey, Jr., to be Chief of Staff, United States Army.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I support GEN George Casey's confirmation to be the next Chief of Staff of the United States Army. His nomination was approved by the Armed Services Committee by a vote of 19 to 6.

Through a long and distinguished career, he has held positions of increasing responsibility, culminating in that of Commanding General of multinational forces in Iraq, in which capacity he served for over 2½ years.

Prior to that command, he was Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, which was preceded by an assignment as Director of the Joint Staff, and before that as Director of Strategy, Plans, and Policy, J–5, on the Joint Staff.

General Casey is an infantryman, having commanded at all levels up to and including division command. As an assistant division commander, he served in Bosnia, and earlier in his career he served in Cairo as a U.N. military observer with the U.N. Truce Supervision Organization. He also served a tour of duty as a congressional liaison officer.

General Casey knows Iraq and the challenges the Army faces there. He also knows the Pentagon and the challenges he will face there. General Casey has the knowledge to perform his primary responsibilities as Chief of Staff, which is the training and equipping of soldiers and caring for them and their families.

There is some opposition to General Casey's nomination because he is identified with the administration's failed Iraq strategy, and I agree that strategy has not been successful. As a matter of fact, I have argued as forcefully as I know how that strategy has not been successful and that we need to change course in Iraq.

It is appropriate to hold military leaders responsible for their own failures, but the principal failures that have led to the chaos in Iraq were decisions of the civilian leaders. General Casey had to deal with the consequences of a myriad of flawed policies, including having insufficient forces at the outset of the operation, failing to properly plan for postwar stability operations, disbanding the Iraqi Army, then trying to build a new army, initially using civilian contractors, and an overly extensive debaathification program, to name but a few.

All of these critical mistakes, which fueled the insurgency and civil disorder, are attributed to the civilian leadership in the White House, in the Department of Defense, and in the Coalition Provisional Authority. Compounding those mistakes was the effect of detainee abuse at Abu Ghraib attributed, in part, to ambiguities in what was considered permissible in the interrogation of prisoners fostered by that very same civilian leadership in the administration, the White House, and the Pentagon, where the advice of uniformed military lawyers was overruled. Those critical mistakes were made in the year before General Casey took command and had severe adverse consequences which he inherited.

General Casey's focus in Iraq was on training and equipping Iraqi security forces to bring them as quickly as possible to a level where they could relieve American forces from the burden of providing the security that Iraqis should be providing for themselves. He was not alone in seeing this was a priority. It was also the focus of his boss, the Central Command commander, General Abizaid, and his subordinates, the Corps commander, Lieutenant General Chiarelli, and the commanders of that training effort, Generals Petraeus and later Dempsey. General Casey put it this way:

> The longer we in the United States forces continue to bear the main burden of Iraq's security, it lengthens the time that the Government of Iraq has to take the hard decisions about reconciliation and dealing with the militias. And the other thing is that they can continue to blame us for all of Iraq's problems, which are at base their problems.

Those are wise words. General Casey recognized there is no military solution to the situation in Iraq, that only a political solution enabled by Iraqi politicians making the essential political compromises can save the Iraqis from themselves. General Casey is not alone. There actually seems to be an agreement among most observers that an Iraqi political settlement is a key to ending the violence in Iraq. The difference of opinion exists on whether Iraqi politicians need breathing space, as President Bush has said, to reach required political compromises or whether, as many of us believe, Iraqi politicians need to be pressured to make those compromises and that the addition of 21,000 more troops doesn't make a political compromise more likely, it just gets us in deeper into a civil conflict.

It has been said that General Casey was too optimistic about the possibility of troops being reduced, having predicted in the spring and summer of 2006 and then subsequently predicting that reduction toward the end of 2006 and into 2007 was possible. He did make those predictions, and I think he was clearly overly optimistic. He has made a number of mistakes, but the key fundamental flaws were the mistakes

made, the wrong judgments of the civilian leadership of this country, not the uniformed military leaders of this country.

Was he too optimistic? Yes. Is he still too optimistic? I believe he is. When asked about whether he agreed with what the President finally said the other day, that we are on a road to slow failure—the President finally stepping up to acknowledging the reality in Iraq—General Casey said he believed we are still on a road to slow success. That is how optimistic he is.

I am not going to hold that against him. I think he is wrong in that excessive optimism, but we expect our military leaders to be enthusiastic and positive about the missions they are assigned—the missions that they are assigned—by their civilian leaders. We expect them to be confident and to inspire their soldiers with the importance of those missions, to keep their morale high, and General Casey did that.

He has also increased and decreased troops—both—depending on the missions assigned to him by the civilian leaders.

As he testified, he requested additional troops on six occasions for specific missions, such as to provide security for the elections or otherwise deal with spikes of violence. However, mindful of the stress on soldiers and their families and on the deteriorating readiness of the nondeployed units in the Army and the Marine Corps, he also sought opportunities for reductions—both directions.

One of the real questions I had to face in addressing this nomination was whether General Casey changed his tune when it came to this surge of additional troops that is being requested or being sent by the President. I pressed him on this issue at his nomination hearing before the Armed Services Committee.

I want to read the exchange between General Casey and myself at his hearing within the last week.

I asked General Casey the following:

We asked General Abizaid back in November when he appeared before this committee whether he needed more troops or whether he supported more troops going to Iraq. And this is just last November. And this is what he said. He said that he met with every divisional commander, General Casey, the Corps commander, General Dempsey. ''We all talked together. And I said, in your professional opinion, if you were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq? And they all said no. And the reason is because we want Iraqis to do more. It's easy for the Iraqis to rely upon us to do this work. I believe—

This is General Abizaid speaking—

that more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking more responsibility for their own future.''

I continued in my questioning of General Casey:

Now, General Abizaid said that he spoke to you and that his opinion reflected your opinion and all the other commanders. Was that true when he said it?

General Casey:

I'm not exactly sure when in November it was, but it was.

Senator LEVIN:

So you've changed your view since November?

General Casey:

As I described in my opening testimony, Senator, in mid November was when the reevaluation of the plan was taking place. So I suspect John and I talked before that. And that does reflect my general view on additional U.S. forces in Iraq.

Senator LEVIN:

It reflects a general view, but then there was some kind of a reevaluation which took place in mid November.

General Casey:

That's right, Senator. We're constantly reevaluating how we're doing and what we need.

Senator LEVIN:

But that position that General Abizaid stated was your position when you spoke to him in early November presumably still remains your general view.

General Casey:

That's correct.

Senator LEVIN:

Well, if that's your general view, what is the change? Why are you modifying your general view for this surge?

General Casey:

What has changed, Senator, are several things: One, the development of a plan, a new plan that was conceived by the Iraqis and worked in concert with us; so there is a plan that laid out requirement for those forces. So just to say do you need more forces is one thing; to say do you need more forces to execute this plan is quite another. And we do need an additional two brigades to implement that plan.

I think he is giving us a straightforward answer to that question. His general view is, and was before the new plan was adopted, that we did not need more forces in Iraq; that it took the Iraqis off the hook. There was a new plan which was adopted by the administration, by the Commander in Chief, by the civilian leadership of this country. That plan requires that we not just clear neighborhoods but that we then remain in neighborhoods in Baghdad.

Do I think that is a wise plan? I do not. I am going to vote against the surge. I think it gets us in deeper militarily. This is a military officer who has been given a new plan and has been asked what are the requirements for that new plan which has been adopted by the civilian leaders of this country. And when given a new plan by the Commander in Chief, he very properly said that is going to require some additional troops.

Again, we are going to debate the plan, the wisdom of it, I hope one of these days. We are going to debate the wisdom of whether this surge makes sense. But given a new plan, given that decision, what General Casey is saying is that his general view about the lack of the wisdom of increasing the military presence in Iraq has to be modified when there is a new requirement, a new plan which requires us to be present in the neighborhoods of Baghdad.

Once again, although I disagree with the plan, I view that as a satisfactory explanation for why he now supports the additional troops. Not to the same extent that the President has proposed or decided upon, but to the extent of two brigades. He said the additional brigades will give additional flexibility. He doesn't have any problem with that, but he testified that was not what his recommendation was.

So his emphasis on building up Iraqi security forces to relieve Americans of the tasks that Iraqis should be doing for themselves is a critical part of any strategy in Iraq that has a chance of success, and it is key to the ultimate U.S. military disengagement. The real key to a stable and secure Iraq and a viable Iraq is a political solution that can only be reached by the leaders in Iraq, the politicians. And what American political leaders need to do, in my judgment, is to pressure those politicians to make that happen.

That was never General Casey's responsibility. General Casey never had the responsibility of doing what is critically essential politically, which is to put pressure on the Iraqi politicians to reach a political settlement. He is a military man. He is a military man who, by his own acknowledgment, has made a number of mistakes. Indeed, he listed a number of mistakes for us that he has made and that he takes responsibility for. But the fundamental mistakes which have led to the chaos in Iraq, which did not allow us to help to create in Iraq a stable and viable country, which is the goal of all of us, those fundamental mistakes were the mistakes made by the civilian leaders of this country. To hold him accountable or responsible, and to vote against him because of the major mistakes which led to this chaos through not the uniformed leaders' mistakes but through our civilian leaders' mistakes, it seems to me, is inappropriate and unfair, and I will vote for his confirmation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I rise to express opposition to the nomination of General George Casey to be the next Chief of Staff of the Army.

I admire General Casey's patriotism and his long service to our country. I have concluded, based on his role as commander of the multinational forces in Iraq, that I cannot support his nomination.

Let me first make clear that General Casey has had a long and distinguished career in the U.S. Army and is deserving of the utmost respect and gratitude for the contributions he has made to this Nation's defense over his long career. At his nomination hearing on February 1, I stated my appreciation to him and his family for their extraordinary service and personal sacrifice, as well as the support they have provided to the men and women in uniform and their families. I emphasized

then, and I reiterate today, I do not in any way question General Casey's honor, patriotism or service to America, nor do I question his sincere desire to continue serving the Army.

At this critical moment in our history, however, with the obvious—obvious—lack of success in achieving our goals in Iraq, this nomination should bear unusual weight in our deliberations. All of the Armed Services, and particularly our ground forces, are undergoing difficult changes to adjust to the global war on terror. The next Chief of Staff of the Army will be faced with enormous challenges in matters relating to recruiting, training, and retention of soldiers, the continuing organizing of the Army, and requirements for the procurement of weapon systems. The next Chief of Staff must be able to evaluate ongoing strategy and be able to react with sound advice when unforeseen challenges are encountered. Perhaps most importantly, the next Chief of Staff must be unconstrained in evaluating the past while giving advice for the future.

I have questioned in the past, and question today, a number of the decisions and judgments that General Casey has made over the past 2½ years. During that time, conditions in Iraq have grown remarkably and progressively worse, and the situation now can best be described as dire and deteriorating. I regret that our window of opportunity to reverse momentum may be closing.

The bombing at the Golden Mosque in Samarra last February sparked sectarian violence throughout Iraq and in Baghdad, in particular. Yet in the face of this dramatic change in the Iraqi security environment, our military strategy—and I emphasize military strategy—remained essentially unchanged. Instead of conducting a traditional insurgency campaign, our troops focused on training and equipping Iraqis, hoping, in vain, that they could do the job. After repeated elections and political events demonstrated that the democratic process would not, on its own, bring down the level of violence, our troops did not begin focusing on protecting the population. Instead, the coalition and Iraqi forces launched Operation Together Forward in June 2006. This operation, aimed at securing Baghdad, failed. Yet the coalition launched Operation Together Forward II in August in a very similar fashion. The result, predictably, was a similar failure.

I am not going to go over the many times I complained about a failed strategy. A number of times I asked our leaders, both civilian and military, why they were continuing to pursue this failed strategy. I continued to give speeches denouncing this strategy and predicted we would end up in the dire circumstances we are in today. It is all a matter of responsibility—a matter of responsibility.

General Casey, more than any other individual, has been the architect of U.S. military strategy in Iraq over the last 2 years. During this time, I fear he consistently presented unrealistically rosy, optimistic assessments of the situation in Iraq. For example, in December 2004, General Casey stated at a Pentagon press conference:

My view of winning is that we are broadly on track to accomplishing our objectives, with Iraqi security forces that are capable of maintaining domestic order and denying Iraq as a safe haven for terrorists. And I believe we are on track to get there by December of 2005.

I repeat that:

I believe we are on track to get there by December of 2005.

Almost a year later, in September of 2005, General Casey repeated:

We have a strategy and a plan for success in Iraq, and we are broadly on track in achieving our goals.

Last October of 2006, he stated, before the Armed Services Committee, I believe:

The idea that the country is aflame in sectarian violence is just not right. General Casey said: I do not subscribe to the civil war idea.

Mr. President, we have hearings to try to get an honest, unvarnished opinion of how our Armed Forces are doing, what their needs are, what their missions are, and of course because we are in a war, what is happening in Iraq. We are not on the ground there. We visit frequently, but we rely to a large degree, obviously, on the judgment and the recommendations and the evaluations of our military leaders. This is the opening statement of GEN George W. Casey before the Armed Services Committee on 23 June of 2005:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman . . .

Remember, this is 23 June 2005.

. . . In the past year, the Iraqis, supported by the coalition, have established an interim government, neutralized the Shia insurgency, eliminated terrorist and insurgent safe havens across Iraq, mobilized their security forces to confront the insurgency . . .

How could he possibly give that kind of assessment? Senator LEVIN says, well, we should have put pressure on the Iraqis. Well, maybe we should have put pressure on the Iraqis, but it was pretty obvious to even the most uninitiated that the Iraqis weren't performing. They weren't performing.

In his nomination hearing last Thursday, I asked General Casey about these and other statements he has made, both publicly and privately, that seem entirely at odds with the situation as most observers find it. I noted, for example, that in recent days, the Secretary of Defense, General Pace, and Admiral Fallon, the new head of Central Command, have all stated that the United States is not winning in Iraq and that we have had a failed strategy. These were clear-cut, realistic statements. But General Casey disagreed, saying I do not agree that we have a failed policy. I do not believe that the current policy has failed.

He may be the only person in America who believes that. This is a judgment issue, not an honor issue. Of course, the civilian leadership is responsible. I believe that the former Secretary of Defense will go down in history with Robert Strange McNamara. But military leaders are also responsible. That is why we give them positions of responsibility because we place in their trust our most precious asset: American blood.

During his own nomination hearing on January 23, Lieutenant General Petraeus stated that five additional brigades were required to implement the President's new military strategy and that he could not accomplish his mission if he didn't have these additional troops. I, for one, worry that five brigades may still be insufficient to accomplish all we are asking our troops to do in Iraq and would prefer that we are on the side of too many troops rather than too few, as has been the case in the past.

General Casey, however, confounding the experts, said in his hearing:

We do need an additional two brigades to implement that plan.

Not five, not more than five, but just two.

General Casey said the additional three brigades the Department will send ''merely gives General Petraeus great flexibility.''

Remember, we are putting this person, who still doesn't believe we need five brigades, in the position to be the one who is implementing the policy. Given this and other judgments, I don't see in this nominee an accurate assessment of the situation in Iraq or what is required to avoid catastrophe there.

My colleague from Michigan says, well, it is all the civilian commanders' fault. I will put plenty of blame on the civilian commanders and I have for many years, but somehow to absolve the military commander on the ground there, conducting the operations, of any responsibility flies in the face of everything I ever learned in my lifetime of involvement with the military.

Recently, I noticed in the paper there was a submarine with four sailors who were washed overboard. I believe they were later rescued. The commander of the submarine was relieved. I still remember in my earliest youth, when the captain was asleep in the cabin and the USS *Missouri* ran aground in the mudflats someplace south of here, he was relieved that day of his command.

We put people in positions of responsibility and hold them responsible and we try to reward them as much as we can when they succeed, with the approval of a grateful nation. But we also hold them responsible for failure.

My friend from Michigan and I have a very different view of the responsibilities of commanders in the field, which is why, during World War II and other wars, we have relieved commanders in the field because they were not accomplishing the mission and, if they didn't like the mission, they didn't speak up to get the mission changed, and if they embraced a failed mission, then they were held even more responsible.

I would go on. I want to emphasize, again, what General Casey said in the hearings the other day. Senator LEVIN said:

. . . even he came to the point, after all these years, of not having what everybody wanted, which is success in Iraq. He finally described that mistakes were made. And then he said, ''Yes, one could define that, doing what we're doing, as maybe a slow failure.''

In other words, Senator LEVIN was asking General Casey if what has happened in Iraq was a ''slow failure,'' as stated by the President of the United States. General Casey:

I didn't—I actually don't see it as slow failure. I actually see it as slow progress.

In the last 4 weeks I believe we have had five helicopters shot down. Casualties have spiked to a very high level. I saw in one of the newspapers this morning that over the past 3-month period they have been perhaps as high or the highest of any time in the war. And we are in a situation of slow progress?

Judgment. Judgment. Judgment. We expect people who are placed in positions of responsibility to exercise good judgment.

There is a lot I could say in response to the statement of my friend from Michigan concerning no responsibility whatsoever for the failures in the hands of the commander on the ground in Iraq. I mean, on its face it is a rather unusual interpretation of the responsibility we give to our commanders on the ground. Of course the ultimate responsibility rests with civilian leadership. Of course it does. That is how our democracy is shaped. But we don't absolve anybody in the chain of command, civilian or military, for the responsibility for failure and it is widely believed by everyone, perhaps with the exception of General Casey, that the policy in Iraq is a failure and that is why we are trying a new strategy in hopes that we prevail in very difficult conditions. There is an old saw about those who ignore the lessons of history are doomed to repeat them. During the Vietnam war there was failure. General Westmoreland, then head of forces in Vietnam, was brought back and made Chief of Staff of the Army even though our policy and strategy in Vietnam had failed. Ask anyone who was a young officer in those days in the United States Army or Marine Corps. It was a blow to their morale because they were held responsible for their performance on the field of battle. We are holding our men and women, both officer and enlisted, responsible for their behavior on the field of battle, as to whether they succeed or fail. But now, in this particular instance, a failed commander is now, again, unfortunately, being promoted to a greater position of responsibility. We are, again, repeating the lessons of history because we ignore them.

I intend to vote against the nomination of General Casey and I hope my colleagues will as well. I say that with all due respect to the honorable service of him and his family to this Nation. It has nothing to do with honorable service. It has everything to do with judgment and positions of responsibility. Just as Abraham Lincoln held generals responsible for performance on the battlefield, so today we should hold commanders responsible for performance on the battlefield.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, a couple of quick comments on my good friend's statement. First, no one suggests that the commanders be absolved from any responsibility. In fact, when we asked General Casey what mistakes had been made, he listed a number of mistakes in his own answers, including:

We underestimated the ability of al-Qaida, the Sunni insurgents, to provoke sectarian conflict and failed to preempt the attack against the Golden Mosque in Samarra; we thought that as more security forces were trained and equipped we would be able to gradually shift ever increasing security responsibilities to them and thus reduce our forces proportionately. This is occurring slower than we originally projected. We were slow to anticipate the extent of the radical Shia death squads.

He has acknowledged mistakes have been made. But the fundamental mistakes which have been made which caused us to be in the situation we are in were not George Casey's. Every commander makes mistakes. There is no commander I know of who would say he or she did not make mistakes. No one is absolving General Casey of the mistakes, which he is the first to acknowledge. The question is whether he is going to be held accountable—not for his mistakes but for the fundamental mistakes which were made by the civilian leadership of this Nation. That is the question.

When my friend says General Casey must be the only one in America who doesn't think this policy is a failure, let me give you a couple of other Americans who seem to think the same way. Let's start with the President of the United States, last October, when he said: ''We are absolutely winning in Iraq.''

That is the Commander in Chief. ''We are absolutely winning in Iraq.''

How about another person, the Vice President of the United States, within the last year? ''The insurgency is in its last throes.''

To say that General Casey is the only person in America who has made statements that are overly optimistic, to put it mildly, in terms of what is going on in Iraq, when he is trying to carry out the policies of the administration, keep the morale of his troops, and now, after November the President now says we are on a road to slow failure, after the American public told the President of the United States that we are on a road to slow failure, now what we are saying is: OK, the President acknowledges we are on a road to slow failure unless we adopt his policy of a surge. What General Casey is saying, honestly, when I pressed him—he doesn't frame it that way. He believes we are on a slow progress road. Are we going to say he is not qualified to be Chief of Staff of the United States Army, when he has been Vice Chief, he has been a Commander, he has been a three star general—because he believes it is slow progress instead of slow failure, when we have a Commander in Chief who just a few months ago said we are absolutely winning in Iraq, absolutely winning?

And George Casey, now it is all piled on him. He is the only one in America who seems to think we are winning in Iraq. Well, he doesn't think we are winning in Iraq; he thinks we are slowly making progress in Iraq, to use his words. Do I agree with him? No. I think this policy has been a failure right from the beginning. Going in was a mistake. It was a mistake that was based on arrogance, it was based on a misunderstanding of history, it was based on a misreading of what the threat was, it was based on a lot of mistakes. Disbanding the Iraqi Army? Look what it has led to. Not having a plan for the aftermath? Look what it has led to. These are the fundamentals. These are the transcendent mistakes which have created the chaos in Iraq, and George Casey inherits that.

He makes his own mistakes at a totally different level, degree, than these fundamental mistakes. Suddenly we say he is not qualified to be a chief of staff of the Army because he was a commander who inherited that mess and made his own mistakes of a much lower degree, obviously. Much too optimistic. He is a commander of troops, trying to keep morale up. So he is optimistic, I believe he is overly optimistic, history has proven he is overly optimistic. But to say we are trying to absolve him of mistakes when he acknowledges his own mistakes as any good commander will, learning from mistakes—he listed his mistakes; it is his list—no one is absolving him. We are simply saying he should not be carrying the load of the mistakes the civilian leadership of this country has made, which has helped to create such chaos in Iraq.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I repeat, in case Senator LEVIN didn't hear me, I have criticized the policies and, placed responsibilities on the President, the Vice President and the former Secretary of Defense for the last 3 years over a failed policy in Iraq. The difference Senator LEVIN and I seem to have is I also hold responsible the commanders in the field for giving accurate information, for providing recommendations that will help to win a conflict rather than subscribing and continuing to this day, to this very day to support a policy everyone acknowledges has failed.

By the way, I said today says are failed—not quotes from a month ago or

6 months ago or a year ago, I say to my friend from Michigan. No one decried those comments, such as ''last throes'' and ''stuff happens'' and ''dead enders'' more than I did at the time. But I hold the entire chain of command responsible down to the commanders in the field.

He says just a few days ago:

I don't see it as slow failure. I actually see it as slow progress.

The unclassified NIE we have read, the National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq says, ''We are not making progress.'' It says, ''We are losing.''

We are going to make the chief of staff of the Army the guy who thinks that ''We are making slow progress'' as opposed to the National Intelligence Estimate, which is agreed on by our entire intelligence establishment, that we are losing. So, of course, we hold people responsible. Of course we do. Do I hold our former Secretary of Defense responsible? Absolutely. Absolutely. If he were up for another job, I would be standing here on the floor objecting to it.

Do I hold others in the administration responsible? Absolutely. But this is a leader who is up for an increased responsibility and he has failed in his mission, and that is what it is all about. An honorable and decent man who has served his country, but the message throughout the military now is, unfortunately, as it was with General Westmoreland, ''Even though you fail, you are going to be promoted.''

To somehow say the commander in the field is in some way not responsible in any way for the ''mistakes'' I think flies in the face not only of the record but the tradition we have in the United States of America, of placing the commanders in the field in positions of responsibility and making them accountable for their performance and how they carry out those responsibilities.

I am sure the Senator from Michigan and I will continue to disagree for some period of time because we have a philosophical difference, a fundamental difference of opinion. If you want to blame everything on the civilian leadership, who are of course responsible, who of course history will judge very harshly, that is one way of looking at it. If you say that responsibility is shared down to the commanders in the field, as I do, then you probably have a different view.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I have no objection at all. I am just curious as to about how long. I am not in any way trying to influence the length of time.

Mr. ALLARD. Let me just say I am anticipating somewhere around 12 or 15 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank my colleague.

Mr. ALLARD. In October 2002, this body saw fit to authorize, by a large majority, the use of force against Iraq. Specifically the resolution authorizes the President: to use the Armed Forces of the United States as he determines to be necessary and appropriate in order to defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq.

I remind my colleagues that we did so because of two important reasons—the same two reasons offered by the President to the American public.

First, Saddam Hussein was in breach of more than a dozen United Nations Security Council resolutions. He refused to cooperate with U.N. weapons inspectors even after a decade of sanctions, and rejected proposal after proposal to verify that he did not have such weapons.

Second, after September 11, it was clear that America could not afford to allow imminent threats to our Nation go unopposed. At the time, Iraq represented a dangerous crossroad between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. In the context of Saddam's hostile intentions, it was a nexus that we could not ignore.

When critics attempt to cover up their support for the use of force against Iraq, they damage U.S. credibility overseas and send mixed messages to our servicemembers. Even more dangerously, they encourage an enemy who believes America will give up when the fighting gets tough.

Of course, there is no doubt that the strategic imperatives in Iraq have changed since 2002. I will readily admit that this fight is one that we fully recognize. But that in no way diminishes the importance of our mission there now. We have a vital national interest to remain in Iraq and help maintain a secure and stable nation.

The terrorists have made it abundantly clear that Iraq is central in their war against the civilized world. They are committed to fighting there and will not stop unless we defeat them. If we have to fight, it is preferable to fight on their own soil.

They have also made it clear that they will not stop with Iraq. They will strike Iraq's neighbors as they did in Jordan and Lebanon. They will strike Europe as they did in the Madrid bombings. And, they will not hesitate to strike America again as they did on September 11.

And yet now, in this body, we are debating another resolution, but one that does not hold any legal weight; a resolution that would tie the hands of our soldiers in the field by limiting their options, lower their morale, and harm their efforts in Iraq. I am convinced that a long-term stable Iraq is in the best interest of our national security, and as I have said many times before, the price of failure in Iraq is too great to walk away now.

We should not forfeit our progress in Iraq to meet arbitrary deadlines whether they are in the short or in the long term. We should not think about giving up when our men and women in uniform who have achieved so much. Such defeatism encourages the terrorists, undermines our efforts to persuade other nations to join us, and opens the door to attacks here at home. We must stand firm. We must stand strong.

Thus, I support the President's plan to move forward in trying to secure Baghdad.

One of the keys to success in Iraq, I believe, is obtaining a sincere commitment from the Iraqi Prime Minister to get the Iraqi government to play a much stronger role in the destiny of Iraq.

President Bush is confident that we now have that commitment and I think that this will have a major impact on our new efforts to bring stability to Baghdad.

I am supportive of this new strategy because it contains a much stronger commitment from Iraqis, in terms of their share of force strength and their financial share of the costs of the war, and includes new thresholds for the Iraqis to meet. To date, the Iraqis have become too reliant on U.S. troops and U.S. dollars. This plan shows a new commitment from the Iraqis to step up to the plate and fight for their country's future.

I am optimistic that the President's shift in direction was needed, and may have already resulted in two positive results:

No. 1, Iraq's prime minister dropped his protection of an anti-American cleric's Shiite militia after U.S. intelligence convinced him the group was infiltrated by death squads; and

No. 2, recently, U.S. forces arrested the top aide to radical cleric al-Sadr in a raid. I think this signals that the important change in our strategy shows hope for success and that Iraq is ready to come forward with a renewed commitment to solving its problems.

Mr. President, I enter in the RECORD the following newspaper articles describing these accounts.

[From the Washington Post, Jan. 20, 2007]

KEY AIDE TO SADR ARRESTED IN BAGHDAD—IRAQI-LED OPERATION PART OF BROADER PUSH

(By Ernesto Londono)

U.S.-backed Iraqi forces arrested a top aide to anti-American Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr in eastern Baghdad on Friday, amid growing signs of stepped-up efforts to quell Sadr and his supporters.

U.S. military officials said in November that Sadr's Mahdi Army militia represents the greatest threat to Iraq's security. U.S. and Iraqi forces are preparing a renewed effort to pacify Baghdad, including the deployment of additional U.S. troops.

Abdul Hadi al-Daraji, Sadr's media director in Baghdad, was arrested at his house in the neighborhood of Baladiyat, near the Mahdi Army stronghold of Sadr City, shortly after midnight, said Sadr spokesman Abdul Razak al-Nadawi.

The spokesman said a guard was killed during the operation. At least two other aides were taken into custody, according to a statement released by the U.S. military.

The statement did not identify Daraji by name, but said the main suspect was involved in the assassination of numerous

members of Iraq's security forces and is ''affiliated with illegal armed group cells targeting Iraqi civilians for sectarian attacks.'' The military said the arrest was the result of an ''Iraqi-led'' operation.

Nadawi said ''the occupation forces are provoking Sadr . . . by these daily operations or every-other-day operations.'' The spokesman added that the cleric's followers ''are the only ones demanding and putting a timetable for the occupation withdrawal.''

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, who has been pressured by the Bush administration to bring the Mahdi Army and other Shiite militias under control, was not forewarned about the arrest, said Ali Dabbagh, a spokesman for Maliki. Dabbagh said the prime minister was not notified about every impending high-profile arrest.

''No one is untouchable for the security forces,'' Dabbagh said. ''At the same time, no one was interested to go into a fight with the Sadr movement.'' Sadr, whose supporters hold 30 seats in parliament, is a key supporter of Maliki, who is a Shiite, but the cleric is also widely seen as an instigator of the country's sectarian violence.

Neither Dabbagh nor the U.S. military said whether Daraji had been charged with a crime. ''Definitely, if he's not charged, he will be released in a respectful way,'' Dabbagh said.

Sadr said in an interview with an Italian newspaper published Friday that a crackdown had begun and that 400 of his men had been arrested, according to the Associated Press.

Maliki told reporters this week that 430 Mahdi Army members had been arrested in recent days, but Nadawi said Thursday that the arrests stretched back to August 2004.

In the interview, Sadr said his militiamen would not fight back during the Muslim holy month of Muharram, which started Friday for Sunnis and begins Saturday for Shiites, saying it was against the faith to kill at that time.

''Let them kill us. For a true believer there is no better moment than this to die: Heaven is ensured,'' he was quoted as saying. ''After Muharram, we'll see.''

Also on Friday, the U.S. military reported the death of an American soldier killed Thursday by an improvised explosive device.

The soldier, who was not identified pending notification of relatives, was traveling in a convoy conducting an escort mission in a neighborhood in northwest Baghdad when the blast occurred. Three other soldiers were injured.

[From the Los Angeles Times, Jan. 18, 2007]

MALIKI PLEDGES TO TREAT MILITANTS WITH AN IRON FIST

(By Louise Roug)

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Maliki promised Wednesday to crack down on Shiite Muslim militias and Sunni Arab insurgents, warning that no one—not even political ally Muqtada Sadr—would be above the law.

''We will not allow any politicians to interfere with this Baghdad security plan . . . whether they are Sunnis or Shiites, Arabs or Kurds, militias or parties, insurgents or terrorists,'' Maliki said in a rare interview.

The prime minister's comments appeared to align his government's security plan with the Bush administration's call to confront Shiite militias. But in other remarks, Maliki underscored his differences with the U.S., suggesting that American miscalculations had worsened the bloodshed in Iraq, and warning that his patience for political negotiation with warring factions was wearing thin.

''When military operations start in Baghdad, all other tracks will stop,'' Maliki said. ''We gave the political side a great chance, and we have now to use the authority of the state to impose the law and tackle or confront people who break it.''

U.S. officials have said that renewed military operations should go hand in hand with efforts at political reconciliation between warring Shiites and Sunnis.

Maliki said if Iraqi security forces were given sufficient training and equipment, they could stabilize the country enough to allow the withdrawal of U.S. troops starting in three to six months—a period in which President Bush's proposed troop buildup would still be underway.

He said if better U.S. training and supplies had come earlier, lives could have been saved.

''I think that within three to six months our need for the American troops will dramatically go down,'' Maliki said. ''That's on the condition that there are real strong efforts to support our military forces.''

The U.S.-Iraq security plan involves sending 21,500 more American troops to Iraq and 8,000 to 10,000 Iraqi forces to Baghdad in an effort to quell the civil war between Sunnis and Shiites that on average kills more than 100 people a day.

Maliki said Iraqi security forces this week had detained 400 Shiite militiamen affiliated with Sadr, a radical Shiite cleric whose followers constitute part of Maliki's political base. He offered no further details.

RETURN TO POLITICAL FORM

The interview, which took place in a pavilion inside the heavily fortified Green Zone, was a return to the freewheeling style that characterized Maliki's political manner before he became prime minister last year.

When asked whether the Bush administration needed him now more than he needed the administration, Maliki laughed uproariously, calling it an ''evil question.''

Throughout, Maliki appeared confident and seemed to relish the chance to respond to statements by Bush and U.S. officials, including allegations that his government had botched the hanging of deposed leader Saddam Hussein and had not done enough to stop the sectarian violence.

Commenting on a recent statement by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, he said, ''Rice is expressing her own point of view if she thinks that the [Iraqi] government is on borrowed time,'' humorously suggesting that it might be the Bush administration that is on borrowed time.

''I understand and realize that inside the American administration there is some kind of a crisis situation, especially after the results of the last election,'' he said.

Maliki said suggestions by Bush officials that the U.S. did not fully support his government played into the hands of insurgents.

''I believe such statements give a morale boost to the terrorists and push them toward making an extra effort, making them believe they have defeated the American administration,'' Maliki said. ''But I can tell you, they haven't defeated the Iraqi government.''

CONCERN ALL AROUND

The widening split between the U.S. and Iraqi governments comes at an inopportune time.

Maliki has promised to carry out a security plan to halt the civil war, but his government has been riddled with sectarian fighting and corruption.

The Bush administration is under fire in the U.S. over the Iraq security plan. The strategy to send more American troops is being resisted by many Democrats, who control the House and the Senate.

In Washington on Wednesday, a group of senators introduced a nonbinding resolution opposing the troop buildup.

In the Middle East, there is great concern that Iraq's civil war could spill over into neighboring countries.

When Rice visited Kuwait this week, officials told her that the U.S. needed to start talks with Syria and Iran in order to ease the violence in Iraq. But the White House has resisted the suggestion, also put forward by the bipartisan Iraq Study Group.

U.S. rhetoric directed at Iran has become more aggressive even as Iraq is working to strengthen its ties with its eastern neighbor and largest trade partner.

When American forces detained five Iranians in northern Iraq last week, some Iraqi officials were angered by what they saw as U.S. interference in their foreign affairs.

In the interview, Maliki asserted his government's independence from U.S. interests in the region. But he underscored that the U.S. and Iraqi governments shared basic goals for his country: stability and prosperity.

''The success that can be achieved in Iraq will be a success for President Bush and the United States, and vice versa,'' Maliki said. ''A failure here would be a failure for President Bush and the United States.''

He took issue with Bush's contentions during a PBS interview Tuesday that Maliki's government ''has still got some maturation to do,'' and that it had botched Hussein's execution by allowing Shiite guards to taunt the former leader and videotape his hanging.

Maliki said that Hussein and his codefendants were given a fair trial, and that it was his government's constitutional prerogative to carry out the death penalty. He said Hussein was shown greater respect than the former president gave to his rivals.

Maliki appeared to bristle at Bush's criticism, but he acknowledged that ''mistakes had happened.'' He said he had personally given orders to his deputies to treat Hussein with respect before and after he was hanged.

He said the pressure Bush was feeling might have prompted the critical remarks.

''Maybe this has led to President Bush saying that he's sorry, or he's not happy, ahout the way the execution happened.''

Significant developments like these are exactly the type of results the President is working toward. Iraqi officials must do more to defend their country and President Bush is making that clear. In turn, we must remain steadfast in our resolve to show the Iraqis that we will honor this renewed commitment by allowing the plan to proceed without trying to weaken it before it has a chance to work.

Our new Commander in Iraq, General David H. Petraeus, has testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that he would not be able to get his job done without an increase in troops.

Think about that Mr. President. Just two weeks ago, the Senate unanimously approved General Petraeus to head our efforts in Iraq, but some in this body would now restrict his efforts by scuttling the new strategy before the General has been given opportunity to perform.

Why would we support him and recognize his stellar career with a unanimous nomination vote, but say we would rather not give him the troops to get the job done we have sent him over there for?

General Petraeus also testified that the adoption of a Congressional resolution of disapproval of our efforts in

Iraq would not have a beneficial effect on our troops. I've felt all along that the field commanders should be given the opportunity to try the new plan of action.

Mr. President, I enter in the RECORD the following media report regarding General Petraeus' Senate confirmation hearing.

[From the New York Times, Jan. 24, 2007]

GENERAL SAYS NEW STRATEGY IN IRAQ CAN WORK OVER TIME

(By Michael R. Gordon)

Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, President Bush's new choice as the top commander in Iraq, told senators on Tuesday that the new military strategy to secure Baghdad can work, and that he had asked that the additional troops the administration promised be deployed as quickly as possible.

In his first public comments about Mr. Bush's plan to send some 21,500 troops, the general described the situation in Iraq as ''dire'' but not hopeless. He asserted that the ''persistent presence'' of American and Iraqi forces in strife-ridden Baghdad neighborhoods was a necessary step, but also cautioned that the mission would not succeed if the Iraqi government did not carry out its program of political reconciliation.

''The way ahead will be neither quick nor easy, and undoubtedly there will be tough days,'' he told the Senate Armed Services Committee. ''We face a determined, adaptable, barbaric enemy. He will try to wait us out. In fact any such endeavor is a test of wills, and there are no guarantees.''

But much of the hearing focused not on details of the strategy about to unfold in Iraq, but rather on the political debate within the Senate over resolutions that would signal disapproval of the new strategy.

When Senator JOHN MCCAIN, Republican of Arizona, who has long favored sending more troops to Iraq, asked if approval of a Senate resolution assailing Mr. Bush's new strategy could hurt the morale of American troops, the general replied, ''It would not be a beneficial effect, sir.''

Asked by Senator JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN of Connecticut, who also backs the plan, if a resolution would also ''give the enemy some encouragement'' by suggesting that the American people are divided, General Petraeus replied, ''That's correct, sir.''

That answer sparked admonishments by critics of Mr. Bush's strategy, who insisted that the point of the Senate resolutions is to put pressure on the government of Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki of Iraq to follow through on its political program and take more responsibility for its own security.

''We know this policy is going forward,'' said Senator HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, Democrat of New York. ''We know the troops are moving. We know that we're not likely to stop this escalation. But we are going to do everything we can to send a message to our government and the Iraqi government that they had better change, because the enemy we are confronting is adaptable.''

Senator JOHN W. WARNER, the Virginia Republican who is promoting a resolution opposing Mr. Bush's troop reinforcement plan, cautioned General Petraeus to be sure that ''this colloquy has not entrapped you into some responses that you might later regret.''

By the end of the hearing, General Petraeus sought to extricate himself from the political tussle by insisting that as a military man he did not want to take a position on the Senate debate. ''There are a number of resolutions out there,'' he said.

''Learning that minefields are best avoided and gone around rather than walked through on some occasions, I'd like to leave that one there.''

Senator Carl Levin of Michigan, the Democratic chairman of the panel, said later that he was satisfied that the general had not intended to involve himself in the debate. The exchanges at the hearing did not appear to have any ill effect on the prospects for the confirmation of General Petraeus, and Mr. McCain said he hoped the commander would ''catch the next flight'' to Iraq after winning Senate confirmation.

When their questions focused on the military plan, senators elicited several new details. General Petraeus said Lt. Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, the day-to-day commander of American troops in Iraq, advised that in order to carry out the new strategy, five additional brigades were needed in Baghdad and two additional battalions were needed in Anbar Province in western Iraq.

Under the current deployment schedule, it will be May before all five of the brigades are in Iraq, but General Petraeus hinted that he would like them sooner, saying that he had asked the Pentagon to dispatch them ''as rapidly as possible.''

General Petraeus acknowledged that the guidelines in the military's counterinsurgency manual implied that 120,000 troops would be needed to secure Baghdad. But he reasoned that the roughly 32,000 American troops that would be deployed in the capital under the plan would be enough, because the total number of American and Iraqi security personnel would be about 85,000, while the use of civilian contractors to guard government buildings would reduce troop requirements.

If the troops are sent according to the current schedule, General Petraeus said the United States would know by late summer if the plan to clear contested neighborhoods of insurgents and militias, hold them with American and Iraqi security forces and win public support through reconstruction was working.

He said he would raise the issue of suspending troop reinforcements with his military superiors if the Iraqi government appeared to have not lived up to its commitments. But he suggested that withholding assistance from specific Iraqi institutions that fall short would have a greater influence. The general also said that a decision to withdraw American troops within six months would lead to more sectarian attacks and increased ''ethnic cleansing.''

General Petraeus acknowledged that he had concerns about the absence of a unified command structure. Under the new plan, the Iraqi Army and police units will be under direct Iraqi command. The American Army units that work with them will be under a parallel American command. To ensure proper coordination, American officers are trying to establish joint command posts.

Senator Levin said his committee had repeatedly asked the administration to make available a list of the security and political ''benchmarks'' the Iraqi had agreed to meet. He warned that the committee would use its subpoena power or hold up military nominations if benchmarks were not provided.

By insisting on that the benchmarks be provided, Mr. Levin seemed to be trying to position himself to argue that the ''surge'' of ''reinforcements be suspended if the Iraqis fell short of meeting commitments.

There is no doubt that we face extremely difficult challenges in Iraq and we have not made enough progress. The citizens of Iraq must be willing to fight for their own freedom. The President recognizes this and his new plan is the result of increased commitments from the Iraqi Prime Minister.

Again, the cost of failure in Iraq is too great as far as our future long-term national security. It's in America's security interests to have an Iraq that can sustain, govern and defend itself. Too much is at stake to simply abandon Iraq at this point; the price of failure is too great.

I wish we could move forward and have legitimate votes on when we should leave or if we should reduce funding for the effort. But unfortunately we won't proceed to those votes due to a decision of the Democratic leadership.

Let me remind the American people, it is the majority leadership which determines the schedule here in the Senate. It is the Democratic leadership that does not want to have a real debate on Iraq. I would welcome an open and fair debate over our future involvement in Iraq and the Middle East.

Personally, I cannot and will not support a proposal that would at this time condemn the new strategy our Commander in Chief has advocated for—a strategy that requires our full support in order for it to succeed. I would rather have an opportunity to vote on Senator GREGG's amendment in support of what our troops are trying to accomplish rather than a resolution that does nothing but diminish morale, sow confusion and discord without achieving anything but short term political pandering. If we are going to debate, let's have a real debate.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today to comment on the nomination of George Casey to be Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army. I have had the occasion, as so many others have had, to visit Iraq on numerous occasions to talk to General Casey. I knew of him before his appointment to Iraq. I think you have to first begin assessing his tenure in Iraq by understanding the situation as he arrived. He arrived after the CPA—the Coalition Provisional Authority—under Mr. Bremer had made systematic and fundamental mistakes with respect to the occupation. He arrived, in fact, after our national command authority entered a country and attempted an occupation without a plan. That, I think, can be attributed to many people but not to George Casey. Without this plan, they were improvising constantly, both on the military side and on the civilian side.

The chief master of improvisation was Ambassador Jerry Bremer. He and his colleagues decided to disband the Iraqi Army without any alternative approach to retaining individuals, paying

them, or directing them into useful services. He also embarked on a very elaborate debaathification program.

In this time it became increasingly more obvious that our forces, because of the misguided and poor decisions by the President and the Secretary of Defense, were engaging in an occupation without sufficient resources. This became most obvious in Abu Ghraib, an incident that shocked the conscience of the world, shocked America particularly. Again, this all preceded George Casey.

When he arrived on the ground he had a situation of chaos, both administratively and also a situation in which the leadership of this Nation—not the officers but the civilian leadership—had grossly miscalculated in terms of successfully stabilizing this country.

Over the intervening months, General Casey established some degree of administrative routine, some degree of planning. He, along with colleagues such as General Petraeus, started an Iraqi training program. Once again, to understand what he saw when he came in, I can recall, as can many of my colleagues, going up and being briefed by Secretary Rumsfeld and others about the 200,000 Iraqi security forces. In fact, they usually pulled out a big pie chart which each week was designed to show the slice of American forces as growing smaller and smaller. That was a total fiction. These people could not be found. When they were found, they were not trained. Again, that is what George Casey inherited.

If people are trying to lay blame and accountability on someone, George Casey is somewhere in the middle or the end of the line. It begins at the top, with the President of the United States whose policies were flawed, with implementation that was incompetent. A large part of the burden should be shared by Secretary Rumsfeld whose personality, whose temperament added further to the chaos that we saw in Iraq. I think we could also include Secretary Wolfowitz and other civilians—Doug Feith, Steve Cambone all of them misguided and impervious to the reality of the ground in Iraq.

Yet just a few weeks ago, as Secretary Rumsfeld left, he was lauded by the President of the United States and the Vice President as the greatest Secretary of Defense we have ever had. That is really accountability.

This nomination is difficult in some respects because in that chaotic and difficult and challenging assignment, General Casey would be the first to admit that his performance was not without flaws. That is one of the appealing aspects of General Casey. He has a certain candor and honesty that he has generated throughout his entire career.

Today, we are debating his nomination. I will support that nomination. I will support it not because he succeeded in every endeavor but because he gave his last ounce of effort and energy to a very difficult and challenging role. He made progress, but that progress today is hampered—but hampered not by his role, certainly, alone—but by strategic decisions that were made by the President, by the Secretary of Defense, and by many others.

Interestingly enough, too, this nomination is not strictly the result of the President's work, but it is also that of Bob Gates who, I think, is an individual of competence and character who has already created a new tone and a good tone in the Department of Defense. Secretary Gates thought long and hard about this, and in some respects to suggest that Casey is the wrong person for this job is to question the judgment of Bob Gates. At this point, I am not quite ready to do that.

I will support General Casey's nomination. He has an important role to play in the Army, an Army that because of this administration has been severely strained. All of the nondeployed units in the United States are not combat ready. There is a huge personnel turmoil caused by extended deployments overseas. The ability of the Army to modernize is sincerely compromised by operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. He has to face all these problems.

There is something else he has to face, too—and, again, it goes right back to the top. It is the selective realism of this President and his Cabinet and his civilian leadership. I was amazed to look at the budget released yesterday, the budget that General Casey will have to operate with, to find out that this administration is estimating the cost of operations in Iraq—not in this fiscal year but the following one, starting October 1, 2008—at a mere $50 billion. Yes, I say a mere $50 billion because this year we will spend about $240 billion; yet next year it will remarkably be brought to $50 billion, although General Pace told me in my questioning that they operate with the assumption at the Pentagon they will spend at least $84 billion.

Where is this $200 billion, or $34 billion, disappearing? It is disappearing into the fiction that this administration is trying to project, not just about Iraq but the deficit reduction, their tax cut plans—all of these things. And General Casey will have to work with that budget.

And there are those in the Senate demanding we vote not to cut off funds for troops. We are not going to cut off funds. But I tell you what. If the President's budget is to be believed, come October 1 of 2008 there will be a huge reduction in funds for those troops in Iraq—but, then again, do we believe the President on this or many other issues?

I will vote for General Casey. I think he should be criticized for shortcomings that he admits readily, but he should not be condemned because he was carrying out a strategy and a policy that was seriously flawed when he arrived on the ground in Iraq. He has done his best to do the job he was given.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. DEMINT. I ask unanimous consent I be allowed to speak 10 minutes in morning business.

Mr. LEVIN. Reserving the right to object, of course, I will not—did I understand the Senator to say 10 minutes? We don't have any shortage of time, so I am not trying to restrict the Senator in any way. I just want to plan.

Mr. DEMINT. Ten minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MCCASKILL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DEMINT. Madam President, I take a few minutes today, despite my hoarse voice, to discuss the fiscal year 2007 spending resolution that we will be debating next week.

The operations of the Federal Government are currently being funded by a temporary spending measure that expires on February 15, and the proposed resolution will fund the Government for the rest of the year.

It is important we understand how we got to this point. Last year, we did not debate and pass all of our annual spending bills before the November elections. When we came back after the election for the lameduck session, a few Members worked successfully to stop Congress from passing a last-minute, foot-tall omnibus spending bill—like this one—that would have been filled with thousands of wasteful earmarks. As a result, we passed an earmark-free stopgap spending measure that, if continued, would have saved the American taxpayer some $17 billion.

There were several media reports last year that said Republicans were trying to push this debate into the future so Democrats would have to clean up this mess. That may have been true for some, but it was never true for me. My goal has always been to stop wasteful earmarks. I am happy to work with Members in either party to get that done. That is why I offered to work with the Democratic leader to pass a clean resolution this year that would not contain any new earmarks and that would keep spending at last year's levels.

While the Democratic leader did not work with me on this measure, I am pleased to say that it does not contain any new earmarks. Let me say that again so that there won't be any confusion. There are no new earmarks in this spending resolution. I applaud the Democrats for continuing the progress we started last year.

As my colleagues can see, this resolution is only 137 pages. That can be compared to where we were headed before we were able to stop the earmarks. It is a major improvement over the last omnibus spending bill we passed that has over 1,600 pages.

Let me make another point clear if I could. This resolution does not stop the administration from enacting the hundreds and even thousands of earmarks

that are not written into this bill. As my colleagues know, over 95 percent of all earmarks never show up in our bills but are buried in hidden committee reports that do not carry the force of law. This resolution says—the one we are considering next week—that the earmarks contained in fiscal year 2006, in the committee reports in 2006, shall have no legal effect. That is a good thing, but those earmarks had no legal effect anyway. The administration was not bound by them last year and is not bound by them now.

Also, this resolution is completely silent with respect to the earmarks in fiscal year 2007 in those committee reports. I am not sure why these reports were left out of this measure, but it appears to be a glaring mistake.

The supporters of this resolution say it is earmark-free. While that is technically true, earmarks can still sneak in the back door. I praise Democrats when they call for a moratorium on earmarks, but this resolution does not actually achieve that goal. That is why I am sending a letter to the President today asking him to do his part by prohibiting anyone in his administration from giving preference to any earmark request that is not legally binding. We need to put a stop to committee report earmarks. We need to end the practice where a Member calls up a Federal agency and threatens its funding if it does not fund that Member's pet project.

Our Federal agencies need to be free to use American tax dollars in ways that meet true national priorities rather than serving one special interest or another. The President has the power to stop secret earmarks. He said in his State of the Union that he wants to stop them. I hope he will do so.

This spending resolution has several other flaws. For example, it uses budget gimmicks to hide its true cost. The proponents say it does not exceed the budget, but that is less than honest. First, it cuts spending on national defense programs with the expectation that funds will be added as emergency spending later this year. This is not the time to cut defense and security spending while adding social programs. It is not honest to hide spending this way. Second, the resolution also pays for new spending by cutting funding in budget accounts that are already empty. These are phony offsets, and they should not be used.

This resolution not only pretends to reduce spending in places where it does not, it also fails to reduce spending where it should. First, the resolution leaves out thousands of congressional earmarks worth billions of dollars. Rather than passing those savings along to American taxpayers, it spends them on other programs. Second, this resolution fails to eliminate a number of programs which were proposed for termination by the President and agreed to last year by the House and the Senate Committee on Appropriations. These programs should be terminated, but this resolution fails to do so.

There are a number of problems with this resolution. I hope we can fully debate this measure and offer amendments to make it stronger.

I understand the Democratic leader does not intend to allow amendments, which is very unfortunate since we have plenty of time to consider and debate them. The current stopgap spending measure lasts for another week, and the House can easily take up our final bill and pass it in a matter of hours. I am glad there are no new earmarks written into the text of this resolution, and I thank my colleagues for that, but if we are not allowed to fix other problems in this resolution, I will not be able to support it.

As I am sure many of my colleagues remember, I came to the floor a few weeks ago and had a spirited and important debate with the Democratic leader on how the Senate will disclose earmarks. We worked through that issue and came to a bipartisan agreement that resulted in earmark disclosure rules that were unanimously approved. It was a clear example of how this body can and should work together. I believe we can do that again on this resolution. I hope the Democratic leader will reconsider his position and work with us to allow a limited number of amendments.

Madam President, I yield the floor and the remainder of my time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 15 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. No objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, I wish to address the body and my colleagues about Iraq, the complex situation that exists there today, the resolution we were not able to address on the floor this week. My hope is we will be able to address this resolution in the very near future.

Iraq is one of the most important and, certainly, complex subjects we will ever debate on this floor. For example, there are some Members of this body who want to reduce this to an either/or decision: surge into Iraq or withdraw from it. But the issue cannot be discussed in such oversimplified terms, I do not believe. Our decisions, whatever they end up being, carry consequences far beyond the number of troops who are deployed within Iraq's borders. Those who favor a withdrawal or a phased withdrawal from Iraq must wholly appreciate those consequences.

We have heard that withdrawal from Iraq would leave a safe haven for terrorists. That is almost certainly assured. We have heard that withdrawal would destabilize the region. That is certainly true as well. But a withdrawal is even worse than that. A cut-and-run strategy would set the stage for a regionwide conflict between gulf states, Arab countries, and Iran and its sphere of influence, and not just a regional war but a bigger one. Such a war would have enormous implications for the war on terrorism and stability around the world. We cannot withdraw from the Middle East and leave behind the kind of chaos in which al-Qaida thrives. If Arabs feel compelled to counter an Iranian threat, the governments are likely to become more radical, not more moderate. We recognized in the aftermath of September 11 that winning the war on terror requires the emergence of moderate governments across the Middle East. Withdrawing from Iraq would amount to pushing the governments of the region toward the arms of Islamist radicals and undermine the core of our counterterrorism strategy since 9/11. This is not the way to go.

We must acknowledge that we cannot afford to lose in Iraq because such a loss would reverse the gains we have made in the war on terror and extend the war on terror for years to come. On the other hand, I am not convinced that a troop surge into Iraq will usher in the sort of peace we need to take the place of the consequences I have just discussed.

I have no doubt our forces are capable of winning any and every individual battle in which they engage. I have been with the troops. I have been with the troops within the past month. They are strong. They are determined. They are courageous. And they are doing a fabulous job. I believe strongly they are capable of defeating the al-Qaida insurgency in Iraq and, as they have demonstrated recently, they are quite capable of defeating Iranian agents seeking to foment violence and instability inside of Iraq. What they cannot do, what our troops cannot do, is achieve a political solution between Iraq's sectarian groups. That is a political problem which requires a political solution. As I found out during my recent travels to Iraq, the sectarian violence is the overwhelming cause of Iraq's difficulties. Additional troops on the streets simply will not make Sunni and Shia trust each other.

I say this with great respect to General Petraeus, who is a friend, whom we have confirmed to be the commander of the multinational forces in Iraq. I met with General Petraeus several times during his tenure when he was commander at Fort Leavenworth in my home State of Kansas. He is a bright, articulate, and outstanding officer. I believe he is well qualified to take on this extraordinarily difficult assignment. I voted to confirm him because he is the right man for such a difficult position, and I wish him Godspeed.

I understand there are different constitutional roles that must be played in the debate over our strategy in Iraq. The President has the responsibility as Commander in Chief to direct the Armed Forces. As part of that responsibility, he sent us a commander he believes will serve well under his overall direction, and I could not agree more.

The Senate has the right, if it chooses, to express its opinion of the President's actions. And we do so. It is entirely possible for the Senate to express its disapproval of the President's strategy without taking steps to undermine the commander or the troops. I have indicated that I do not support the President's surge plan, but I did not attempt to undermine the Commander in Chief or our soldiers in the field by voting against General Petraeus, who is very well qualified for command, nor will I attempt or support efforts to undermine our troops by withdrawing their funding. This is the essence of disagreeing at home while being united overseas.

A Senate debate over strategy is consistent with our constitutional roles to voice opinion and oversee the executive branch. Denying promotions of qualified leaders or cutting funding to the troops in the field would not only be inappropriate but irresponsible.

Let me now turn to those things which I endorse wholeheartedly.

First, I support our troops. They are brave, as I have stated, dedicated, and talented. They deserve not only our admiration and gratitude but our very best efforts to help them achieve their mission. And I support that mission. Our troops are vital to prevent the kind of regional instability I spoke of earlier. They are crucial to denying radical Islamic extremists a safe haven from which they can launch further attacks. They are essential to providing the training necessary for the Iraqi security forces to take charge of their own country's security.

As I have said, we cannot afford to lose this fight. Iraq is the key front in the war on terrorism. We must remain in Iraq as long as it takes to ensure that Iraq can fend off external threats in a tough neighborhood as well as take full responsibility for its own internal security and prevent the establishment of terrorist safe havens within its territory. But I fully understand we cannot sustain this kind of long-term commitment in Iraq that will likely be necessary unless we have bipartisan support here at home. We must be united here if we are to achieve victory over there.

This principle was at the foundation of the efforts of the Baker-Hamilton commission, which sought to bring people together on a way forward that could have broad support. I supported the commission's report as something we could rally around together. I do not agree with every part of that report. Some recommendations, such as those linking the Arab-Israeli conflict with the problems in Iraq, just do not seem to make sense to me. Neither a peace accord between Israel and Palestinians nor new arrangements in the Golan Heights will convince Iran or al-Qaida to get out of Iraq or end the sectarian violence. But I supported the overall report because it could have been something we could use to build bipartisan support for a new strategy in Iraq.

If we cannot rally around that report, perhaps we can rally around a Senate resolution that can gain strong bipartisan support, uniting us here to win over there. Many of us have been working toward this goal. Many of us support a resolution or resolutions that provide responsible opposition to the surge. We do not want to see funds withdrawn from our troops, nor do we believe in withdrawing from Iraq. I hope the party now in the majority in this Chamber will articulate exactly what it can support.

There has been a lot of discussion in the last several days about funding for our troops. I am concerned that already there are plans to use the supplemental and the regular appropriations process to restrict funding for operations in Iraq. Our troops face the threat of real casualties daily. They ought not be casualties of our debates on Iraq.

I have indicated my support for the Warner resolution because it responsibly articulates an opposition to the surge while guaranteeing our troops in the field have the support they deserve from this body and from the American public. This is a responsible approach. I hope that whatever resolution reaches the floor includes a promise of support for our troops. I will not support proposals that do not include such provisions. We need this debate, and we need to vote on this.

I believe there is a way we can come together across the aisle. I think we can be clear about our priorities. The first priority I think we can agree on is getting the Iraqis to work and agree on a political solution to the sectarian violence occurring between Sunnis and Shias. We must encourage the Iraqis to reach a political equilibrium, eliminating the motivation for sectarian strife. We should make sure Iraq's borders are secure. We should chase the foreign fighters out of Iraq and deny the terrorists safe haven. And we should limit the influence of Iran.

I believe we can sustain this kind of military strategy for the necessary time to come, preserving our interests while we put pressure on Iraq's various groups to reach a political settlement. For this reason, I have indicated support for the resolution, as I stated, put forward by Senator WARNER. I believe it is the most constrictive resolution we will consider. It outlines the importance of winning in Iraq, opposes the surge, offers reasonable political and military goals, and praises the efforts of our men and women in uniform. This resolution moves us toward the kind of consensus needed for success.

Other proposals that fail to recognize the consequences of failure, that advocate a precipitous withdrawal, or that provide less than full support for our men and women in uniform, polarize, move us away from consensus and further from victory.

Madam President, the Senate needs to express itself on the subject of Iraq. I hope we can get to a vote on a resolution that will have strong bipartisan support that achieves the goals I have outlined and sustains our commitments for as long as it takes to win in Iraq. We need to have an open process. We need to be able to vote on various resolutions. This is the most important issue facing our country. We should have a full, open debate and debate about it a long time and vote on several resolutions that people see as key. We need to address this, and we need to do it now. We can win. We must pull together.

Madam President, I thank the Chair and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for up to 15 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, there has been much debate and discussion about President Bush's plan for a new way forward in Iraq. In fact, there was much discussion between the President and his team of military and civilian advisers prior to his making the decision to change course and outline a new strategy to help bring stability to the country and to hasten the day when our troops could come home.

There is no easy answer and no easy solution to the situation in Iraq and the Middle East. The President's decision was informed by input from many sources, including his national security advisers, civilian and military, members of his Cabinet, his intelligence experts, as well as Members of Congress, foreign leaders, and others with foreign policy experience. In the end, it was the President who decided this new strategy and that this new strategy had the best chance of success.

He acknowledged, and we all know, there is no guarantee of success. But the dangers are too great to not try to create an opportunity to provide an increased level of stability in Iraq. A temporary deployment of additional U.S. troops in Iraq to support the Iraqi security forces will provide a new window of opportunity for Iraqi political and economic initiatives to take hold and reduce sectarian violence.

The President and his military and civilian advisers reviewed last year's

efforts and determined there were not enough troops to secure the cleared neighborhoods. They also determined that unnecessarily burdensome operational restrictions were placed on the military. The President and our military leaders have assured us that these mistakes will not be repeated.

Prime Minister Maliki has assured us that more Iraqi troops will be engaged in the fight and that political restrictions will be removed. In addition, the Prime Minister of Iraq has committed to take responsibility for security for all Iraq provinces by November, to work to pass legislation to share oil revenues equitably among Iraqi citizens, and to spend $10 billion of Iraqi reserve funds for reconstruction and initiatives that will create jobs. He will also work toward demobilizing militias, holding provincial elections, and reforming debaathification laws, which should help improve the civil structure so the Government can meet the needs of its people and help promote economic growth.

Last week the National Intelligence Estimate, entitled ''Prospects for Iraq's Stability: A Challenging Road Ahead,'' was delivered to Congress. I will not speak to the 90-page classified report. But there were some unclassified judgments provided to us that I can mention. Within this National Intelligence Estimate, this information is provided to support these conclusions:

If strengthened Iraqi security forces, more loyal to the government and supported by Coalition forces, are able to reduce levels of violence and establish more effective security for Iraq's population, Iraqi leaders could have an opportunity to begin the process of political compromise necessary for longer-term stability, political progress, and economic recovery.

Nevertheless, even if violence is diminished, given the current winner-take-all attitude and sectarian animosities infecting the political scene, Iraqi leaders will be hard pressed to achieve sustained political reconciliation in the timeframe of this Estimate.

Coalition capabilities, including force levels, resources, and operations, remain an essential stabilizing element in Iraq. If Coalition forces were withdrawn rapidly during the term of this Estimate, [that is 12 to 18 months] we judge that this almost certainly would lead to a significant increase in the scale and scope of sectarian conflict in Iraq, intensify Sunni resistance to the Iraqi government, and have adverse consequences for national reconciliation.

If such a rapid withdrawal were to take place, we judge that the ISF [Iraqi Security Forces] would be unlikely to survive as a nonsectarian national institution: neighboring countries—invited by Iraqi factions or unilaterally—might intervene openly in the conflict; massive civilian casualties and forced population displacement would be probable; AQI [al-Qaida in Iraq] would attempt to use parts of the country—particularly al-Anbar province—to plan increased attacks in and outside of Iraq; and spiraling violence and political disarray in Iraq, along with Kurdish moves to control Kirkuk and strengthen autonomy, could prompt Turkey to launch a military incursion.

Madam President, these statements remind me of prepared testimony presented by Dr. Henry Kissinger to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on January 31. He indicated that U.S. forces are indispensable and withdrawal would not only have dire consequences in Iraq but would also have a negative impact on the region. I will quote from Dr. Kissinger's testimony at that hearing in the Senate:

The disenchantment of the American public with the burdens it has borne largely alone for nearly four years has generated growing demands for some type of unilateral withdrawal, usually expressed as benchmarks to be put to the Baghdad government that, if not fulfilled in specific timeframes, would trigger American disengagement.

But under present conditions, withdrawal is not an option. American forces are indispensable. They are in Iraq not as a favor to its government or as a reward for its conduct. They are there as an expression of the American national interest to prevent the Iranian combination of imperialism and fundamentalist ideology from dominating a region on which the energy supplies of the industrial democracies depend. An abrupt American departure would greatly complicate efforts to stem the terrorist tide far beyond Iraq; fragile governments from Lebanon to the Persian Gulf would be tempted into preemptive concessions. It might drive the sectarian conflict in Iraq to genocidal dimensions beyond levels that impelled U.S. intervention in the Balkans. Graduated withdrawal would not ease these dangers until a different strategy was in place and showed progress. For now, it would be treated within Iraq and in the region as the forerunner of a total withdrawal, and all parties would make their dispositions on that basis.

President Bush's decision should, therefore, not be debated in terms of the ''stay the course'' strategy he has repeatedly disavowed in recent days. Rather, it should be seen as the first step toward a new grand strategy relating power to diplomacy for the entire region, ideally on a nonpartisan basis.

The purpose of the new strategy should be to demonstrate that the United States is determined to remain relevant to the outcome in the region; to adjust American military deployments and numbers to emerging realities; and to provide the maneuvering room for a major diplomatic effort to stabilize the Middle East. Of the current security threats in Iraq—the intervention of outside countries, the presence of al-Qaida fighters, an extraordinarily large criminal element, the sectarian conflict—the United States has a national interest in defeating the first two; it must not involve itself in the sectarian conflict for any extended period, much less let itself be used by one side for its sectarian goals.

Madam President, it is clear to me from Dr. Kissinger's comments that it is truly in our national interest to support the President's new strategy to help provide a new opportunity for political and economic solutions in Iraq and for more effective diplomatic efforts in the Middle East region. Of course, we know there are no guarantees of success. But according to the National Intelligence Estimate, the perspective of one of our most experienced foreign policy experts, Dr. Kissinger, included maintaining the current course or withdrawal without additional stability in Iraq will be harmful to our national interests and to the entire region.

Over the last few weeks, there have been a number of hearings in which the situation in Iraq and the President's new plan have been debated. During the January 30, 2007, hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on his nomination to be Deputy Secretary of State, Ambassador John Negroponte stated:

. . . I believed, and still believe, that it is possible for Iraq to make a successful transition to democracy. What I would like to say is that my belief that success in Iraq remains possible is based on my experience in dealing with Iraq as U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. and Ambassador to Iraq, and as Director of National Intelligence.

We know there are challenges in Iraq and in the region. And the President has developed a new strategy for dealing with the problem, which I applaud. This includes involving the Government in Iraq and the military forces and the police in Iraq in a more aggressive way. Together they have worked with our military and diplomatic leadership to come up with a new plan that, if it is not undermined by the Congress, has a chance of succeeding.

During the January 23 hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee on the nomination of General David Petraeus to be Commander of the Multinational Forces-Iraq, General Petraeus said:

I believe this plan can succeed if, in fact, all of those enablers and all the rest of the assistance is, in fact, provided.

He, also, indicated this:

It will not be easy, but if we could get them to where they are shouting instead of shooting, that would be a very substantial improvement.

Madam President, it is obvious to me we need to do what we can to help stabilize this situation and bring our troops home. As a beginning point for this strategy, for it to work, we should show a commitment by our country to success. I support this new initiative, and I think we should give it a chance to work.

This does not mean we should not monitor the situation or that the plan should not be adjusted as new developments occur. But we need to move forward in hopes of stabilizing Iraq, stabilizing the region, and in hopes of bringing our troops home at an early date. The President deserves our support in this effort, and I intend to support him.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OBAMA). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes as in morning business on Iraq.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, this whole debate regarding what the Senate should do and how to send the right

messages regarding Iraq war policy is important, but the most important message the Senate can send, to me, would be to our troops and to our potential enemies.

Everybody in America understands the war is not going well. Those who don't understand it are in denial because it clearly has not been the success we were hoping for.

The new strategy we are about to embark on, the Petraeus doctrine, for lack of a better word, I do believe has the best chance left for us to succeed, and additional troops in Iraq can make a huge difference. We have been able to clear in the past but never hold. We don't need any more combat power to clear. We have won every battle we have ever been in with the insurgents. But we have been unable to hold the territory. Mr. President, 17,500 more troops in Baghdad would allow us to hold territory for the purpose of political reconciliation.

The ultimate question for the body is how to bring out the best in the Iraqi political leadership. Some say we need to send a strong message that we are going to leave at a date certain, threaten to cut off funding for the Iraqi military, quit providing security to political leaders in Iraq.

My answer is that democracy is hard without being shot at. The reason we don't solve immigration, Social Security, and other emotional problems is because in our own country we get locked down by pretty extreme voices who have political action committees and run 527 ads.

The problem the Iraqi political leadership has to deal with is a violent country, to the point where it is hard to get political compromise. It is tough to go to Baghdad and do an oil-sharing revenue agreement among Sunnis, Kurds, and Shias when 100 of your constituents have been shot in the head and left out in the street that day.

So I believe precondition to political reconciliation is better security and the better security can only be achieved by going into militia strongholds that were previously off limits, by more combat capability on the ground to hold territory cleared, and by putting the Iraqi troops out front with a sufficient support network behind them and American hands to give them the capacity they are lacking today to deal with the insurgency.

The McCain-Graham-Lieberman resolution understands a million troops won't matter if the Iraqi political leadership doesn't reach political consensus on oil, rule of law, and on a million other problems they have. But the benchmarks in our resolution are an acknowledgment that it takes political compromise in Iraq to bring about stability, but we cannot have that political compromise with this level of violence.

The resolution also talks about a failed state in Iraq and the consequences to this country. They are long lasting and far reaching. A failed state in Iraq is partitioned, where the civil war environment spreads to the region, as a disaster. So if you throw in the towel on Iraq, you don't stop the fight; you guarantee a larger fight.

The debate for the Senate is how many votes should we have to express the differences we have in this body? If the Warner-Levin resolution—I respect both authors, but I just disagree with the message it sends—if Warner-Levin is ever adopted by this body, the headlines throughout this world will be: Senate condemns surge. Baghdad lost.

The resolution disapproves of sending more troops. I believe we need more troops in the short term to bring about political reconciliation. But it is not only me saying it. It is General Petraeus, the commander. I think the message from the resolution considers his efforts lost before they have had a chance to be implemented. It is a lack of resolve in terms of the enemy. The enemy will see this as a lack of resolve on our part, and no good comes from it because it doesn't stop the troops.

Secondly, it says you can continue operations in Anbar, the Sunni area where al-Qaida is operating, but you can't go into Baghdad. Baghdad is a mess. Baghdad is a very violent place where they have sectarian violence occurring. The question is: Do we stop it now or let it grow bigger? There are 6 million people in Baghdad. The nightmare I worry about is an open civil war, where we have a bloodletting that will bring in Sunni Arab nations to come to the aid of their Sunni brothers, Iran will get involved in the south of Iraq, and nothing good will come of that.

The reason we are having this sectarian violence is because al-Qaida struck the mother lode when it bombed the Golden Mosque in Samarra, the third most holy religious site in the Shia religion. That has created sectarian fighting that has gotten out of control.

For decades, Sunnis and Shias married and lived together in Baghdad and other places. The Shia population was terribly oppressed during the Saddam Hussein regime, but the Shia majority had remarkable restraint up until the bombing of the mosque, which was al-Qaida inspired. I don't want to give in to acts of terrorism that bring out the worst in people.

Our goal is not to get the oil from Iraq; it is not to create a puppet state for the United States in Iraq. It is to bring out the best in the Iraqi people, to allow the moderates in the region a chance to conquer and defeat the extremists who have no place for anybody other than only their way of doing business, including us.

We can't kill enough of the terrorists to win, but we surely can empower the moderates so they have a chance of winning.

I am glad we did not take a vote in isolation on Warner-Levin. It would have been 50-something votes, less than 60, and the headlines throughout the world would read: Surge condemned. Baghdad lost. It would have been embarrassing to the President. This is not about President Bush being embarrassed. It is about the message we send to our troops and our enemies.

The reason the Senate is not the House is because we have a chance for the minority; we have a chance to have a healthy, full debate. We were asking for two votes, not one. If you are going to vote on Warner-Levin, fine, I will come to the floor and take the responsibility for opposing it, vote against it, and argue vehemently that it undercuts our efforts in Iraq. But there was another vote being proposed on the Judd Gregg amendment that simply said we will not cut off funding, we will not cap troops as a statement of this body. It would have gotten 70 votes. And the reason we couldn't have those two votes, in my opinion, is because the Democratic left—and we have them on the right—would have ginned up and gone nuts over the idea that the Democratic caucus would not cut off funding for a war that the Democratic left thought should have ended last week.

I know what it is like. I have been through this on immigration. Once your base gets mad at you, it is not pleasant, but you can't build policies around bloggers.

So I am glad the Senate did not take a single vote that was designed to embarrass a single political element in the country. If we are going to debate Iraq on the floor of the Senate, we should be willing to take more than one vote. Two votes is not too much to ask.

Where we go from here, I don't know. I can't promise success from this new strategy, but I can promise the consequences of failure, and these young men and women who will leave to go off as part of this new strategy, I know every Member of the Senate wishes them well and prays for their safety. But I do hope as they leave, we do not take any action to undercut their efforts because of 2008 politics. The war in Iraq is much bigger than the next election.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, during the course of the afternoon, a group of Republican Senators have been meeting, including our final meeting with our distinguished Republican leader, MITCH MCCONNELL, and our assistant Republican leader, Senator LOTT. We now have a letter signed by seven Senators: myself, Senator COLLINS, Senator SMITH, Senator VOINOVICH, Senator SNOWE, Senator HAGEL, and Senator COLEMAN. The letter is addressed

to our two Republican leaders and to the distinguished majority leader, Senator REID, and the assistant majority leader, Senator DURBIN.

I would like to now read the text of the letter to place it into the Record:

Dear Leaders: The war in Iraq is the most pressing issue of our time. It urgently deserves the attention of the full Senate and a full debate on the Senate floor without delay.

We respectfully advise you, our leaders, that we intend to take S. Con. Res. 7 and offer it, where possible, under the Standing Rules of the Senate, to bills coming before the Senate.

On January 10, 2007, the President stated, with respect to his Iraq strategy, ''if Members have improvements that can be made, we will make them. If circumstances change, we will adjust.'' In a conscientious, respectful way, we offered our resolution consistent with the President's statement.

We strongly believe the Senate should be allowed to work its will on our resolution as well as on the concepts brought forward by other Senators. Monday's procedural vote should not be interpreted as any lessening of our resolve to go forward advocating the concepts of S. Con. Res. 7.

We will explore all of our options under the Senate procedures and practices to ensure a full and open debate on the Senate floor. The current stalemate is unacceptable to us and to the people of this country.

Mr. President, for reference purposes, a copy of S. Con. Res. 7 is printed in the RECORD of Monday, February 5, 2007 at page 51556.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, in the debate over whether we should be supporting or withdrawing our support from the President's plan to surge over 20,000 more troops into Iraq, I am acutely aware of one overriding irony. Those who are seeking to begin the withdrawal from Iraq are committing the same conceptual error that many of the same critics have accused the administration of committing when they made their flawed plans for the invasion of Iraq. They are not thinking about what will happen on the day after we begin our withdrawal.

Let me say that the situation in which we find ourselves today in Iraq is certainly in part due to the administration's failure to anticipate many variables in the Iraqi theater, in the region, and in Iraqi society. Those who prepared only for the military defeat of Saddam's forces committed such a profound error that it will be a lesson learned in the history books long after we are gone.

We did not prepare for the vehemence with which certain elements of the displaced Sunni elite would fight to retain their status quo.

We did not anticipate how fractured and weak the oppressed Shia society of Iraq would be once the dictator was deposed, and we did not appreciate how unprepared the Shia would be to present true leadership.

And we did not anticipate, because we apparently did not plan for this, that a political and leadership vacuum created by the fall of Saddam would invite the influence of Iran, whose interests in Iraq are anything but charitable.

The mistakes that we have read so much about—the failure to secure massive ammunition dumps, the peremptory disbanding of the Iraqi army, the sweeping de-Baathification policies that alienated many Sunnis not directly responsible for the Saddam's tyranny—all of these mistakes derive from our failure to think about what would happen in Iraq the day after Saddam fell. It was a much more profound mistake than not sending enough troops; we simply did not imagine that we would be facing problems that would require more troops.

Thinking of what was the most fundamental criticisms of our failures to anticipate the terror of September 11, I am reminded of the 9/11 Commission's conclusion that we did not have the imagination to prepare for that attack.

In Iraq, where our imagination failed again, a thorough understanding of Iraqi history and society should have helped.

I am not talking about rehashing the history of imperialists, who would argue to justify their creation of the unnatural state of Iraq, or who would argue about the superiority of one sect over the other.

I am not talking about the history as told by anthropologists, who argue about ancient fights and long-simmering disputes.

A thorough study and understanding of Iraq would have required us—and the top policymakers of this administration—to understand the complexity of Iraqi society as it was in 2003. And if we had done so, we would have had the imagination to prepare for the many contingencies that quite naturally developed when we so boldly sought to change the status quo.

We know that we had next to no intelligence on Iraq—and if you have read the latest NIE on Iraq put out last Friday, you will be dismayed, as I am, to read that we have very little more intelligence today.

But how about open source knowledge on which we could have made more careful assessments of what to expect the day after the tyrant toppled?

It was a tragic mistake to underestimate the role of criminality underpinning Saddam's regime in its last decrepit days, a criminality that was unleashed immediately after we invaded and which has added great complexity to the conflict among the many armed groups in Iraq today.

But we should not have underestimated the reluctance with which the Sunnis would accept their new declassed position in Iraq.

We should not have overestimated the ability of the Shia, with no political experience, to assume political power. Had we properly assumed the difficulties that we would have faced, we should have been prepared for a period of instability, during which the neighbor to the east, Iran, would not sit idle.

I say this because I cannot support the administration today without honestly assessing what happened in the preparation and implementation of this war over 4 years ago.

And now, 4 years later, the Senate has determined to take up an increasingly partisan debate over what to do to prevent losing the Iraq war.

And we are now debating a variety of what I hope will be non-binding resolutions in response to the President's announcement to surge 21,500 troops into the Iraq conflict.

This is an extremely somber moment in the history of this nation. We find ourselves in the midst of a war that it appears some still do not fully understand. It is a war whose dynamics and politics are completely in flux, and with the consequences of both our actions in the field—as well as in our politics right here—being profound for the Iraqi people, the Middle East region and our national security.

Make no mistake: What we do communicate is America's political will, and our political will is directly related to the morale of our troops. Those who seek to, for rhetorical purposes only, assert their support of the troops while communicating their opposition to their mission cannot sever this natural connection between political will and morale.

While it is always good for the Senate to debate great matters of war and peace—and, indeed, there are no more important matters—the imbalance between partisan rhetoric and substantive direction on this question has been, to my mind, unsettling. A perilous state of war in Iraq is not improved by the partisan level of debate here.

I have watched the course of this conflict with increasing concern and dismay.

As I said, I have been profoundly disappointed in realizing the errors we have made in implementing this war.

I have been greatly dismayed in the failure of the Iraqi people to resist the descent into sectarian violence, and their failure to demand leadership from their elected leaders.

I have been horrified by the level of barbarism. I have not been surprised, I must say, by the Sunni jihadists, whose barbarism should be well known by now, but by Shia militias, who, operating under a government dominated by the Iraqi Shia for the first time in modern Iraq's history, seem to operate without restraint or morality by their authorities in their nihilistic persecution of their real and perceived enemies. I can understand the sense of revenge one must feel when one has been

released from decades of oppression; I can understand the anger and despair one feels when one's family is targeted for murder; I can appreciate the rage when one's shrines and mosques are bombed. I will never understand a revenge that takes as its victims other innocents and noncombatants.

The American people have been shocked by this level of brutality as well—but we shouldn't call it mindless, because in the diabolic minds of the Sunni al-Qaida and ex-Baathist perpetrators, it has a reason: to push Iraq into chaos. In the minds of the bloody Shia militia leaders like Moqtada al-Sadr, there is also a rationale: Their militias complete the cyclical logic of barbarism.

In this cycle is perpetuated a nihilistic violence that will so destabilize Iraq that the Sunni jihadists will be able to create a safehaven where they will expand their reach and refocus on their long-term goals. They are succeeding, and if they succeed they will focus on us.

In this cycle is perpetuated a nihilistic violence that will so destabilize Iraq that the Shia will be left so victimized and subject to militia rule that Iran will further assert its influence to undermine this fledgling nation. If post-Saddam Iraq succeeds, its success would provide the Shia world with an alternate model to the corrupt and failing regime in Tehran. If it fails, Tehran will have a field in which to meddle for years.

The Iraqi Shia, so traumatized by years of oppression under Saddam, and traumatized—let us be perfectly honest about this—by America misleading them and neglecting them in their hour of need immediately after the first gulf war—have failed to stand up and present political figures who can assert leadership instead of political impotence.

Iran is not a passive player here, no.

It is not in Iran's interest for the Iraqi Shia to build a strong, independent, Shia Arab state.

It is not in Iran's interest to have the seminaries of Najaf and Karbala returned to their central position in the world of Shia scholarship, possibly eclipsing Qum. To have this occur would lessen the legitimacy Iran desperately needs as ideological cover for Persian supremacy. The Iraqi Shia, Arabs who were the rank-and-file cannon fodder in the 8-year war against Iran, are now left open to Iran's meddling by their own weak government.

The Sunnis, Iraqi and others throughout the region, are quick to tell us we have fallen into a preexisting and ancient conflict between the Arabs and the Persians, and the Iraqi Shia and their seemingly hapless leaders are caught in between. And that is where we find ourselves today.

Now the Senate is to respond to the policy advanced by the President before the Nation on January 10.

We are to express approval or disapproval to the President's initiative in the middle of a war like this Nation has never faced. At a moment when the situation in Iraq is critical and the outcome is uncertain, some believe our excercise here will provide valuable clarity.

As I have said, it is fitting that the Senate debate this war.

From the day we passed a resolution authorizing the use of force to remove Saddam Hussein the fall of 2002, it has been fitting to debate this war, and we have, through many floor speeches and amendments to authorizing or appropriating legislation. Whether it is fitting that we respond to the President's latest change in military strategy with these resolutions is another matter.

I have paid a great deal of attention to the hearings held before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate Armed Services Committee. I thank and commend the chairmen and ranking minority members of both committees for the many opportunities for substantive review they have sought to present to us and to the American public.

Dozens of substantive testimonies have been submitted, and the questioning has been, in many cases, direct and detailed.

As a member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, I have also had the opportunity to listen to the opinions of the leaders of the intelligence community, and I have read the reports coming from Iraq including, most recently, the National Intelligence Estimate released last Friday.

The public needs to be reminded: There are no silver bullets, no glowing assessments, no confident predictions.

Surrounding this debate, there is a level of political taunting amongst ourselves that I find troubling.

From the majority leader, I hear public pronouncements of 21 Republican seats to be defended in 2008—and I find it disturbing that anyone would question that a Senator of any party would hinge his or her voice on such momentous policy problems for the purpose of personal political survival.

Does anyone doubt that the November election in 2008 is a world away from the carnage of Iraq today?

Can anyone predict with certainty what the situation will be in Iraq almost 2 years from now?

I do not like the rhetoric of ''cut and run'' any more than I like the rhetoric accusing members of my party for ''heading for the tall grass.''

Lives are in balance and we should not be throwing around glib rhetoric.

In that sense, the exclamation of a member of my party 2 weeks ago that we should all be accountable on these resolutions or go be shoe salesmen has a certain urgency, although I do not condescend to the working man, a good many of whom are fighting in this war as we speak.

Nor do I believe that if I go and buy a pair of shoes from a good shoe salesman today that those shoes will not last longer and give better value than some of the resolutions being bandied about today, to be forgotten months from now when the war will bring to us either the reality of some progress toward stability, more stalemate in strife or even greater chaos.

One should predict the future with caution and humility. But, I can make one prediction here, particularly to those on the other side of the aisle: Iraq will be a central issue before this Congress, and before the next administration, in 2009.

We cannot make it go away before then. There is no way that a withdrawal begun now will leave a new administration free from the policy problems presented by Iraq.

So we should liberate ourselves right now from seeking partisan advantage, because as much as some may wish to walk away from Iraq, its relevance to our security and standing is not going to diminish. Not for a long time.

I will support the President's plan for this surge, and I will support any resolution that articulates such support, provided I can agree with all of its language. In doing so, I am acutely aware that the situation we are addressing is at least in some part a function of policy failures committed by this administration.

Admitting this, I have to say that I am unaware, through my reading of American military and diplomatic history, of any conflict in the midst of which our leaders saw clearly the end. Rarely have outcomes been perceivable through the shifting tactics and circumstances that war presented in the moment of greatest chaos.

Many times, in hot wars and cold wars, we have reassessed and changed policy.

Retroactive analysis and accountability are important—sometimes it is critical to understand minor and major mistakes in order to correct flawed policy—but the challenge is to seek the policy amongst the realistic options that will best deliver us to our goals for the future, not to sink in self-satisfying denunciations of the past.

I have read each of these resolutions carefully. I oppose the original Biden amendment, because I fundamentally disagree with it.

Its first resolution clause states:

> It is not in the national interest of the U.S. to deepen its military involvement in Iraq, particularly by escalating the United States military force presence in Iraq.

I deeply disagree.

Not only does this set up a potential constitutional conflict between the executive and legislature as to who runs foreign policy in a war, its intent is to inhibit the President from trying to improve the situation in Iraq at a perilous time. Further, to maintain the status quo in Iraq, as this clause implies, is to guarantee greater chaos in Iraq.

If the opponents of the President want to force a withdrawal, shouldn't they say so directly?

The second clause of the original Biden resolution stated:

The primary objective of U.S. strategy in Iraq should be to have the Iraqi political leaders make the political compromises necessary to end the violence in Iraq.

When I read this, I have to ask, where have the authors of this language been? That was our strategy, which we tried mightily, from 2004 until last year: to let politics lead the way to security. But the forces of insurgency and chaos overwhelmed the fledgling political process and now we clearly realize we have to implement and achieve security before we can regain political process.

Am I the only one here who finds it ironic that critics of the administration who support this resolution appear to be advocating a policy that has failed?

The next clause reads:

Greater concerted regional and international support would assist the Iraqis in achieving a political and national reconciliation.

This is not a policy option, but a dreamer's delusion. It is true, in the abstract, that international support would be greatly beneficial to the Iraqis. But if you look at the region, this dream of international cooperation is not based on reality. Aspirations should not substitute for harsh reality.

Then the resolution states:

Main elements of the mission of the U.S. forces in Iraq should transition to helping ensure the territorial integrity of Iraq, conduct counterterrorism activities, reduce regional interference in the internal affairs of Iraq, and accelerate training of Iraqi troops.

But, we are conducting counterterrorist activities, and the fight in al-Anbar for which the President has requested a small number of this surge is exactly for that. But this resolution disapproves of that, if you are to reread the first clause. We are accelerating training, but we have learned that, if you are going to do it right, you can't speed it up beyond a certain point.

To paraphrase my colleague, the vice chairman of the Intelligence Committee, Senator BOND, who has said of rushed intelligence assessments:

If you want it bad, you're going to get it . . . bad.

If we rush the training, as we have seen, we're going to get ineffective results. If our training of the Iraqi security forces is to be effective and successful, we need to take the time to do it right.

I am all for reducing regional interference, but to do so might mean exercising power and influence, and critics of this President have a conniption if you suggest anything other than a diplomatic tea party with Syria or Iran.

And I do not consider it wise to commit to the territorial integrity of Iraq. We should be agnostic about this question, and recent history should keep us humble against knee-jerk commitments to territorial lines drawn by imperial powers. A previous Bush administration fumbled on the wrong side of history in the last days of the Cold War when it argued against ''suicidal nationalism'' at a time when the Soviet Union was dissolving. A failure to recognize that Yugoslavia was a false state led the U.S. to delay for years an involvement that could have saved hundreds of thousands of civilian lives.

If a soft partition could be achieved without bloodshed, I would support that in Iraq, although no one has figured out how to do that, yet, and it remains unclear whether Iraqis themselves, particularly urbanized Iraqis, desire this or could survive a bloody partition.

But I repeat: If I could imagine a nonviolent partition implemented by an international organization that would have the support of the Iraqi people, I would rather find the billions to do that than the billions to fight a war. In the case of finding financial resources for soft partition, I would expect we would have a somewhat better response from the international community than we are having now.

The next resolution clause states:

The U.S. should transfer, under an appropriately expedited timeline, responsibility for internal security and halting sectarian violence in Iraq to the Government of Iraq and Iraqi security forces.

But just because we want to shed ourselves of this war does not mean we can immediately stand up Iraqi security forces. We have been trying to do that, and it is taking time. This clause is, in effect, purely aspirational. It makes us feel good, but it doesn't change the reality on the ground.

The final clause states:

The U.S. should engage nations in the Middle East to develop a regional, internationally-sponsored peace and reconciliation process for Iraq.

Mr. President, who are the players in the Middle East who are both: (a) sympathetic to the Iraqi cause, and (b) strong enough to be effective?

No country meets both of these simple conditions.

They aren't there. It is too typical of the critics of this administration to substitute the process of diplomacy for the substance of hard policy choices.

Now, I do not oppose diplomacy. It is a legitimate tool in the tool kit. But diplomacy must always be part of a broader policy. Before I would support this administration's diplomatic initiative toward Iran, I would want to see a comprehensive Iran policy. However late in the day, the administration appears to to be forming such a policy, and it appears to include elements of confrontation and competition, as well as a clearly stated solicitation for more constructive relations, as any sound and sophisticated policy should.

If we are to sit down with Iran while Iran is continuing with a program for nuclear development, continues to be the No. 1 state sponsor of terrorism in the world, continues to undermine the stability in Lebanon, and is working against the coalition's forces in Iraq, I would want those Iranian diplomats that we are sipping tea with to know that we are competing and challenging them on all of those fronts. It would be foolish to talk to Iran simply hoping we could convince the Iranians to see the world our way.

The nations of the region with whom we are close do support the peace and reconciliation in Iraq. And those nations want us to remain in Iraq until the situation is stabilized. Kuwait, Jordan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia—none of those governments want us to leave Iraq the way it is now. But Syria and Iran and al-Qaida, too—they want us to leave, and leave behind chaos they can exploit.

My colleague and good friend, Senator WARNER, has made an effort to write a resolution that smoothed away some of the aspects of the original Biden legislation which I find I cannot support.

In particular, the senior Senator from Virginia recognizes, in the first clause, the President's foreign policy prerogative, while somewhat ambiguously also stating that the resolution's intent is not ''to question or contravene'' the President's constitutional authority as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States.

I say ''ambiguously,'' because Senator WARNER's first resolution clause is remarkably similar to Senator BIDEN's:

The Senate disagrees with the plan to augment our forces and urges the President to consider all options and alternatives for achieving the strategic goals set forth below.

It seems to me, however, that adding troops to meet the goals the President has set—achieving a zone of security in Baghdad from which the Iraqi political leadership can assert its leadership and implement essential policies—is a major option that the Warner resolution precludes.

Further, Senator WARNER's resolution strongly supports our efforts against Sunni jihadists, including al-Qaida, in Anbar Province, as I do.

Senator WARNER and the cosponsors of his resolution, however, do not want to see us in between the various sects fighting in Baghdad.

I have to ask: If we are to encourage the anti-al-Qaida Sunni elements in Anbar to join us in a fight to eradicate al-Qaida, what credibility do we have to do so if we are standing by while Sunni jihadists target Shia in Baghdad, and Shia militias slaughter Sunnis in response?

Part of how we got here is by not imagining the way the perpetrators of sectarian strife calculate. We can't continue to fail to understand this dynamic, nor to believe that we can ignore it.

I will support the President's surge strategy because I believe there is a reasonable chance—reasonable, not guaranteed—that a strong military presence that has open rules of engagement to attack insurgents, militias and other criminal elements may create a zone of calm and security for Baghdad. This goal is to create the

space for political leaders to make effective decisions on oil resources, federalism, economic development and other critical issues to entice the majority of the Iraqis into believing there is an alternative to civil war.

Such a period of calm, if achieved, is essential not only for the political system to assert itself, but for us to complete the majority of our training of Iraqi security forces.

If we are to succeed, we won't be able to do it alone. The Iraqi Sunnis are going to have to lead in defeating the foreigners who are terrorizing them in their homes in western Iraq and leading the attacks against Shia in Baghdad.

The Sunnis will have to lead in ejecting al-Qaida, as they have begun to do so.

The Sunnis, not the Shia, are going to have to definitively expose and defeat the former Baathists who have not accepted that the Baath era is over.

The Sunni will have to address this challenge, not the Shia.

And the Shia, not the Sunni, are going to have to lead in ending the terror of the Shia militias.

The Shia are going to have to defeat those who claim to advance the Shia cause by revenge, by torture, by barbarism. If the Maliki government fails to muster the political will to do so, we cannot impose it from the outside.

Perhaps the Iraqi government can finally make progress toward building institutions that will sustain a unified Iraq, toward passing legislation that will divide Iraq's enormous natural resources equitably among the three ethnicities, that will open the civil society to Sunnis, instead of punishing them indiscriminately for their dominance during the Baath era.

Perhaps.

But if not, this Nation and this administration should not be irrationally wedded to the notion of a unitary state of Iraq. We need to imagine all options, rather than cling to ideas which may have departed from the realm of reasonable options.

I will support this surge because the option right now of withdrawing leaves three critical questions unanswered:

No. 1: How do we continue the fight against foreign Sunni extremists, including al-Qaida, in the west of Iraq?

No. 2: Are we to leave a fractured Shia substate unstable enough for Iran to exert expansionist influence, thereby strengthening Tehran?

No. 3: Are we prepared as a nation to see a bloodbath ensue, in Baghdad and elsewhere, that may make other American foreign policy failures—Budapest in 1956, Vietnam in 1975, the Shia slaughter after we ejected Saddam from Kuwait in 1991—pale in comparison?

As I said at the beginning of this speech, the critics' attempts to set the stage for withdrawal commits the same strategic blunder they legitimately accuse the Bush administration of making in its implementation of the Iraq war. They didn't think of the day after Saddam fell. Today the critics are not thinking of the day after we withdraw.

Today, however, we need to recognize that worse than the vanity about easy victory committed in 2003 is the denial of calamitous defeat that would occur if we leave before we make every attempt to stabilize the country.

For this reason, I will support the administration, but I will do so under no casual assumptions or glib assurances.

I will also do so by demanding that the administration be much more forthcoming in its plans for the day after—the day after we complete our surge into Baghdad, the day after we can honestly assess that Baghdad has been pacified, and heaven forbid, the day after we assess that the chaos unleashed and manipulated by the forces of destruction are prohibiting a meaningful and comprehensive success.

I am not conceding defeat, nor preparing for withdrawal.

I am supporting a strategy for success. So far, President Bush—who has a lot to answer for the mistakes that have been made—is offering the only way to try to leave Iraq in better shape than it is now.

He has my support, and I urge my colleagues to join me.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CANTWELL). The Senator from New York is recognized.

Mrs. CLINTON. Madam President, we are all well aware in this Chamber that our country finds itself in a deepening crisis in Iraq, and we find ourselves at a moment of decision in the Senate. Nearly 4 years ago, our President rushed us into war in Iraq, a war now longer than American involvement in World War II, which next month will actually exceed the length of our own Civil War. For 4 years, Members on both sides of the aisle have watched with shock and dismay as our President has made mistake after misjudgment after miscalculation. Even before the invasion ended, the administration rejected the voluminous plans drawn up by the State Department to deal with the chaotic aftermath. The successful examples of the U.S. experience in Bosnia and Kosovo during the 1990s were summarily rejected. State Department and other American officials with experience in nation-building were blackballed in favor of inexperienced ideologues who were selected on the basis of political litmus tests, including answering questions about whether they were for or against Roe v. Wade and whether they had voted for George W. Bush.

Despite the urgent warnings of Army Chief of Staff Rick Shinseki and other senior military commanders, the necessary number of troops to ensure security and stability was not sent at the start of the conflict. Our men and women in uniform were ordered into harm's way without the necessary body armor or armored vehicles, a mortal error I have tried to correct time and again since I first learned of it. The strategic blunders now fill an entire library shelf of books, and they are certainly too numerous for me to list in the time allotted here.

Through these 4 years, there has also been another abdication of responsibility. That was the failure of this Congress to engage in its Constitutional obligation of oversight and accountability. While our troops have stood valiantly on the frontlines, the Congress has stood on the sidelines. Defending a partisan position trumped U.S. national security interests and the welfare of our troops in the field. Many Members attempted to raise the debate, and we were unable to do so because of the majority's refusal to hold the administration accountable.

In the election last year, the American people decided the status quo was no longer acceptable. So we have a new Congress, and it is past time we in this Chamber do our duty to balance the President and provide a check against his failed policy in Iraq. As there is a majority in our country against the President's failed policy in Iraq, there is a bipartisan majority in this Senate against it, as well. The resolution before the Senate reflects that bipartisan consensus as it also reflects the sentiments of the overwhelming majority of Americans.

But a partisan minority seeking to shield the administration's continuing failure in Iraq seeks to thwart the bipartisan majority and the will of the American people. This is not a debate about abstractions. I have seen the consequences of our involvement in Iraq, as have many of my fellow Senators. Three weeks ago, I visited Iraq to express gratitude to our soldiers, to meet with Iraqi leaders and U.S. commanders and our troops on the ground.

What I saw and what I did not see underscored my concerns. I saw American service men and women performing their duty admirably, but I did not see a strategy that, under the current circumstances, has much chance of success. The collective analysis of our intelligence community in the latest National Intelligence Estimate is that the term ''civil war'' does not adequately capture the complexity of the conflict in Iraq. The bipartisan Baker-Hamilton Commission said the situation in Iraq is grave and deteriorating. Yet the President's response to the bipartisan commission and the latest National Intelligence Estimate does not match the urgency that is described. The so-called surge is not a new strategy but a tactic that has been tried and failed.

The absence of leadership on the part of the President leaves Congress no choice but to demonstrate the leadership that the American people and the reality on the ground demand. The previous two Congresses abdicated their duty. We must not. Every single day our feet sink deeper into the sands. Every day the crisis worsens. To hide from this debate with our troops in such danger is wrong, plain and simple.

The crisis in Iraq has fostered a crisis of democracy at home. The American people expect a debate. Our troops are owed a debate. Our Constitution commands we debate. But a partisan minority acting at the behest of the administration is standing in the way. This amounts to a gag rule on our democracy, contrary to the national security interests of the United States.

Even though America voted for a new direction in Iraq, even though the majority of Senators opposes escalation in Iraq, we cannot get the Republicans to allow us to take a symbolic vote to condemn the escalation, much less a real vote to stop it. This resolution deserves a debate. It deserves a vote. It deserves passage.

There are those in the Senate who invoke our grave troops, suggesting that a debate on the most important issue facing our country and facing our troops would somehow undermine the mission and weaken our Nation. It is a pernicious, shameful argument and it is dead wrong. Our democracy is stronger than that and the American people and our troops deserve better than that.

Our troops understand we are debating this war. We are debating it not just in this Senate, we are debating it in kitchen table conversations, around water coolers, and standing in line at supermarkets. We are debating this war everywhere Americans gather. Indeed, our troops are debating this war.

The American people understand it is the policy that undermines our national security interests, not a vote disapproving the policy.

This debate and this resolution have merit and purpose and it will, if permitted to go forward, begin the process of changing the policy; otherwise, why would the administration and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle fight so hard to prevent us from having a debate and a vote? Because they understand this will be the first step to restore our strength and renew our leadership around the world, to begin redeploying our troops out of Iraq and start on the long road of undoing the damage brought by the President to America's leadership around the world.

If you believe the escalation is the right strategy, cast your vote for it. If you believe, as the majority in this Chamber believes, that escalation is not the right strategy, then cast your vote against it. But standing on the sidelines is no way to stand up for the troops.

Now, there are many—both in the Chamber and outside—who wish to go further than this resolution and look for ways to bind the actions of the President and to require him to change course. I understand and agree with the frustration that has afflicted many Members in dealing with the President's policy. However, if we can get a bipartisan vote against escalation, it will be the first time the Senate has exercised its constitutional responsibility to be a check and balance on the President. The first step for the Senate will be a giant leap toward accountability and toward the right end to this war.

There is a big difference between calling for the end of this war and doing the difficult, painstaking work of building the political will within the Congress to take action. We, in the Senate, entrusted by our constituents to cast tough votes, should not have the luxury of standing outside the arena and lobbing criticism from within.

Once we pass this resolution, we should go further. Rather than an escalation of U.S. troops, which will not contribute to fundamentally changing the conditions on the ground, we should put pressure on the Iraqi Government in a way that they will understand there are consequences to their empty promises and their continued inaction.

Last week, the National Intelligence Counsel released the unclassified key judgments of the National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq. That presents the consensus views of the U.S. intelligence community. It underscores the need for a political solution. The NIE states that in the coming 12 to 18 months, the overall security situation will continue to deteriorate at rates comparable to the latter part of 2006. And it goes on further to say that even if violence is diminished, given the current winner-takes-all attitude and sectarian animosities infecting the political scene, Iraqi leaders will be hard-pressed to achieve sustained political reconciliation in the timeframe of the estimate, namely, a year to a year and a half. Even if the intelligence experts argue the escalation results in greater security, their best judgment is that the bloodshed and violence will continue to spiral out of control.

So what should we do? Many believe, and we have been arguing for this and voting for this for more than a year and a half, that we have to chart a new course that emphasizes greater Iraqi responsibility. I still believe that is the path we should be taking. Instead, the President has chosen a very narrow course that relies heavily on American military force.

I will be introducing legislation that I think offers a better alternative. First, my legislation will cap the number of troops in Iraq as of January 1st and will require the administration to seek congressional authorization for any additional troops. The President has finally said, this is not an open-ended commitment in Iraq, but he is providing the Iraqis with an open-ended presence of American troops.

Second, as a means to increase our leverage with the Iraqi Government and to clearly send a message that there are consequences to their inaction, I would impose conditions for continued funding of the Iraqi security forces and the private contractors working for the Iraqis.

My legislation would require certification that the security forces were free of sectarian and militia influence and were actually assuming greater responsibility for Iraqi security, along with other conditions. We must not let U.S. funds, taxpayer funds, be used to train members of sectarian militias who are responsible for so much of the violence in Iraq. Unfortunately, it appears our funds to Iraqi security forces may be going to the people we are trying to restrain.

A news report last week in an article entitled ''Mahdi Army Gains Strength through Unwitting Aid of U.S.'' reports that:

> . . . the U.S. military drive to train and equip Iraq's security forces has unwittingly strengthened Muslin cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army militia, which has been battling to take over much of the capital city as American forces are trying to secure it.

According to this new report, U.S. Army commanders and enlisted men who are patrolling East Baghdad, said al-Sadr's militias had heavily infiltrated the Iraqi police and Army units that they've trained and armed. Said one soldier:

> They'll wave at us during the day and shoot at us during the night.

We need to inform the Iraqi Government, in no uncertain terms, that there are consequences, that we will take funds away from their troops—not from our troops, many of whom still lack armored vehicles and counter-insurgency measure devices and communications equipment. And we will not fund the Iraqis if our troops are going to enter into sectarian battles where some of the participants have received American training and support.

Third, I would hold the administration accountable for their empty promises as well. My bill requires the Bush administration to certify that Iraq has disarmed the militias, has ensured that a law has finally been passed for the equitable sharing of oil revenues; that the Iraqi Government, under American influence and even pressure, has made the constitutional changes necessary to ensure rights for minority communities; that the debaathification process has been reversed to allow teachers, professionals, and others who joined the Baath Party as a means to get a job to serve in the new Iraqi Government.

I would also require the administration to engage in a regional diplomatic initiative, including all of Iraq's neighbors, to address Iraq's future and to understand and convey clearly that the United States expects Iraq's neighbors to be partners in the stability and security of the new Iraqi state.

If these conditions are not met or are not on their way to being met within 6 months, a new congressional authorization requirement would be triggered.

Finally, I would prohibit any spending to increase troop levels unless and until the Secretary of Defense certifies that our American troops will have the proper training and equipment for

whatever mission they are ordered to fulfill.

Yesterday, I read the classified report outlining the findings by the Department of Defense inspector general about the problems that have been faced by our troops getting the equipment they desperately need in combat areas such as Iraq.

The inspector general did not have the full cooperation of the Department of Defense. It is heartbreaking that the inspector general could conclude that the U.S. military still has failed to equip our soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, especially for the kind of warfare they are confronting, with IEDs and insurgents who are attacking them in asymmetric, unconventional warfare.

This report comes on the heels of an article in the Washington Post last week titled ''Equipment for Added Troops Is Lacking: New Iraq Forces Must Make Do, Officials Say.'' The Washington Post story raised serious questions about the adequacy of the supply of up-armored HMMWVs and trucks.

One of our generals is quoted as saying he does not have the equipment our forces need, and they will have to go into battle with what they have.

On my way back from Iraq and Afghanistan, I stopped at Landstuhl Hospital in Germany to visit with some of our wounded soldiers. I met with one young man who was lying in his bed with injuries he had suffered from one of the shape charges, these new more advanced, more sophisticated command-controlled IEDs, the improvised explosive devices. He told me that the armored, fully equipped HMMWV had saved his life and that of the lives of his buddies who were with him. But he also told me that not everybody he served with had that kind of protection because there were not enough of those armored vehicles to go around.

I do not believe the Congress can shirk its responsibility. It is past time we live up to our constitutional responsibility. If I had been President in October of 2002, I would have never asked for authority to divert our attention from Afghanistan to Iraq, and I certainly would never have started this war. But we are where we are, and this Congress must deliver a strategy to help us end this war in the right way and begin returning our troops home.

So on this most important issue of our time, I call on my colleagues not to hide from this debate but to welcome it, to welcome the opportunity to set forth whatever one's opinions might be because this debate is about more than our policy in Iraq. It is about the role and responsibility of this august institution. Great debates in our past have not only moved public opinion but furthered the progress of our country.

This debate is not merely about whether the President should escalate troops into Iraq, whether he has failed to grasp the complexity of the situation we confront in Iraq, and to take every diplomatic, political, economic, and military strategy available to him, but it is about our democracy itself.

We should consider this resolution, and I hope we will. Our duty is rooted in the faith entrusted to us by our constituents and enshrined in our Constitution. When we think about the patriotism and bravery, the humor and resolve, the optimism and strength of our soldiers, marines, airmen, and sailors, our Active Duty, our Guard, and Reserve, I think it humbles us all. But it comes out of this great democratic tradition that we are all blessed to be a part of.

I hope we have the opportunity in the next days to do our duty just as the men and women who are serving us have done and are doing theirs.

A week ago, I was privileged to go to San Antonio for the opening of a remarkable center called the Center for the Intrepid. It is a new state-of-the-art facility devoted to the rehabilitation and recovery of our wounded heroes. It was funded by contributions from more than 600,000 Americans. It was not built by our Government. It was built by our citizens.

It is not only going to be a place of great hope and healing for the brave men and women who have given their full measure, but it will also stand as a symbol of our democracy, of our values, of people coming together across our country—a unique partnership that you find nowhere else in the world except here.

As I sat on the stage during the ceremonies for the opening of this new rehabilitation center, I watched the hundreds of young men and women who had been injured march in, and in some cases wheeled in, to take their place in the audience. I believe they are owed this debate. And certainly all those who are currently serving, and the thousands who are on their way to carry out this escalation strategy, deserve it even more.

So I hope we will have a chance to express the will of our constituents, our deeply held opinions, and participate in a debate that is historic and necessary. That is the least we can do.

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that an analysis of the consequences of our actions in Iraq entitled ''Now What?'' by Army Retired LTG Jerry Max Bunyard be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NOW WHAT?

(By Jerry Max Bunyard)

At church every Sunday, the Fort Belvoir, VA Installation Chaplain uses the question ''now what?'' to get the congregation to analyze the message he just delivered and find a way to apply it to their lives. I believe as citizens and leaders of this nation we are at a point in the continuing War in Iraq that we must ask the same question; ''Now What?''

Today we have been bombarded with facts, figures, commentaries, interpretations, and subjective thoughts concerning the Middle East activities. Depending on the writer, attempts are made to sway you one way or the other concerning a particular issue. There are many half-truths that are spoken, which tend to lead the reader in a given direction. Our world-wide media has led us astray on many Middle East subjects. They tend to be over zealous to ensure what is being written follows the point they are attempting to make or stays within the bounds of being politically correct or meet their organization's marketing goals for selling air time or copy. They sometimes convince the reader to believe and support a particular political agenda. In many cases these misleading and unbalanced reports cause the reader to be convinced that what is being said is the truth. On the other hand, there are some excellent articles, books and writings that exist on the subject but they have been overlooked or ignored to some degree by both academia and the media because of political correctness coupled with political sensitivity for fear of offending major non-western religion, reigning political and ideological orthodoxies, or a mix of both. So the question is how do we get to the truth of the Middle East conundrum?

For many Americans (as well as other nationalities) they simply rely on what the newspaper, radio or TV is telling them. They do not question or seek other sources on any given event or subject being discussed. They make no attempt to understand the totality of the area of interest they just swing with the ''news of the day'' from their favorite news media or TV station. Then we have the politicians and their army of supporters who will do and say what they think John Q. Public wants to hear in order to glean their vote. They twist and slant the news to meet their agenda. As we approach the 2008 Presidential election this aspect has become the norm and is simply misleading the American people, causing great harm to our chances of achieving the National objectives throughout the world as well as showing, indirectly, lack of support for the members of our armed forces who are serving in harms way supporting these objectives. This, I consider personal aggrandizement and, unquestionably, it is not in the best interest of the country.

There are others, thank goodness, who do take the time and energy to study the subject pro and con and attempt to be objective and analyze the big picture along with the day to day events as they occur. Likewise, there are some very knowledgeable Middle East analysts who have made it their life's endeavor to understand the intricacies of the situation, various cultures, religion and politics of this volatile region of the world. Many of these people are not in the government. In my opinion, we should be listening to and incorporating their thoughts and experience into any decisions concerning that region of the world. These dedicated, unbiased ''subject matter experts'' should be consulted regularly for opinions and recommendations.

Based upon this multitude of diverse information one has to sort the wheat from the chaff. This requires some personal knowledge of the Middle East and Iraq war as well as the writer or speaker providing information concerning the area of interest. One must do his homework in order to place the information in ''categories'' to establish a prioritization of credible information. Once this task is completed then one only uses that information and ''files'' the rest. Throughout this paper I will use quotes or information from whom I consider credible sources and will footnote where the comments or quotes originated.

The purpose of this paper is to provide my two cents worth on how to answer the question of ''Now What'' relative to what we should be thinking about and doing concerning the Iraqi situation or, better yet, the

Middle East regional situation. There will not be any effort to address the question of how we got into this situation. We are where we are, so what course of action should we follow from this point forward? To address this one must take a look at the region itself and place into perspective the consequences of the various choices that are now before us.

THE CHALLENGE

I cautioned earlier about politicians and how they use or misuse information. However, there is at least one exception in the political arena, Senator Joseph Lieberman (I–CT) who very clearly summed up the current Iraqi situation and the challenge that faces Iraq, the United States and the free world in general. Based on his long term interest in the region, the wars (both past and current), and the information gleaned from his trip to Iraq in December of 2006, he provided the following comments upon his return:

''Because of the bravery of many Iraqi and coalition military personnel and the recent coming together of moderate political forces in Baghdad, the war is winnable. We and our Iraqi allies must do what is necessary to win it.

The American people are justifiably frustrated by the lack of progress, and the price paid by our heroic troops and their families has been heavy. But what is needed now, especially in Washington and Baghdad, is not despair but decisive action—and soon.

''The most pressing problem we face in Iraq is not an absence of Iraqi political will or American diplomatic initiative, both of which are increasing and improving; it is a lack of basic security. As long as insurgents and death squads terrorize Baghdad, Iraq's nascent democratic institutions cannot be expected to function, much less win the trust of the people. The fear created by gang murders and mass abductions ensures that power will continue to flow to the very thugs and extremists who have the least interest in peace and reconciliation.''

Senator Lieberman brought out very salient points—the war is winnable; American people are frustrated by lack of progress; price paid by troops and families has been heavy; what is needed, especially in Washington and Baghdad, is not despair but decisive action—and soon; most pressing problem is the lack of basic security.

To me, that captures the status that continues to exist at present.

So, this sets the stage as to the situation we find ourselves in today. Now what do we do about it and how?

BACKGROUND

Before getting into the current Middle East issues and possible courses of action it is necessary one have a general understanding of the key religious aspects along with a basic knowledge of the Jewish, Arab, and Islamic history.

Religion has once again become a force that no government can safely ignore. The United States and other Western countries experts have failed to recognize the importance of faith as it relates to world affairs. One, if not the most, important aspects to be considered when discussing the Middle East and the growing dominance of the Islam religion concerns the differences of opinion between Islam and the Western World view of separation of Church and State.

Bruce Feiler states ''Abraham, the great patriarch of the Hebrew Bible, is also the spiritual forefather of the New Testament and the grand holy architect of the Koran. Abraham is the shared ancestor of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. He is the linchpin of the Arab-Israeli conflict. He is the centerpiece of the battle between the West and Islamic extremists. He is the father—in many cases, the purported biological father—of 12 million Jews, 2 billion Christians, and 1 billion Muslims around the world. He is history's first monotheist.''

Thomas Jefferson once remarked that in matters of religion ''the maxim of civil government'' should be reversed and we should rather say, ''Divided we stand, united, we fall.'' In this remark Jefferson was setting forth with classic terseness an idea that has come to be regarded as essentially American: the separation of Church and State. This idea was not entirely new; it had some precedents in the writings of Spinoza, Locke, and the philosophers of the European Enlightenment. It was in the United States, however, that the principle was first given the force of law and gradually, in the course of two centuries, has become a reality.

Another very important aspect of this overall issue is to address the total Middle East environment. An important consideration is the countries that border Iraq and what impact our actions and those of others may have on these specific countries. Shown next is a map of the Middle East countries. The countries directly adjacent to Iraq are Iran, Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

George Friedman describes the dilemma that now faces the United States as it relates to the potential influence of Iran on the outcome of the Iraqi war. ''The Iraq war has turned into a duel between the United States and Iran. For the United States, the goal has been the creation of a generally pro-American coalition government in Baghdad—representing Iraq's three major ethnic communities. For Iran, the goal has been the creation of either a pro-Iranian government in Baghdad or, alternatively, the division of Iraq into three regions, with Iran dominating the Shiite south.''

THE COSTS OF DISENGAGEMENT

The next logical step would be to understand as best as possible, the implications of not continuing our efforts in Iraq and, in so doing, what this would mean to the United States, in the future. One of the best analyses I have found thus far comes from two men outside the government who have significant experience in Middle East studies. Over the years Daniel Bynum and Kenneth Pollack have gained an excellent understanding of that region. In August of 2006 they published an article titled, ''What Next,'' and have followed that up with a 130 page report titled, ''Things Fall Apart'' that was published in January 2007 by the Brookings Institution's Saban Center for Middle East Policy. This latest report states: ''Iraq is rapidly sliding into all-out civil war that is likely to spill over into neighboring countries, resulting in mass deaths and refugees, serious disruption of oil supplies and a drastic decline in US influence.''

In the August 2006 article, Bynum and Pollack state:

'' . . . The consequences of an all-out civil war in Iraq could be dire. Considering the experiences of recent such conflicts, hundreds of thousands of people may die. Refugees and displaced people could number in the millions. And with Iraqi insurgents, militias and organized crime rings wreaking havoc on Iraq's oil infrastructure, a full-scale civil war could send global oil prices soaring even higher.

''However, the greatest threat that the United States would face from civil war in Iraq is from the spillover—the burdens, the instability, the copycat secession attempts and even the follow-on wars that could emerge in neighboring countries. Welcome to the new 'new Middle East'—a region where civil wars could follow one after another, like so many Cold War dominoes.

''And unlike communism, these dominoes may actually fall.''

There are other consequences of civil war as explained by Bynum and Pollack. A top-level summary of their in-depth study reveals: ''. . .civil wars tend to spread across borders . . . and Washington must decide how to deal with the most common and dangerous ways such conflicts spill across national boundaries. Only by understanding the refugee crises, terrorism, radicalization of neighboring populations, copycat secessions and foreign interventions that such wars frequently spark can we begin to plan for how to cope with them in the months and years ahead . . . massive refugee flows are a hallmark of major civil wars . . . refugee camps often become a sanctuary and recruiting grounds for militias, which use them to launch raids on their homelands . . . terrorism finds new homes during civil wars . . . radicalism is contagious as civil wars tend to inflame the passions of neighboring populations . . . the problem worsens whenever ethnic or religious groupings also spill across borders . . . Iraq's neighbors are just as fractured as Iraq itself . . . should Iraq fragment, voices for secession elsewhere will gain strength . . . the first candidate for secession is obviously Kurdistan . . . another critical problem of civil wars is the tendency of neighboring states to get involved, turning the conflicts into regional wars . . . covert foreign intervention is proceeding apace in Iraq, with Iran leading the way . . . Iran has set up an extensive network of safe houses, arms caches, communications channels and proxy fighters, and will be well-positioned to pursue its interests in a full-blown civil war. The Sunni powers of Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Turkey are frightened by Iran's growing influence and presence in Iraq and have been scrambling to catch up . . . Turkey may be the most likely country to overtly intervene in Iraq . . . none of Iraq's neighbors thinks that it can afford to have the country fall into the hands of the other side . . . an Iranian ''victory'' would put the nation's forces in the heartland of the Arab world, bordering Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Syria—several of these states poured tens of billions of dollars into Saddam Hussein's military to prevent just such an occurrence in the 1980s . . . similarly, a Sunni Arab victory (backed by the Jordanians, Kuwaitis and Saudis) would put radical Sunni fundamentalists on Iran's doorstepa nightmare scenario for Tehran . . . add in, too, each country's interest in preventing its rivals from capturing Iraq's oil resources . . . if these states are unable to achieve their goals through clandestine intervention, they will have a powerful incentive to launch a conventional invasion.''

George Friedman provides his assessment of Iran's concern if Iraq is able to stabilize its government and the country in general. He also indicates what the Iranians are doing to counter the U.S. efforts to accomplish stabilizing Iraq.

''A stable Iraq under U.S. influence represents a direct threat to Iran, while a fragmented or pro-Iranian Iraq does not. Therefore, the Iranians will do whatever they can to undermine U.S. attempts to create a government in Baghdad. Tehran can use its influence to block a government, but it cannot—on its own—create a pro-Iranian one. Therefore, Iran's strategy is to play spoiler and wait for the United States to tire of the unending conflict. Once the Americans leave, the Iranians can pick up the chips on the table. Whether it takes 10 years or 30, the Iranians assume that, in the end, they will win. None of the Arab countries in the region has the power to withstand Iran, and the Turks are unlikely to get into the game.''

The National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq, released 2 February 2007, warns that

pulling U.S. troops out of the country too soon would lead to a collapse of the Iraqi military, outside intervention and the creation of safe havens for al Qaeda terrorists. It also states that if coalition forces were withdrawn rapidly . . . we judge that this almost certainly would lead to a significant increase in the scale and scope of sectarian conflict in Iraq, intensify Sunni resistance to the Iraqi government and have adverse consequences for national reconciliation. Additionally, if such a rapid withdrawal were to take place, we judge that the [Iraqi Security Force] would be unlikely to survive as a nonsectarian national institution; neighboring countries . . . might intervene openly in the conflict; massive civilian casualties and forced population displacement would be probable. The report also says that the al Qaeda terrorist group in Iraq would try to ''use parts of the country''—particularly al-Anbar province—to plan increased attacks in and outside of Iraq. Additionally, Turkey could launch a military incursion if there were no U.S. or allied troops to block Kurdish attempts to control northern Iraq.

ALTERNATIVE COURSES OF ACTION (C/A) AND SUPPORTING BASE

Many alternatives and options have surfaced over the past several weeks and months. The repercussion of exercising certain alternatives have been looked at in considerable depth with some alarming results that not only impact what goes on in Iraq, but the impact they could have on the entire Middle East.

In my opinion, there are at least four alternatives that have been put on the table in respect to the way ahead in Iraq. These are not new but have been identified by different sources.

Cut and Run—The first C/A being considered was initiated by Congressman Murtha in what has been termed as the ''cut and run'' scenario. There are other variations of this C/A but, essentially, they all boil down to get the troops out of Iraq as quick as you can—some say immediately others say six months others say by the end of the year (2007). This is easy to say but carries with it tremendous implications and ramifications.

In my opinion, this C/A would simply embolden the terrorists to include Iran, Syria and other countries that are supportive of terrorism. At the same time it would demoralize our friends in the region. Once again it would place America in everyone's minds as a feckless country that does not have the will to see actions through to completion. How many times do we have to learn that lesson? This would be a strategic defeat for American interests with potentially catastrophic consequences both in the Middle East region and elsewhere. Thus, this C/A could lead to Iran expanding their influence throughout the region and utilizing Hamas and Hezbollah in Syria, Lebanon, Palestinian territories and Jordan. What Arab friends the U.S. may have would feel abandoned and it would place their governments in jeopardy. No longer could they look to the U.S. as a reliable ally or guarantor of peace and stability in this critical region. The implications are that the effects of pulling out of Iraq would spread over into the energy resources and transit choke points vital to the global economy. How this would all play out is unknown but these are potential outcomes of pursuing this C/A.

Annexation of Iraq—The second C/A would be the annexation of Iraq by American forces, which means the U.S. would govern with a military governor-general and local commanders, and a long-term commitment made that no matter the cost in resources (people and dollars) the U.S. would defend, assist, and help develop those who put their trust in us, in every hamlet, village, and neighborhood until they are able to defend themselves. This would entail sealing the borders and providing local security, local civic actions and local government and public services. The oil industry, agriculture and other agencies would be franchised to U.S. companies to redevelop with royalties going to the governor-general to defray the costs of the occupation and security campaign. This C/A could take decades before they are ready to become an independent nation of Iraqis—no longer Kurds, Arabs and other minorities but Iraqis. Complicating this C/A is Islam and the differences that exist within the various interpretations of Islam. In my opinion, this C/A would never be supported by either Americans or Arabs/Iraqis and, therefore, is discarded for further discussion.

Stay the Course—The third is to ''stay the course,'' which falls in the unacceptable category, based on the failure to date, plus the votes from the recent elections and the sentiments of Congress. This C/A is not supported by the Administration, Congress or the Defense Department. Therefore, it is not considered viable and will be discarded for further discussion.

Presidential Proposal—The fourth C/A follows what the President is proposing. That is to provide support to the Iraqi government in order for it to, as quickly as possible, establish a unified democratic federal Iraq that can govern and defend itself and serve as an ally in the War on Terror. As I understand it, these have been the U.S. strategic goals and objectives from the outset.

Stephen Hadley, Presidential security advisor, described the President's proposal as follows:

''The Baker-Hamilton report explained that failure in Iraq could have severe consequences for our national interests in a critical region and for our national security here at home. In my many conversations with members of Congress and foreign policy experts, few have disagreed.

''Most people agree that we must focus on fighting al-Qaeda. The president's strategy steps up this fight—particularly in Anbar province, where al-Qaeda seeks a sanctuary. The administration also agrees that we must accelerate the training of Iraqi security forces. The president's strategy does this—with benchmarks to track progress and bolster the size and effectiveness of those forces. Training and supporting Iraqi troops will remain our military's essential and primary mission.

''But the president's review also concluded that the strategy with the best chance of success must have a plan for securing Baghdad. Without such a plan, the Iraqi government and its security institutions could fracture under the pressure of widespread sectarian violence, ethnic cleansing and mass killings. Chaos would then spread throughout the country—and throughout the region. The al-Qaeda movement would be strengthened by the flight of Sunnis from Baghdad and an accelerated cycle of sectarian bloodletting. Iran would be emboldened and could be expected to provide more lethal aid for extremist groups. The Kurdish north would be isolated, inviting separation and regional interference. Terrorists could gain pockets of sanctuary throughout Iraq from which to threaten our allies in the region and our security here at home.

''The new plan for Baghdad specifically corrects the problems that plagued previous efforts. First, it is an Iraqi-initiated plan for taking control of their capital. Second, there will be adequate forces (Iraqi and American) to hold neighborhoods cleared of terrorists and extremists. Third, there is a new operational concept—one devised not just to pursue terrorists and extremists but to secure the population. Fourth, new rules of engagement will ensure that Iraqi and U.S. forces can pursue lawbreakers regardless of their community or sect. Fifth, security operations will be followed by economic assistance and reconstruction aid—including billions of dollars in Iraqi funds—offering jobs and the prospect of better lives.''

Stephen Hadley continues his explanation of the totality of the President's plan by explaining the key strategic shifts that are major changes from previous approach:

''Reinforcing our military presence is not the strategy—it is a means to an end and part of a package of key strategic shifts that will fundamentally restructure our approach to achieving our objectives in Iraq.

''Building on experience elsewhere in the country, the new strategy doubles the number of provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) in Iraq. These civilian-led units will target development aid where it is needed and help the Iraqi government extend its reach to all corners of the country.

''Because close civilian-military cooperation is key to success, 10 new civilian PRTs will be embedded with U.S. combat brigades.

The new strategy incorporates other essential elements of the Baker-Hamilton report, such as doubling the number of troops embedded with Iraqi forces, using benchmarks to help us and the Iraqis chart progress, and launching a renewed diplomatic effort to increase support for the Iraqi government and advance political reconciliation.''

DISCUSSION

Earlier in this paper the Byman-Pollack report identified consequences of an all-out civil war in Iraq. In their ''what to do about it'' part of their report they had the following to say:

''Much as Americans may want to believe that the United States can just walk away from Iraq should it slide into all-out civil war, the threat of spillover from such a conflict throughout the Middle East means it can't. Instead, Washington will have to devise strategies to deal with refugees, minimize terrorist attacks emanating from Iraq, dampen the anger in neighboring populations caused by the conflict, prevent secession fever and keep Iraq's neighbors from intervening. The odds of success are poor, but, nonetheless, we have to try.

''The United States, along with its Asian and European allies, will have to make a major effort to persuade Iraq's neighbors not to intervene in its civil war. Economic aid should be part of such an effort, but will not suffice. For Jordan and Saudi Arabia, it may require an effort to reinvigorate Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations, thereby addressing one of their major concerns—an effort made all the more important and complex in light of the recent conflict between Hezbollah and Israel. For Iran and Syria, it may be a clear (but not cost-free) path toward acceptance back into the international community.

''When it comes to foreign intervention, Iran is the biggest headache of all. Given its immense interests in Iraq, some involvement is inevitable. For Tehran, and probably for Damascus, the United States and its allies probably will have to put down red lines regarding what is absolutely impermissible—such as sending uniformed Iranian military units into Iraq or claiming Iraqi territory. Washington and its allies will also have to lay out what they will do if Iran crosses any of those red lines. Economic sanctions would be one possibility, but they could be effective only if the European Union, China, India and Russia all cooperate. On its own, the United States could employ punitive military operations, either to make Iran pay an unacceptable price for one-time infractions

or to persuade it to halt ongoing violations of one or more red lines.

''A full-scale war in Iraq could result in hundreds of thousands of deaths and millions of refugees streaming across the nation's borders. The level of killings and displacement from other major civil conflicts—such as those in Bosnia, Congo, Lebanon and Rwanda—suggests the toll in Iraq could surge even higher if conditions there deteriorate further.''

David Dolan, a reputable journalist and author, who has spent the last 27 years living and working in Israel, provides his assessment of what is viewed from the lens of the Israeli military analysts concerning the turmoil that exists today in the Middle East and the prognosis for the coming year.

''Israeli military analysts said the main reason for growing regional instability is stepped up Iranian meddling throughout the Middle East. They noted that the oil-flushed theocratic Muslim regime in Tehran is pumping copious amounts of financial aid and weapons to its Syrian, Lebanese Hizbullah and Palestinian Hamas and Islamic Jihad allies, along with material aid going to Iranian-backed Shiite militias operating next door in violence-torn Iraq. Coming against the ominous backdrop of Iran's escalating nuclear uranium enrichment program, the mullah's meddling is succeeding in destabilizing the entire region, adding to growing prospects that major portions of the tense Middle East will erupt into full-scale warfare during 2007.''

The Brookings Institution Saban Center Analysis Number 11, released 29 January 2007, examines the history of some dozen recent civil wars to reveal the general patterns by which such conflicts can ''spill over'' into neighboring states, causing further civil wars or regional conflicts. Historically, six patterns of spillover have been the most harmful in other cases of all-out civil war: refugees; terrorism; radicalization of neighboring populations; secession that breeds secessionism; economic losses; and neighborly interventions. The purpose of this review was to determine what policy options the United States could employ to try to contain the spillover effects of a full-scale Iraqi civil war. It is recognized that with each passing day, Iraq sinks deeper into the abyss of civil war. President Bush has proposed one last-chance effort to quell the fighting and jumpstart a process of political reconciliation and economic reconstruction. Comments coming from this review state:

''Should this last effort fail, the United States is likely to very quickly have to determine how best to handle an Iraq that will be erupting into Bosnia- or Lebanon-style all-out civil war. The history of such wars is that they are disastrous for all parties, but the United States will have little choice but to try to stave off disaster as best it can.''

These tasks will be difficult and will require the deployment of large ground forces to accomplish them. Ending an all-out civil war requires overwhelming military power to nail down a political settlement. The Byman-Pollack report of 2006 states:

''It took 30,000 British troops to bring the Irish civil war to an end, 45,000 Syrian troops to conclude the Lebanese civil war, 50,000 NATO troops to stop the Bosnian civil war, and 60,000 to do the job in Kosovo. Considering Iraq's much larger population, it probably would require 450,000 troops to quash an all-out civil war there. Such an effort would require a commitment of enormous military and economic resources, far in excess of what the United States has already put forth [and planned future increases].''

MEANWHILE, BACK IN THE USA

This discussion would be incomplete if we did not discuss the home front and what is going on here in the United States relative to the Iraq War. The November 2006 elections started a fire storm of various anti-war factions rising to the surface and demanding we pull out of the war immediately or within a short period of time. With the Democrats taking over both sides of the Congress we now have a political confrontation as to who can get his or her resolution to pass both sides of the Congress. Lately, the Congress is awash with resolutions. Senator Obama submitted legislation 30 January, which would remove all combat brigades from Iraq by March 31, 2008. This timetable for completing a withdrawal puts him at odds with other leading rivals for the Democratic nomination. Senator Hillary Clinton supports capping the number of troops at their levels of Jan. 1, 2007. Sen. Christopher J. Dodd (Conn.) has proposed a similar troop cap. But neither has embraced a timetable for a troop removal. Former Senator and Vice Presidential candidate in 2004 and now a Presidential candidate for 2008, John Edwards (D–NC), has been outspoken in his opposition to Bush's new plan and has called for the immediate withdrawal of 40,000 to 50,000 troops. But he, too, has stopped short of setting a firm date by which all would be removed. New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson is the only other prominent Democrat in the field to set a withdrawal timetable, declaring that troops ''can and should'' be brought home by the end of 2007. The Obama plan, called the Iraq War De-escalation Act of 2007, would begin a troop withdrawal no later than May 1, 2007, but it includes several caveats that could forestall a clean break: It would leave a limited number of troops in place to conduct counterterrorism activities and train Iraqi forces. (The question one must ask in respect to this proposal is how could you leave a small contingent of U.S. forces in a country rife with civil war?) And the withdrawal could be temporarily suspended if the Iraqi government meets a series of benchmarks laid out by the Bush administration. That list includes a reduction in sectarian violence; the equitable distribution of oil revenue; government reforms; and democratic, Iraqi-driven reconstruction and economic development efforts. Senator Obama's proposal also would reverse Bush's troop-increase plan.

On the other side of the aisle the Republicans have their own versions of resolutions. A resolution by Sen. John McCain (R–AZ) and Sen. Lindsey O. Graham (R–S.C.) demanding tough benchmarks for progress in Iraq was supposed to garner overwhelming Republican support, being a more palatable alternative to language by Sen. John W. Warner (R–Va.) that would state opposition to the troop buildup. Instead, rival measures continue to proliferate. Sen. Judd Gregg (R–N.H.) said he is circulating language that would forbid a cutoff of funding for troops in the field under any circumstance, similar to another proposal by Sen. Johnny Isakson (R–Ga.). Sen. John Cornyn (R–Tex.) is shopping around a measure that would demand that the president's policies be given a chance to work while calling for the reversal of perceived war-related mistakes, such as the wholesale purging of Baath Party members from the Iraqi government and the failure to ensure equitable oil-revenue sharing among Iraqi groups. ''Resolutions are flying like snowflakes around here,'' Sen. Specter said. There may be more in the wings of Congress that have yet to surface but, at this writing, these appear to be the ones being discussed.

Meanwhile, the two camps promoting competing resolutions of opposition—one headed by Senators Joseph R. Biden Jr. (D–Del.) and Chuck Hagel (R–Neb.) and the other by Senator Warner (R–Va.) and Senator Levin (D–Mich.)—initially appeared to be closing in on common language that could win a clear majority within the Senate, but, at this writing it appears that may not happen.

These non-binding resolutions, regardless of which side of the aisle they come from, are not constructive—they change nothing, take responsibility for nothing, and hurt both morale and whatever semblance of national unity the USA might project. They aid and abet the enemy just like the discussions that occurred during the Vietnam War. If we set deadlines or propose certain number of troops be withdrawn by a certain date then this gives the enemy a timetable to work to in respect to holding off until the Americans leave. It certainly doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure that one out. Rhetoric influences perceptions, and perceptions can drive responses.

Unless Congress can find the intestinal fortitude to assert its true Constitutional authority and actually freeze or even mandate a drawdown in spending on operations in Iraq and use of funds to move troops individually or as units to Iraq, this is just a lot of hypocritical political theater—attempting to look assertive while in fact denying responsibility and showing the lack of commitment and fecklessness of America—once again. J. D. Pendry said, ''Our enemies, just as enemies past, know that winning a war with the United States is not about combat assaults, but about wearing down the will of the American people to continue to support the fight. Because they're winning the war of wills, they wouldn't dare attack inside the country. Our enemies know that our weak link in fighting a war is our politics, media, and the socialist elites who ally with them in waging war against the American will to sustain a fight.''

General David Petraeus, the new U.S. commander of the forces in Iraq, explained in hearings before Congress, that reinforcing U.S. troops is necessary for this new plan to succeed. Any plan that limits our ability to reinforce our troops in the field is a plan for failure—and could hand Baghdad to terrorists and extremists before legitimate Iraqi forces are ready to take over the fight. General Petraeus made clear his disdain for ideas that are very much in vogue in Washington these days: getting out of Iraq altogether, or the current favorite of the Democratic leadership: passing resolutions critical of the war.

In the Congressional confirmation hearing Sen. John McCain asked what would happen if we were to leave Iraq. Gen. Petraeus pointed to ''the very real possibility of involvement of countries from elsewhere in the region, around Iraq, entering Iraq to take sides with one or the other groups.'' He added that there ''is the possibility, certainly, of an international terrorist organization truly getting a grip on some substantial piece of Iraq.'' In response to questions from Sen. McCain and Sen. Joe Lieberman, Gen. Petraeus added that resolutions of disapproval for the war would be unhelpful to American troop morale and would encourage our enemies in Iraq.

During the recent confirmation hearing of Admiral Fallon to be the Central Command Commander Sen. Carl M. Levin (D–Mich.), the committee chairman, proposed to hold the Iraqi leaders accountable to meeting benchmarks, Admiral Fallon said he believed that imposing ''edicts'' or ''deadlines'' would be unconstructive. He also suggested a need to lower American expectations for Iraq, indicating that U.S. goals for Iraq following the 2003 invasion were unrealistically ambitious.

Sen. John Cornyn, Texas Republican said, ''Congress is sending mixed messages to the troops, to voters and to the world with a ''no confidence'' vote that carries no force . . . We

can't claim to support the troops and not support their mission,'' he said in a floor speech 31 January. ''If we don't support the mission, we shouldn't be passing nonbinding resolutions. We should be doing everything in our power to stop it . . . we should send them the message that, yes, we believe you can succeed and it's important to our national security that you do.''

We also hear from Congress and others about how ''we support the troops'' but also we hear anti-Iraq war and anti-surge overtones. If Congress and the American public truly support the troops then they must provide the full support. It is incoherent and irresponsible to say one supports the troops but not the war. How can Congress on one hand unanimously approve the appointment of General Petraeus to command the troops in Iraq and execute the war plan and, at the same time, refuse to support the war effort and provide resolutions restricting the necessary troops and wherewithal to accomplish the task they have assigned to him? This simply does not pass the common sense test. It is simply a cop out!

Summarization—America cannot win a counter-insurgency campaign in a Muslim territory as long as it is ruled by Muslims. That is why the effort must be led by the Muslims (Iraq) in order to win their own counter-insurgency campaign. Absolutely, we must assist them and apply more forces but the Iraqi leaders are the ones who have to gain the confidence of the populace as well as subdue and disassemble the militias, particularly that of Al Sadr. If Maliki and his government do not take the lead and insist on the breakup of the militias then we are wasting our time, soldier's lives and billions of dollars to help reconstruct that country. The world is watching to see what course of action Maliki takes and whether we will continue to provide support. If this fails we will have least tried to make it work. I don't know how long we continue this support—probably a year to eighteen months to see if it is going to work and then decide if it is being successful or not. If not, then we execute a strategic withdrawal removing our troops, equipment, and supplies. Concurrently we must have made plans for dealing with the aftermath of our withdrawal—a point which no politicians are talking about right now. This action will embolden Iran and Syria plus others and then the ''global'' terrorist and economic problems will start to build. The predictions of all-out civil war will prevail and the spillover to adjacent countries will most likely occur. How will the United States address this situation Madam Speaker of the House/Mr. President of the Senate?

PROBABLE SCENARIO FOLLOWING A COLLAPSE OF IRAQI GOVERNMENT AND US WITHDRAWAL

''Responsible'' Middle East experts say that if we withdraw it will be a blood bath to start with and then the ''Middle East region'' will turn into a haven for terrorists that will be controlled by Iran and Syria—primarily Iran—all under the guise of Islam and in preparation for the return of the 12th Imam. This in turn will cause our quasi Arab friends, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait (and perhaps a few others) to begin making alliances with Iran in fear for their own country and lives therein.

Then, guess what? Terrorism will spread like wild fire and Iran et al will now control the majority of the world oil reserves (which can be used for terrorist activities) and the rest of the world will start experiencing an economic disaster just over the price of oil. One may rest assured that President Chavez in Venezuela will chime right in there with them and raise the price of his oil as well.

The OPEC will be overtaken by Iran et al and the free world will have no choice but to, most likely, use military force to sort this out—assuming the free world has the will and determination to do so. The free world would have no leverage via the UN to do anything in respect to sanctions against Iran et al as they would just thumb their nose at them. It is a ''pay me now or pay me later'' situation and it appears at present that Congress and much of the American public are just sticking their heads in the sand and hoping it will all go away. We continue to debate the overwhelming importance of oil. Unfortunately, our efforts to find substitutes will not pay off in a big way for most likely another 15–20 years.

A stronger and more pointed discussion needs to occur in this country relative to the radical/militant Islamists. Our enemy is not only terrorists. Terrorism is a symptom, not the basic cause. Our true enemy is radical or militant Islam and their goals and objectives are to take over the world by jihad and impose on EVERYONE their beliefs, which include living by the law of Shari'a under their interpretation of the Koran. Daniel Pipes said, ''The problem at hand is not the religion of Islam but the totalitarian ideology of militant Islam. Islam is one of the world's major religions in terms of duration, extent, and numbers of adherents; as a faith, it has meant very different things over fourteen centuries and several continents. Two common points one can note are that: Islam is, more than any other major religion, deeply political in the sense that it pushes its adherents to hold power; and once Muslims gain power, there is a strong impetus to apply the law of Islam, the Shari'a.'' There is no separation of Church and State. Under their belief they are one in the same.

Anyone who has any knowledge about the Islamic goals and objectives knows full well that they are not going away and will continue their pursuit to control the entire world and have it under the Islamic law/religion and, in the meantime, kill us infidels along the way. We have been told that Islam is the religion of peace, and that the vast majority of Muslims just want to live in peace. Although this unqualified assertion may be true, it is entirely irrelevant. It is meaningless fluff, meant to make us feel better, and meant to somehow diminish the specter of fanatics rampaging across the globe in the name of Islam. The fact is, in the Middle East, the fanatics rule Islam at this moment in history. The ''peaceful majority'' is the ''silent majority'' and it is cowed and extraneous. Peace-loving Muslims have been made irrelevant by their silence. Not a pretty picture at all!!

CONSEQUENCES OF CURRENTLY PROPOSED ACTIONS NEED TO BE REVISITED

The proposed Congressional alternatives of capping the number of troops, cutting off funds for the war, withdrawal within six months or a year or sending our troops to ''control the borders and search out terrorists but don't get involved in Baghdad'' is irrational thinking. If that is what they think we should be doing then we should withdraw completely now and turn the country over to these radical Islamists, terrorists, thugs and criminals and let them kill each other off and watch Iran come in behind us and take control. Then, watch Congress and the American public howl and complain about how ''we lost the war.'' Sometime later this would come back to haunt us here in the US when we start having our fair share of terrorists attacks and encroachment of radical Islamists on our soil.

SO, NOW WHAT?

I submit that in lieu of the defeatist attitude shown by so many in the Congress and the media, that this is no time to feel desperate. What we need is a sense of mission, a purposeful dynamism. General Petraeus will be issuing a progress report on Iraq every two weeks. He'll report on what progress we are having on de-Baathification, disarming the Shia militias, on taking the fight to the bad guys in a very methodical way.

To lose this war is to lose our soul, the soul of our country, the soul of America. If we lose in Iraq, it is inevitable that the terrorists and radical Islamists will be here. The war will come to our shores and threaten the freedoms we so dearly cherish. It is not too late to resolve to win instead. We still have an enormously strong hand to play and we must play it.

The alternative of pursuing the President's proposal is the only viable alternative we have at present time. The Brookings Institute recent report states: ''If there is anything that should make us recognize the need to stay engaged in Iraq, it is the likely impact that such a war could have on the Persian Gulf region (if not the entire Middle East) and the enormous difficulties we will face in trying to contain that impact. If we cannot prevent such a full-scale civil war, then containment, as awful as it threatens to be, might still prove to be our least bad options.''

Mr. AKAKA. Madam President, earlier this week the Senate had an opportunity to begin debate on Iraq and the current plan proposed by President Bush. While I and 48 of my colleagues supported moving forward with this important debate, others in this Chamber elected to prevent discussion on an issue of national importance.

I understand that there are doubts as to what is the proper course of action to pursue in Iraq. We all wish for victory. We all wish for an end to the death and destruction. None of us want to waste additional lives in futile missions, or futile gestures. We all wish for a stable, democratic Iraq—and I would add to that Afghanistan, as this conflict is being waged on more than one front. We all share those common desires and none of us, none of us can predict the future. But what we can do is to apply our wisdom and judgement as to what is the best course of action for the United States to take. That task is our solemn duty.

We cannot perform that duty with all the honesty and clarity that this great body—the United States Senate—is known for if we cannot begin debate. Denying an open discussion of the issues of grave importance to our national security does not serve our Nation well.

We are at a great turning point and the consequences of this policy must be debated. Future generations will be affected by the course of action our Nation takes in the Middle East. No one can say with certainty which path will lead us toward light and which could lead us toward a darker future. But these courses of action demand debate.

Right now our Nation's wealth is being poured into a growing maelstrom in the Middle East—a storm that is engulfing the lives of our most talented soldiers, a storm that is exhausting our national treasure and sinking us deeper into a debt that our grandchildren and great-grandchildren will be paying off. It means our Nation's education, environment, health, and transportation

systems are eroding for a lack of basic resources.

Again, the consequences of this policy must be debated. In Iraq, there is a clear choice: support the President's policy of full steam ahead and continue the current policy of putting American soldiers in harm's way or shift strategy and make it clear that it is time for the Iraqi government to govern and Iraqi troops to protect the Iraqi people.

In any case, whatever policy advocated—whether one supports staying in, getting out now, or getting out later—those choices deserve to be fully and completely debated and voted on in the United States Senate.

I urge my colleagues on the other side to support a full and open debate on the President's Iraq policy.

Madam President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, it is my understanding we are now in executive session; is that right?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is correct.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Executive Calendar Nos. 16 through 22, and all nominations on the Secretary's desk; that the nominations be confirmed; the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table; that any statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate return to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be admiral

Adm. William J. Fallon, 0000

THE AIR FORCE

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Travis, 0000

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. David H. Cyr, 0000

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Douglas J. Robb, 0000

The following named officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brigadier General Frank J. Casserino, 0000
Brigadier General Stephen P. Gross, 0000
Brigadier General Clay T. McCutchan, 0000
Brigadier General Frank J. Padilla, 0000
Brigadier General Loren S. Perlstein, 0000
Brigadier General Jack W. Ramsaur, II, 0000
Brigadier General Bradley C. Young, 0000

To be brigadier general

Colonel Frank E. Anderson, 0000
Colonel Patrick A. Cord, 0000
Colonel Craig N. Gourley, 0000
Colonel Donald C. Ralph, 0000
Colonel William F. Schauffert, 0000
Colonel Jack K. Sewell, Jr., 0000
Colonel Richard A. Shook, Jr., 0000
Colonel Lance D. Dndhjem, 0000
Colonel John T. Winters, Jr., 0000

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. James M. Dubik, 0000

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

J. Michael McConnell, of Virginia, to be Director of National Intelligence,

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN200 AIR FORCE nominations (6) beginning MICHAEL D. JACOBSON, and ending TERRILL L. TOPS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 18, 2007.

PN201 AIR FORCE nominations (11) beginning STUART C. CALLE, and ending EDWIN O. RODRIGUEZPAGAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 18, 2007.

NOMINATION OF JOHN M. McCONNELL TO BE DNI

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today the Senate has confirmed the nomination of VADM Mike McConnell to be the next Director of National Intelligence. It is hard for me to imagine a better choice than Admiral McConnell.

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence received Admiral McConnell's nomination to replace John Negroponte on January 22, 2007. He completed all the requisite paperwork and the committee held a hearing with Admiral McConnell on February 1. The committee met on February 6, and voted unanimously to report the nomination to the Senate with a favorable recommendation.

I am pleased that the Senate has moved quickly to act on this recommendation. I think this swift consideration of the nomination is recognition of both the importance of this position and of the qualifications of Admiral McConnell.

As my colleagues know, the position of Director of National Intelligence was created by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act 2004. That legislation drew on recommendations from the congressional and commission reports on the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Senate Intelligence Committee report on Iraq prewar intelligence, the Report of the Joint Inquiry by the House and Senate Intelligence Committees into the events of 9/11, and the recommendations of numerous other commissions and reviews going back 50 years.

The creation of the DNI was an important step. We now have, for the first time, an individual whose primary job is to run the intelligence community as a whole. Until the creation of the DNI, the old Director of Central Intelligence wore two hats—as the head of the Intelligence Community and as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. But this structural change, while important, was only the first step to reforming intelligence. The DNI must make the 16 agencies of the intelligence community work as one toward a common goal. Director Negroponte has started the community down that path. It is going to be up to Admiral McConnell to move us further along.

A quick review of his resume will show even the casual observer that Admiral McConnell is incredibly well qualified for this critical position. He retired from the Navy as Vice Admiral after 29 years of service. Most of his service during this distinguished career was as an intelligence officer.

While on active duty he served as Director of Intelligence on the Joint Staff during the Persian Gulf War. This made him the principal intelligence advisor to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, GEN Colin Powell. He went on to become the Director of the National Security Agency, our Nation's largest intelligence agency.

Upon retiring from the Navy, Admiral McConnell went to work for Booz Allen Hamilton where he has been a senior vice president for intelligence and national security. He also is currently chairman and chief executive officer of the Intelligence and National Security Alliance, an industry group that works with the Government looking for ways to solve some of our complex intelligence problems. He has the requisite Government experience supplemented by a decade in the private sector.

In his appearance before the Intelligence Committee last week I think it is fair to say that he impressed all members of the committee with his knowledge of the issues and the difficulty of the task ahead. But I was particularly encouraged by his answers to questions about the relationship with Congress.

It is no secret that I have not always been happy with the level of access the intelligence committee has had to materials it needs to do its job. On some of the most important and sensitive programs in the Intelligence Community, we have been frustrated in our attempts to do oversight because we have

not been able to get documents and other information critical to understanding and therefore evaluating these programs. In other cases the administration has placed burdensome and unwarranted limits on access by Senators and staff.

Vice Chairman Bond and I are making a concerted bipartisan effort to deal with these questions. And we are making headway. One issue that we both raised with Admiral McConnell at his hearing has now been resolved. We also have seen movement, if not complete satisfaction, in other areas. Admiral McConnell's answers convinced me that he will be an ally in this area. It is my view that the intelligence community needs to view Congress as a partner in supporting intelligence activities that protect America and I think he will do that.

I thank all of my colleagues for supporting support the confirmation of Admiral McConnell and I look forward to working with him in his new role as Director of National Intelligence.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now return to legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNIZING REAR ADMIRAL CHARLES HAMILTON

Mr. LOTT. Madam President, I rise today to recognize Rear Admiral Charles ''Charlie'' S. Hamilton, upon the completion of his current tour of duty as the Program Executive Officer, Ships, PEO Ships. Since assuming the position nearly 4 years ago, Rear Admiral Hamilton has worked with Congress on numerous issues of vital importance to our Navy and our Nation. His successes and accomplishments have been significant and many. Rear Admiral Hamilton has earned my deep respect and that of my colleagues through his exceptional competence, integrity, and innate ability to cut through bureaucracy in order to get the job done. Today, it is my pleasure to recognize some of Rear Admiral Hamilton's many accomplishments, and commend his service to the Navy, the Congress, and our grateful Nation.

Rear Admiral Hamilton was born in Amityville, NY. He entered military service in 1974 as an ensign after receiving a bachelor of science degree in Zoology from Duke University where he was a member of the Navy ROTC program. He continued his education at the Naval Post Graduate School, where he earned a master of arts degree in national security affairs, and at the National War College, where he earned a master of science degree in national security strategy. He is also a graduate of the Defense Systems Management College, and a designated surface warfare officer and joint specialty officer.

Rear Admiral Hamilton served in a variety of assignments at sea, where he consistently excelled as a leader of the highest caliber. His positions included combat information center officer aboard USS *Hawkins*, DD 873, mission fire control officer aboard USS *Coontz*, DDG 40, and operations officer aboard USS *Callaghan*, DDG 994. In September 1986, he became the executive officer aboard USS *Fox*, CG 33, where his leadership played a key role in the success of Operation Earnest Will, ensuring the safe passage of tankers and merchant vessels during the fiercest days of the Iran-Iraq conflict. In February 1991, he assumed command of USS *O'Brien*, DD 975, where he was hailed by his subordinates and superiors for his extraordinary leadership.

Rear Admiral Hamilton has also excelled in a variety of key staff positions, where he helped define and execute key elements of our national security strategy. These assignments included serving as the arsenal ship program manager; head of the Fleet Introduction and Lifetime Support Directorate, program executive officer for Theater Surface Combatants; two tours with the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations as Anti-Submarine Warfare Program analyst, OP–91, and Head of the AEGIS Destroyer Section, OP–355. He also served in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology as military staff specialist for naval warfare.

On May 15, 2003, Rear Admiral Hamilton assumed command of PEO Ships, then a newly established organization responsible for acquisition and support of the Navy's entire nonnuclear surface fleet, including boats and craft, special mission ships, and foreign military sales. In this capacity, he skillfully planned and executed current and future shipbuilding programs that will carry our surface Navy well into the 21st century.

During his tenure, 16 major surface ships were delivered to the U.S. Navy and 300 boats and craft were delivered to U.S. and foreign navies. To place that in perspective, it is my understanding that Rear Admiral Hamilton successfully shepherded the design and construction of more types of new ships than has ever been accomplished under a single flag officer since the passage of the Naval Act of 1794. These new classes of surface ships included *San Antonio*, LPD 17, *Lewis and Clark*, T-AKE 1, *Makin Island* LHD 8; *Freedom*, LCS 1, and *Zumwalt*, DDG 1000, classes of ships.

In addition, he tirelessly strove to facilitate the realistic consideration of next-generation architectures as well as ship concepts such as maritime prepositioning force future, MPFF, Mobile Landing Platform, MLP, and joint high speed vessel, JHSV. Rear Admiral Hamilton's extraordinary legacy of service will be clearly reflected not only in the improved warfighting capability of this Nation, but also in the safety, readiness, and quality of life of our sailors and marines.

On the eve of Rear Admiral Hamilton's change of command ceremony, I offer my congratulations to him, his wife Debbie and his children Chip, Mike, and Christina. Rear Admiral Hamilton will be greatly missed, and I know I speak for all my colleagues in expressing our heartfelt appreciation to him. He is a man of extraordinary honor, courage, and commitment, who always shot straight regardless of risk or possible peril. He is a credit to both the Navy and the United States of America. We wish our friend the best of luck in future endeavors, and congratulate him on the successful completion of an unprecedented tour of duty.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, I regret that on January 24, 30, and 31, I was unable to vote on certain provisions of H.R. 2, the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007. I wish to address these votes, so that the people of the great State of Kansas, who elected me to serve them as Senator, may know my position.

Regarding vote No. 22, the motion to invoke cloture on the Gregg amendment (No. 101), I would have supported Senator GREGG's amendment and would have voted to bring debate to a close. My vote would not have altered the result of this motion.

Regarding vote No. 23, the motion to invoke cloture on H.R. 2, I would not have voted to invoke cloture on H.R. 2. My vote would not have altered the result of this motion.

Regarding vote No. 34, the motion to invoke cloture on the Baucus substitute amendment (No. 100), I would have supported ending the debate on the Baucus substitute amendment. My vote would not have altered the result of this motion.

Regarding vote No. 37, on the motion to table the Kyl amendment (No. 209), I supported Amendment No. 209 from my colleague Senator KYL and would have voted against the tabling motion.

Regarding vote No. 38, I would have supported the motion to waive the Budget Act with respect to the Kyl Amendment (No. 115) to the Baucus substitute amendment (No. 100) to H.R. 2. My vote would not have altered the result of this motion.

Regarding vote No. 39, the motion to invoke cloture on H.R. 2, as amended, I would have supported ending the debate on H.R. 2. My vote would not have altered the result of this motion.

Madam President, I regret that I was unable to vote the afternoon of January 30 on the confirmation of the nomination of both Judge Lisa Godbey

Wood and Judge Philip Gutierrez to be U.S. district judges. In neither case would my vote have altered the outcome of these confirmations; however, I wish to address these confirmations so that the people of the great State of Kansas, who elected me to serve them as U.S. Senator, may know my position.

Regarding vote No. 35, the confirmation vote on the nomination of Lisa Godbey Wood, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Georgia, Executive Calendar No. 6): I support the confirmation of Ms. Godbey Wood.

Regarding vote No. 36, the confirmation vote on the nomination of Philip S. Gutierrez, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California, Executive Calendar No. 7: I support the confirmation of Mr. Gutierrez.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DENNIS MERRELL

• Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, today I ask the Senate to join me in recognizing Dr. Dennis Merrell on the occasion of his retirement from York Technical College in Rock Hill, SC. Dr. Merrell officially stepped down last week as president of York Tech following over 30 years of service at the vocational college. For the last seventeen of those thirty years, Dr. Merrell led York Tech as the school's president. He leaves York Tech having transformed the college into a powerful source of economic development and manufacturing workforce creation for South Carolina and the country.

After serving 2 years in the military, Dr. Merrell earned a bachelor's degree in business and computer science from Winthrop University and a master's degree in computer science from Virginia Tech. He joined the faculty at York Tech to teach computer technology and programming in 1976 and in time became chair of the Computer Technology Division. Eventually Dr. Merrell was named the college's Vice President of Instruction. He served in that capacity until he was appointed president of the school in 1989 following the death of his predecessor, Dr. Baxter Hood.

To deliver true quality technical education, Dr. Merrell understood that York Tech would need to rely on resources outside of those provided by State and local government. To that end, Dr. Merrell developed a culture of industry partnerships from which the school has tremendously benefited during his tenure. Under Dr. Merrell's leadership, enrollment in the college's continuing education programs nearly doubled. Six buildings including a child development center, library, student services building, continuing education center, institute for manufacturing productivity, and science and technology building were all constructed on Dr. Merrell's watch. Construction on a new economic development training center is also currently underway—the product of a collaboration with 3D Systems Corporation.

Like the relationship with 3D Systems, Dr. Merrell also championed partnerships with regional construction companies and other manufacturing businesses to address practical job-training issues. In the last year, York Tech has also joined with utility companies and contractors in the Carolinas to help meet the growing need for entry-level line workers in the region. For efforts like these York Tech was recognized as a Bellweather Awards Finalist in 2006 for its unique approach to industry alliances. The United States Department of Education has even acknowledged York Tech for its innovative approach to meeting the local and national workforce needs in the area of manufacturing.

Dr. Merrell even promoted distance learning, namely online instruction, allowing countless students the opportunity to reach educational goals without giving up their jobs. As such the American Association of Community Colleges named York Tech the number one digital-savvy college among the country's largest and urban community colleges.

Dr. Merrell's community service outside of his work at York Tech includes leadership roles at the Rock Hill and York County Economic Development Boards, the Rock Hill Rotary Board, the Charlotte Area Education Consortium Board, and the York County Red Cross Board, among a host of other technical education organizations.

York Tech is sure to miss Dr. Merrell's leadership and vision, but I am confident that the school will build on his impressive legacy. In conclusion, I ask that the Senate join me in wishing Dr. Merrell a healthy and happy retirement.•

IN RECOGNITION OF FLOWERS FOODS

• Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, today I wish to recognize Flowers Foods of Thomasville, GA, which has just been named by Forbes magazine as this year's ''Best-Managed'' publicly traded food company. This honor comes on top of a record fourth quarter and a record year for Flowers Foods.

Flowers Foods has clearly set a standard of excellence for which all of us should strive. Operating out of Thomasville, GA, since 1919, Flowers Foods has a proven record of success and dedication not only to its customers and employees but also to the State of Georgia. I have watched as this company has grown over the years to the point where it now serves almost 40 percent of the U.S. population. I expect its continued success to serve as a shining example to businesses across Georgia and the United States.

I want to commend chief executive officer George E. Deese and all the employees of Flowers Foods and their families on a job well done.•

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD SHAPIRO

• Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I join my colleagues in saluting Richard H. Shapiro, the executive director of the Congressional Management Foundation. As Rick moves on to new challenges, I want to thank him for his remarkable service to the U.S. Senate.

Rick Shapiro is responsible for bringing 21st century management skills to an institution build on 18th century rules and practices. We still have spittoons in the Senate—yet we also have blackberries.

Rick Shapiro helped us wrestle with issues that our Founding Fathers didn't even dream about. How do you answer thousands of e-mails a week? How do you hire, train, and retain excellent staff? How do you set goals and measure progress—so that promises made can be promises kept? How do you ensure that state and Washington offices communicate, coordinate and cooperate? Whenever I had a question about managing my office, I turned to Rick Shapiro—and my staff did the same.

Under Rick Shapiro's leadership, the Congressional Management Foundation has helped Members to set up their offices, upgrade office systems, and adjust to new ways of connecting with constituents. His book ''Setting Course'' is a must-read for all new Members of Congress. He was the first to compile and analyze information from individual offices—to enable Senators to learn from the best practices of others.

Rick Shapiro is a part of our Senate family. In fact, he met his wife Trudy Vincent when she was my legislative director. Their daughter Abby has been spotted selling Girl Scout cookies around the Capitol.

Rick Shapiro has made a lasting impact on the U.S. Senate. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking him for his service. While he is stepping down from the Congressional Management Foundation, I look forward to great things from Rick in the years ahead.•

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:11 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 161. An act to adjust the boundary of the Minidoka Internment National Monument to include the Nidoto Nai Yoni Memorial in Bainbridge Island, Washington, and for other purposes.

H.R. 235. An act to allow for the renegotiation of the payment schedule of contracts between the Secretary of the Interior and the Redwood Valley County Water District, and for other purposes.

H.R. 356. An act to remove certain restrictions on the Mammoth Community Water District's ability to use certain property acquired by that District from the United States.

H.R. 386. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain buildings and lands of the Yakima Project, Washington, to the Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District.

H.R. 512. An act to establish the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of the National Museum of the American Latino to develop a plan of action for the establishment and maintenance of a National Museum of the American Latino in Washington, DC, and for other purposes.

At 4:23 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 434) to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 through December 31, 2007, and for other purposes.

At 4:48 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 6913, and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Speaker appoints the following Member of the House of Representatives to the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: Mr. LEVIN of Michigan, Chairman.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 161. An act to adjust the boundary of the Minidoka Internment National Monument to include the Nidoto Nai Yoni Memorial in Bainbridge Island, Washington, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 235. An act to allow for the renegotiation of the payment schedule of contracts between the Secretary of the Interior and the Redwood Valley County Water District, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 356. An act to remove certain restrictions on the Mammoth Community Water District's ability to use certain property acquired by that District from the United States; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 386. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain buildings and lands of the Yakima Project, Washington, to the Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 512. An act to establish the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of the National Museum of the American Latino to develop a plan of action for the establishment and maintenance of a National Museum of the American Latino in Washington, DC, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–721. A communication from the Executive Director, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Electronic Filing of Notices of Exemption and Exclusion Under Part 4 of the Commission's Regulations'' ((RIN3038–AC33)(72 FR 1658)) received on February 6, 2007; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–722. A communication from the Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's annual report on its operations for fiscal year 2006; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–723. A communication from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 16–674, ''National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Grant Authority Temporary Act of 2007'' received on February 6, 2007; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–724. A communication from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 16–676, ''School Without Walls Development Project Temporary Amendment Act of 2007'' received on February 6, 2007; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–725. A communication from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 16–677, ''D.C. Housing Authority Rent Supplement Temporary Amendment Act of 2007'' received on February 6, 2007; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–726. A communication from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 16–675, ''Fiscal Year 2007 Operating Cash Reserve and Revised Revenue December Allocation Temporary Act of 2007'' received on February 6, 2007; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–727. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Inspector General's semiannual report on the Department for the period ending September 30, 2006; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 510. A bill to specify that the 100 most populous urban ares of the United States, as determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security, shall be eligible for grants under the Urban Area Security Initiative of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. KERRY, and Mr. LIEBERMAN):

S. 511. A bill to provide student borrowers with basic rights, including the right to timely information about their loans and the right to make fair and reasonable loan payments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HATCH:

S. 512. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the feasibility of enlarging the Arthur V. Watkins Dam Weber Basin Project, Utah, to provide additional water for the Weber Basin Project to fulfill the purposes for which that project was authorized; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. BOND):

S. 513. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to revive previous authority on the use of the Armed Forces and the militia to address interference with State or Federal law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. NELSON of Florida (for himself and Mr. MARTINEZ):

S. 514. A bill to extend Federal recognition to the Muscogee Nation of Florida; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. BIDEN, and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 515. A bill to provide a mechanism for the determination on the merits of the claims of claimants who met the class criteria in a civil action relating to racial discrimination by the Department of Agriculture but who were denied that determination; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PRYOR (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mrs. LINCOLN):

S. 516. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the option of including combat pay when computing earned income; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. LANDRIEU:

S. 517. A bill to amend the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Hurricane Recovery, 2006 to authorize the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide additional assistance to State and local governments for utility costs resulting from the provision of temporary housing units to evacuees from Hurricane Katrina and other hurricanes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 518. A bill to amend the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 to require the Statistics Commissioner to collect information from coeducational secondary schools on such schools' athletic programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. McCAIN (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. KYL):

S. 519. A bill to modernize and expand the reporting requirements relating to child pornography, to expand cooperation in combating child pornography, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 520. A bill to enhance ecosystem protection and the range of outdoor opportunities protected by statute in the Skykomish River valley of the State of Washington by designating certain lower-elevation Federal lands as wilderness, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR:

S. 521. A bill to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse and customhouse located at 515 West First Street in Duluth, Minnesota, as the ''Gerald W. Heany Federal Building and United States Courthouse and Customhouse''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. BAYH (for himself and Mr. VOINOVICH):

S. 522. A bill to safeguard the economic health of the United States and the health and safety of the United States citizens by improving the management, coordination, and effectiveness of domestic and international intellectual property rights enforcement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 523. A bill to amend the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Hurricane Recovery, 2006 to authorize the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide additional assistance to State and local governments for utility costs resulting from the provision of temporary housing units to evacuees from Hurricane Katrina and other hurricanes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 524. A bill to provide emergency agricultural disaster assistance for agricultural producers, manufacturers, and workers in the State of California; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. Res. 74. A resolution designating each of February 7, 2007, and February 6, 2008, as ''National Women and Girls in Sports Day''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LUGAR (for himself and Mr. BAYH):

S. Res. 75. A resolution congratulating the Indianapolis Colts on their victory in Super Bowl XLI; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 57

At the request of Mr. INOUYE, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 57, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to deem certain service in the organized military forces of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines and the Philippine Scouts to have been active service for purposes of benefits under programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

S. 85

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 85, a bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to clarify that territories and Indian tribes are eligible to receive grants for confronting the use of methamphetamine.

S. 231

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 231, a bill to authorize the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program at fiscal year 2006 levels through 2012.

S. 336

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 336, a bill to require the Secretary of the Army to operate and maintain as a system the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal dispersal barriers, and for other purposes.

S. 355

At the request of Mr. DOMENICI, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. COLEMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 355, a bill to establish a National Commission on Entitlement Solvency.

S. 357

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 357, a bill to improve passenger automobile fuel economy and safety, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce dependence on foreign oil, and for other purposes.

S. 413

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 413, a bill to amend the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 and the Revised Statutes of the United States to prohibit financial holding companies and national banks from engaging, directly or indirectly, in real estate brokerage or real estate management activities, and for other purposes.

S. 439

At the request of Mr. REID, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 439, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit certain retired members of the uniformed services who have a service-connected disability to receive both disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their disability and either retired pay by reason of their years of military service or Combat-Related Special Compensation.

S. 442

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. SNOWE) were added as cosponsors of S. 442, a bill to provide for loan repayment for prosecutors and public defenders.

S. 446

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 446, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize capitation grants to increase the number of nursing faculty and students, and for other purposes.

S. 450

At the request of Mr. ENSIGN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 450, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the medicare outpatient rehabilitation therapy caps.

S. 481

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 481, a bill to recruit and retain more qualified individuals to teach in Tribal Colleges or Universities.

S. 502

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. MARTINEZ) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 502, a bill to repeal the sunset on the reduction of capital gains rates for individuals and on the taxation of dividends of individuals at capital gains rates.

S. 504

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mrs. LINCOLN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 504, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish long-term care trust accounts and allow a refundable tax credit for contributions to such accounts, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 510. A bill to specify that the 100 most populous urban areas of the United States, as determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security, shall be eligible for grants under the Urban Area Security Initiative of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the ''Urban Area Security Initiative Improvement Act,'' which addresses eligibility for the Department of Homeland Security's Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant program.

This bill will improve the existing grant award process by broadening the number of urban areas eligible to apply. In Fiscal Year 06, the Department of Homeland Security made arbitrary decisions about areas' need for homeland security funding, threatening the eligibility of eleven worthy areas to apply for future grants.

The eligibility of Sacramento and San Diego, in my State of California, were threatened in this way. Sacramento is the capital of the most populous State in the Nation and home to

dozens of critical Federal and State government buildings. In addition, much of the State's water, electricity, and telecommunication systems are managed from Sacramento. The San Diego area contains the Nation's seventh-largest city adjacent to a heavily trafficked international border, a busy port, tourist attractions, and major military installations.

My bill would ensure that the 100 most populous urban areas of the country are eligible to apply for UASI grants each year. The Department of Homeland Security would then have the discretion to award funds to as many applicants as it deems worthy and needy.

The bill would also require that the Department employ a ''sensitivity analysis'' in its grant process, to deal with uncertainty in the mathematical models that it uses to evaluate the risk of terrorism for urban areas. The Department's leadership could make better-informed policy decisions if it used a sensitivity analysis to better understand the effects of policy judgments in estimating risk each year.

I urge my colleagues to consider and pass this bill, with its important implications for making our Nation more secure against terrorism.

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. KERRY, and Mr. LIEBERMAN):

S. 511. A bill to provide student borrowers with basic rights, including the right to timely information about their loans and the right to make fair and reasonable loan payments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation to give rights to student borrowers. The Student Borrower Bill of Rights Act will provide student borrowers with five basic rights to protect them when trying to repay their loans.

Students are borrowing now more than ever to pay for higher education. Need-based grant aid has stagnated while college costs have grown, resulting in more students borrowing and at higher levels. In 1993, less than one-half of students graduating from 4-year colleges and universities had student loans. Now two-thirds are faced with this debt.

Unlike other debt, young people take out student loans to invest in themselves. Because these loans help to pay for college, student loans can help people earn more money over the course of their lifetimes and offer students greater choices in their careers. Student borrowers must take the responsibility of repaying their debt seriously so that future generations of students can have the chance to invest in themselves.

However, too many borrowers in New York, and around the country, are overly burdened or treated unfairly as they repay their student loans. That is why I am introducing the Student Borrower's Bill of Rights Act.

This bill will make it easier for students to repay loans and give them a basic set of enforceable rights. This bill would give student borrowers the right to fair monthly payments that do not exceed a percentage of their incomes, as well as access to fair interest rates and fees. This bill would also give students the right to shop in a free marketplace for their lender and to borrow without exploitation. Finally, the bill will give students access to better information about their loans to provide students with better options during repayment.

The unfortunate truth is that student loan debt may even prevent borrowers from pursuing a higher degree. According to the Nellie Mae Corporation, 40 percent of college graduates cite alarming student loan debt as the reason for not pursuing a graduate degree. Most disturbingly, the burden of student loan debt alone can force graduates out of important, but low-paying professions, such as social workers, teachers and police officers. Our Nation cannot remain competitive in the global economy if these trends continue.

I am happy to report that two of the provisions from the Student Borrower Bill of Rights Act of the 109th Congress were enacted into law through the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense 2006. These provisions, a repeal of the single holder rule and consolidation between loan programs, will enable borrowers to choose lenders with acceptable income-sensitive repayment terms when consolidating student loans.

We need to make sure that student loans do not prevent students from following their dreams. It is in our Nation's economic interest to provide student borrowers with effective rights to make repayment of student loans easier.

The rights found in my bill are long overdue. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Student Borrower Bill of Rights.

By Mr. HATCH:

S. 512. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the feasibility of enlaring the Arthur V. Watkins Dam Weber Basin Project, Utah, to provide additional water for the Weber Basin Project to fulfill the purposes for which that project was authorized; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, not long ago, Utahns suffered a long and devastating drought, from which we have not fully recovered. The drought has instilled in us the need to plan for the future and ensure sound management of our water resources. For that reason, I rise to introduce an important bill that will help make better use of Utah's scarce water supply.

The Arthur V. Watkins Dam Enlargement Act of 2007 would authorize the Bureau of Reclamation to conduct a feasibility study on raising the height of the Arthur V. Watkins Dam in Weber County. The bill would give the Bureau of Reclamation access to the dam to study it and make adjustments as necessary to cater to the ever growing needs of Utah citizens. This is no ordinary dam. It is roughly 14 miles long and encloses a reservoir containing more than 200,000 acre-feet of water.

Thousands of Utahns rely on the water provided by the reservoir. And the Weber Basin is one of Utah's fastest growing areas, making the need to find additional water resources even more pressing. In my view, expanding the dam is a simple and inexpensive way to increase water storage capacity in an area that desperately needs it.

Moreover, last year, the Watkins Dam began to leak slightly. If the dam were to breach, it would flood many hundreds of acres of farm and grazing land, which would spell an agricultural disaster. This legislation would provide the resources and the opportunity to address quickly that looming problem, as well.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 512

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 ''Arthur V. Watkins Dam Enlargement Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Arthur V. Watkins Dam is a feature of the Weber Basin Project, which was authorized by law on August 29, 1949.

(2) Increasing the height of Arthur V. Watkins Dam and construction of pertinent facilities may provide additional storage capacity for the development of additional water supply for the Weber Basin Project for uses of municipal and industrial water supply, flood control, fish and wildlife, and

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF FEASIBILITY STUDY.

The Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation, is authorized to conduct a feasibility study on raising the height of Arthur V. Watkins Dam for the development of additional storage to meet water supply needs within the Weber Basin Project area and the Wasatch Front. The feasibility study shall include such environmental evaluation as required under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and a cost allocation as required under the Reclamation Project Act of 1939 (43 U.S.C. 485 et seq.).

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. BOND):

S. 513. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to revive previous authority on the use of the Armed Forces and the militia to address interference with State and Federal law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last year, Congress quietly made it easier for this

President or any President to declare martial law. That's right: In legislation added at the Administration's request to last year's massive Defense Authorization Bill, it has now become easier to bypass longtime posse comitatus restrictions that prevent the Federal Government's use of the military, including a federalized National Guard, to perform domestic law enforcement duties. That change runs counter to our founding principles, to the optimal use of our superb National Guard here at home, and to whatever sensible reforms are needed to improve our Nation's emergency response capabilities.

Today Senator BOND and I are introducing legislation to repeal these unwarranted and perilous changes, which were made to a little-known law called the Insurrection Act. Our amendment replaces every word, comma, and period from the original act and returns it to its original form. Repealing this ill-considered change in the Insurrection Act would allow Congress to have a more orderly, thoughtful, open and consultative discussion on whether such sensitive and massive powers should be changed, if at all. It is difficult to see how any Senator could disagree with the advisability of having a more transparent and thoughtful approach to this sensitive issue.

The Insurrection Act is a Reconstruction-era law that provides the major exemption from posse comitatus—the legal doctrine that bars the use of the military for law enforcement directed at the American people here at home. The Insurrection Act is designed to ensure that Federal laws are enforced and to ensure that American citizens' basic constitutional rights are respected and protected. When the Insurrection Act is invoked, the President can—without the consent of the respective governors—federalize the National Guard and use it, along with the entire military, to carry out law enforcement duties. Treading as this does across basic constitutional issues relating to separation of power and to state and local sovereignty, this is a sweeping grant of authority to the President. Because the use of the military for domestic law enforcement is so sensitive an issue, the Act has been invoked only sparingly since it was enacted.

The primary reason that the law has been invoked so rarely is that there has been an inherent tension in the way it was crafted. Before it was changed last year, the law was purposefully ambiguous about when the President could invoke the Act in cases beyond a clear insurrection or when a state clearly violated Federal law in its actions. Because there was this useful ambiguity—a constructive friction in the law—a President until now would have to use the power with great caution, and with the impetus for appropriate consultation.

Yet by the time committee work was completed in the House and the Senate on the Fiscal Year 2006 Defense Authorization Bill, the law had been changed and that useful ambiguity had vanished. In addition to the cases of insurrection, the Act can now be invoked to restore public order after a terrorist attack, a natural disaster, a disease outbreak, or—and this is extremely broad—''other condition.'' Restoring public order has suddenly become an entirely new purpose for the Insurrection Act. And, as if to underscore this fundamental change, the conference committee changed the name of the Act from ''Insurrection'' to ''Enforcement of the Laws to Restore Public Order.''

This significant change was made without consulting the Nation's Governors, mayors, sheriffs, or the National Guard Adjutants General. It was made without consulting the other relevant policy committees in the Senate and the House. It was merely slipped in, at the Administration's request, as rider to a bill that was hundreds of pages long. And when the Nation's Governors learned of the change and expressed their strong opposition, they were ignored, and this facilitation of presidential ability to federalize the National Guard—even over the objections of the Nation's Governors—remained in the bill that was signed into law by President Bush.

Now this President and future Presidents can more easily take control of the National Guard and use our entire military apparatus for law enforcement at home. In a situation like another Katrina or even a more contained incident like a terrorist incident, the President will be able to bring in Federal troops and take away control from the Governors, the Emergency Managers, the Sheriffs, and the State Adjutants General who know their communities best and are responsible for responding.

What we should be doing instead is buttressing the response abilities of these local and State officials. We should ensure every State has a state-of-the-art emergency operations center, that our first responders have the best equipment and training, and that the National Guard has adequate equipment and available people at home to provide support. Any Federal assets—military or otherwise—that might come into a State should be in a supporting and not commanding role. The local officials who know their communities are in the best positions to control the situation, not the President or the military.

Some have argued that the changes made were only a clarification of existing law or that the Insurrection Act already gave the power to the President to use the military for law enforcement in an emergency. I strongly disagree with that explanation, and so do the Governors, Adjutants General, and a host of other officials. They see it, as Senator BOND and I see it, as a tangible and troubling expansion of the President's powers and a parallel reduction in State sovereignty. But if some believe the original Act already gave the President this expansive power, they should not object to bringing the law back to its original form.

Repeal of the recent changes to the Insurrection Act will help ensure that our National Guard and larger emergency response capabilities remain strong. Repeal is crucial to ensuring that our Governors and local officials remain in control and that they are consulted when anyone considers overriding their authority. Repeal is simply essential to ensuring the military is not used in a way that offends and endangers some of our more cherished values and liberties.

We enter this effort with the strong support of Governors and of the National Guard community, including the National Governors Association, the National Guard Association, the Adjutants General Association, and the Enlisted Association of the National Guard. I ask unanimous consent that support letters from the National Governors Association, the Adjutants General Association, and the Enlisted Association of the National Guard be printed at this point in the RECORD.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

Last year's Insurrection Act rider reflects the general lack of close oversight that has taken a toll on our system of government. I hope the days of rubberstamping are over, and I hope the Senate will quickly remedy this situation by considering and passing the bill that we introduce today.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES, INC.,
Washington, DC, February 7, 2007.

Hon. PATRICK LEAHY,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. CHRISTOPHER BOND,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS LEAHY AND BOND: The National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) is pleased to support your efforts to repeal those provisions of Section 1076 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 109–364) enacted in the 109th Congress.

We believe those provisions removed the governors of the several states from their constitutional role as the commanders in chief of their respective states' National Guard forces in responding to domestic emergencies, in both an unnecessary and unwarranted manner.

We further believe that the exploitation of the language of the Insurrection Act as a surreptitious method to gain special presidential authority where clearly the Congress has never intended the federal executive to hold sway is ''creative'' but ''poor'' public policy. Please spare no effort to reverse this dangerous precedent.

Thank you for your reasoned and forthright protection of the prerogatives of the governors and the National Guard.

Sincerely,

STEPHEN M. KOPER,
Brigadier General (Ret),
President.

NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, February 5, 2007.

Hon.PATRICK J. LEAHY,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. CHRISTOPHER ''KIT'' BOND,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR LEAHY AND SENATOR BOND: Section 1076 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 109–364) unnecessarily expanded the President's authority to federalize the National Guard during certain emergencies and disasters. The nation's governors opposed the inclusion of this section in the bill because responsibility for responding to disasters and other local emergencies to assure the security and wellbeing of our residents along; with managing the Guard within a state must rest with the governor. The changes made in Section 1076 of the National Defense Authorization Act undermine governors' authority over the Guard, place the safety and welfare of citizens in jeopardy and should be repealed.

Unless activated in purely federal service, the National Guard is and should remain under state control with governors as commanders-in-chief. The dual mission of the Guard, a combat ready force that can be called on by the President and a first responder in domestic emergencies or disasters under the command and control of the governor, requires that federal law clearly delineate chains of command for each mission. The changes made to the ''Insurrection Act'' by Section 1076 of the National Defense Authorization Act are likely to confuse the issue of who commands the Guard during a domestic emergency. By granting the President specific authority to usurp the Guard during a natural disaster or emergency without the consent of a governor, Section 1076 could result in confusion and an inability to respond to residents' needs because it calls into question whether the governor or the President has primary responsibility during a domestic emergency.

The Insurrection Act, prior to passage of the National Defense Authorization Act served the nation well as an extraordinary remedy that allowed the President to take control of the Guard in the most rare and exceptional of cases. Despite the role of governors as commander-in-chief of the Guard in their states, Section 1076 of the National Defense Authorization Act was drafted without consultation with governors and without full discussion or debate regarding the ramifications of such a change on domestic emergency response. We urge Congress to repeal the provision in Section 1076 of the Act and open a dialogue with governors regarding how to best enhance the effectiveness of the Guard in responding to domestic disasters and emergencies.

Sincerely,

GOVERNOR MICHAEL F. EASLEY,
Co-Lead on the National Guard.
GOVERNOR MARK SANFORD,
Co-Lead on the National Guard.

ADJUTANTS GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC. 2001, February 7, 2007.

Hon. PATRICK LEAHY,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.
Hon. KIT BOND,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

The Adjutants General Association of the United States (AGAUS) represents the 54 Adjutants General of the fifty states, three territories, and District of Columbia who are responsible for training and readiness of Army and Air National Guard units under their jurisdiction. We are united in support of your legislation that repeals all language contained in the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 that significantly altered existing law known as the Insurrection Act.

The language in the NDAA seriously upset the delicate balance between Governors and the President in determining the authority under which the National Guard will be used to respond to domestic conditions endangering citizens. The language significantly broadens the President ability to declare martial law and mobilize the National Guard under national command without consulting with the Governors. It may in fact cause factions to pressure the President into ill advised actions because the constructive ambiguity of the original language which encourages consultation with Governors no longer exists. For the National Guard this can mean being federalized prematurely thereby losing important capabilities available under State Active Duty and Title 32.

The National Guard has proven capable of operating flexibly and responsively when retained under governor control. This is well documented from the airport security mission in the aftermath of 9/11 to sending 6,000 National Guard Soldiers and Airmen to the southwest border in 2006 (with over 50,000 citizen-soldiers rapidly deployed under EMAC and Title 32 to support Hurricane Katrina recovery sandwiched in between). The language in NDAA 2207 would likely discourage using the National Guard in these innovative, responsive, and cost effective ways.

NDAA 2007 enabled something completely unnecessary without committee or floor debate in either legislative chamber and with explicit opposition from the Governors. Your bill restores the Insurrection Act to a proper balance. Expect willing and energetic support from the AGAUS.

Sincerely,

ROGER P. LEMPKE,
Major General
President.

EANGUS,
Alexandria, VA, February 6, 2007.

Hon. PATRICK LEAHY,
U.S. Senate Washington, DC.
Hon. CHRISTOPHER BOND,
U.S. Senate Washington, DC.

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) is the only military service association that represents the interests of every enlisted soldier and airmen in the Army and Air National Guard. With a constituency base of over 414,000 soldiers and airmen, their families, and a large retiree membership, EANGUS engages Capitol Hill on behalf of courageous Guard persons across this nation.

On behalf of EANGUS, and the soldiers and airmen it represents, I'd like to communicate our support for legislation to repeal the changes to the Insurrection Act as passed in Public Law 109–364, Section 1076, and to restore the authority of the Governors as our founding fathers designed over 230 years ago.

Public Law 109–364 stripped the nation's Governors of their rightful authority to use the militia of the United States (to wit, the National Guard) in times of natural disasters and major public emergencies. Congress made this move without any consultation with those Governors, duly elected by the people of this great nation. It was an obvious knee-jerk reaction to the events surrounding Hurricane Katrina in 2005, yet without merit.

We applaud you for taking legislative steps to repeal this law, and to restore to the Governors their rightful authority over the militia when not in Federal service. The people of America have a unspoken need for the National Guard in times of public emergencies, and Washington is too far removed from the challenges in each state. We look forward to working with your staff as this legislation works its way into law.

Working for America's Best!
MSG MICHAEL P. CLINE, USA (Ret),
Executive Director.

S. 513

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. REVIVAL OF PREVIOUS AUTHORITY ON USE OF ARMED FORCES AND MILITIA TO ADDRESS INTERFERENCE WITH STATE OR FEDERAL LAW.

(a) REPEAL OF AMENDMENTS MADE BY PUBLIC LAW 109–364.—Section 1076 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 (Public Law 109–364), and the amendments made by that section, are repealed.

(b) REVIVAL OF PREVIOUS AUTHORITY.—The provisions of chapter 15 of title 10, United States Code, that were amended by section 1076 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007, as such provisions were in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007, are hereby revived.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) HEADING AMENDMENT.—The heading of chapter of 15 of title 10, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''CHAPTER 15—INSURRECTION''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—(A) The tables of chapters at the beginning of subtitle A of title 10, United States Code, and at the beginning of part I of such subtitle, are each amended by striking the item relating to chapter 15 and inserting the following new item:

''15. Insurrection ..... 331''.

(B) The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 15 of such title is amended by striking the item relating to section 333 and inserting the following new item:

''333. Interference with State and Federal law.''.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. BIDEN, and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 515. A bill to provide a mechanism for the determination on the merits of the claims of claimants who met the class criteria in a civil action relating to racial discrimination by the Department of Agriculture but who were denied that determination; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am introducing the Pigford Claims Remedy Act of 2007. This bill establishes a new cause of action for those African-American farmers who filed late claim petitions as required by the Pigford v. Glickman Consent Decree, but whose petitions were rejected.

These rejections have effectively barred African-American farmers from the one process that was established to bring closure to the claims of discrimination by African-American farmers, many of which have been pending for decades.

My bill attempts to remedy what appears to be a lack of sufficient notice,

indicated by the late applicants. It helps bring justice for farmers who have historically been discriminated against while being mindful of the constitutional constraints on Congress's authority. This bill will provide a new cause of action that will assist those putative claimants whose claims have never been evaluated on the merits.

Studies conducted by the USDA revealed the depth and impact of this disparate treatment. In 1994, the Department of Agriculture commissioned a study to analyze the treatment of minorities and women in farm programs and payments.

In 1997, Secretary Glickman commissioned the Civil Rights Action Task Force to look into allegations of racial discrimination in the agency's loan program. In conjunction with this the Inspector General conducted its own investigation into the allegations of disparate treatment.

Each report confirmed what African-American farmers already experienced first hand. USDA failed to act to adequately address these past wrongs. It took a class action lawsuit filed by African-American farmers in 1997 to get USDA to respond.

The resulting Pigford v. Glickman Consent Decree was believed to be a turning point in this unfortunate history. Hopes were high that African-American farmers would finally be compensated for the history of injustice. The consent decree was intended to provide a swift resolution for the claims of discrimination that had gone unaddressed for decades.

Yet, in a sad twist, the process that was created to provide a forum for those whose claims had been shut out, has itself shut out more than 75,000 African American farmers who wish to have their claims of discrimination heard.

Hearings before the House Subcommittee on the Constitution revealed that almost 76,000 farmers who submitted late claim petitions were denied entry because they could not show that extraordinary circumstances prevented them from filing a timely complaint.

Despite the lack of knowledge about the consent decree, which was cited by more than half of these petitioners, lack of notice was not deemed an extraordinary circumstance under the consent decree. So these petitioners are left without any recourse to have their claims of discrimination heard on the merits. These people should be allowed to have their case heard.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

By Mr. PRYOR (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mrs. LINCOLN):

S. 516. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the option of including combat pay when computing earned income; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to make the Tax Relief for Americans in Combat Act permanent. This measure corrects a discrepancy in the Tax Code that penalizes certain service men and women serving in combat situations.

To give my colleagues a bit of history and perspective on this: In 2003 I approached the distinguished chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, and ranking member of the committee, Senator MAX BAUCUS, and asked them to join me in an effort to get a fresh look at the overall picture of how our Tax Code treats our military.

I was very pleased when they agreed to work with me, and was delighted to jointly request an expedited study by the General Accounting Office, GAO. It was an honor to work with them and their staffs throughout this process.

The GAO raised many interesting findings but there was one especially important issue that demanded our immediate attention. In a nutshell service men and women who were serving in combat zones and receiving nontaxable combat pay were not able to also take advantage of the Earned Income Tax Credit, EITC, and the Child Care Tax Credit.

The result was that thousands of our men and women serving in combat—serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the globe—were seeing a reduction or elimination of their EITC or child credit and in effect losing money. In other words, the Tax Code had the impact of penalizing them because they are serving in combat zones.

The GAO report characterized this result as an ''unintended consequence.'' I saw it as just plain wrong and I am pleased to introduce legislation to fix this glitch.

In 2004, we passed the Tax Relief for Americans in Combat Act. The bill allowed men and women in uniform serving in combat to include combat pay for the purpose of calculating their earned income and child tax credit benefits. In other words, they would be able to continue receiving their rightful combat pay exclusions while having the ability to take full advantage of other tax credits.

However, this legislation only made permanent the child tax credit benefit, while the earned income tax credit provision must be continuously extended.

As of December 2006, the earned income provision was extended for another year, but I believe we must work to permanently resolve this glitch and ensure our men and women in combat are fairly treated.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank cosponsors Senator JOHN WARNER and Senator BLANCHE LINCOLN for their leadership and assistance to help gamer support for this bill.

The urgency of this situation is highlighted especially when you focus on those of our troops which this really affects. We're talking about troops that tend to be in combat for more than 6 months, those in lower pay grades, those who are married with children, and have little or no savings or spousal income.

The GAO analysis suggested that the amount of the tax benefit loss could be up to $4,500 for enlisted personnel and $3,200 for officers. This is real money—make or break money—to many of these families that are already under enormous stress.

I want to work in bipartisan fashion and permanently extend this tax provision. This bill corrects the problem and lets our troops, risking life and limb, know that while they are away fighting for us we will be here in the Senate fighting for them and their families.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. KYL):

S. 519. A bill to modernize and expand the reporting requirements relating to child pornography, to expand cooperation in combating child pornography, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to be joined today by Senator SCHUMER in introducing the Securing Adolescents From Exploitation-Online Act of 2007, otherwise known as the SAFE Act. This bill would clarify and strengthen the requirement that has been a Federal law for almost a decade for electronic communications providers to report images of child pornography to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) and then law enforcement. Simply put, this bill is designed reduce the sexual exploitation of our children, and punish those who cause them physical and emotional harm through sexual exploitation.

This bill would state specifically what information must be reported by electronic communications providers to NCMEC; impose higher penalties on companies that do not report child pornography; and require the Department of Justice to report on the number of investigation and convictions of sex offenders and purveyors of child pornography. In addition, the bill would make the use of the Internet for the exploitation of a child an aggravating factor to the underlying offense that would add 10 years imprisonment to a convicted offender's sentence.

Almost 20 years ago, President Reagan inaugurated the opening of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and called on the Center to ''wake up America and attack the crisis of child victimization.'' Today, thanks to the efforts of NCMEC and many others in the public and private sectors, America is more conscious of the dangers of child exploitation. Unfortunately, our children still face significant threats from those who see their innocence as an opportunity to do harm. The continuing victimization of our children is readily and all too painfully apparent in the resurgence of child pornography in our world via the Internet.

Technology has contributed to the greater distribution and availability,

and, some believe, desire for child pornography. Cyberspace is host to more than one million images of tens of thousands of children subjected to sexual abuse and exploitation, according to a report by the Texas State legislature. The same report estimated that the over 14 million pornography sites on the Internet house an estimated one million pornographic images of children with 200 new images being posted daily.

According to ECPAT International, a group dedicated to eliminating the sexual exploitation of children, the production and distribution of abuse images of children is estimated to be at least a 3 billion dollar business annually in the U.S. alone. Of all the child pornography images on the Internet, 55 percent are generated from the United States, according to the same group, but these images are also produced around the world.

Just today, the Associated Press reported that Austrian authorities uncovered a major international child pornography ring involving more than 2,360 suspects from 77 countries, including over 600 in the United States, who paid to view videos of young children being sexually abused. According to authorities, the children shown in the videos were under the age of 14 and could be heard screaming in fear.

This investigation would not have happened without the good work of an employee of a Vienna-based Internet file hosting service who noticed the pornographic material during a routine check and then approached authorities. The employee blocked access to the videos while recording the I.P. addresses of people who continued to try to download the material, and gave the details to authorities. Within a 24-hour period, investigators recorded more than 8,000 hits from 2,361 computer I.P. addresses in 77 countries ranging from Algeria to South Africa.

The Federal Government already has a system in place for electronic communications providers to report these images to NCMEC. The Center is directed by law to relay that information to local, State and Federal law enforcement agencies. This reporting system has been useful, but it is in need of several vital improvements.

Today, Federal law requires electronic communication service providers to report child pornography they discover to NCMEC through the CyberTipline, but the current reporting system does not specify exactly what information should be reported. This failure to set forth specific reporting requirements makes the current statute both difficult to comply with and tough to enforce. This omission may have led to less effective prosecution of child pornographers. During a Senate Commerce Committee hearing I chaired last September, NCMEC testified that, ''because there are no guidelines for the contents of these reports, some [companies] do not send customer information that allows NCMEC to identify a law enforcement jurisdiction. So potentially valuable investigative leads are left to sit in the CyberTipline database with no action taken.'' This is unacceptable.

This bill would address the problem by requiring that reporting companies convey a defined set of information to the Center, which is in large part the information that is provided to NCMEC today by the nation's leading Internet service providers. Among other things, the bill would require electronic communications providers to report specific information about any individual involved in producing, distributing, or receiving child pornography. In addition, it would require reporting companies to provide NCMEC with the geographic location of the involved individual such as the individual's physical address and the IP address from which the individual connected to the Internet.

To ensure that law enforcement officials have better odds of prosecuting involved individuals, the bill would also require online service providers to preserve all data that they report to NCMEC for at least 180 days. The bill would help to ensure greater compliance with the child pornography reporting requirements under Federal law by increasing the penalties threefold for knowing failure to report child pornography to NCMEC. It would also move the reporting requirement from title 42, which relates to the public's health and welfare, to title 18, our Federal criminal code. This is to underscore that a breach of the reporting obligations constitutes a violation of criminal law. In addition, the legislation would eliminate the legal liability of online service providers for actions taken to comply with the child pornography reporting requirements.

The goal of this legislation, is to ensure more thorough reporting of child pornography to NCMEC. I expect that more and better information provided to the Center will lead to a greater number of prosecutions and enhanced protection of our children. However, let me stress that this bill does not require surveillance by electronic communications providers or require that they monitor the content of any communication. The legislation also does not require electronic communications providers to affirmatively seek out child pornography. Rather, it requires online service providers to report child pornography when they become aware of it, either through a report from a subscriber or user, or through a discovery of the material by an employee. As a result, the reporting requirement would protect children while not imposing a financial or administrative burden on online service providers.

To emphasize the heinous nature of these crimes, this bill would make the use of the Internet in the commission of a crime of child exploitation an aggravating factor that would add 10 years to the offender's sentence. The Internet is likely the greatest invention of the 21st century; however, it has also allowed these children to be victimized again and again as these images are widely distributed via the Internet. The fight to protect our children from exploitation has moved from the playground to the Internet, and we must update our laws to reflect this reality.

To address the international nature of child pornography, the bill would permit NCMEC to share reports with foreign law enforcement agencies, subject to approval by the Department of Justice. In addition, the legislation would state the sense of Congress that the executive branch should make child pornography a priority when engaging in negotiations or talks with foreign countries.

The bill would authorize $25 million for our Nation's Internet Crimes Against Children Task Forces, which is identical to the amount requested by the Administration in its FY 2008 budget. NCMEC, the National Sheriffs Association, and others believe that such funding would significantly improve the efforts of local, State and Federal law enforcement officials dedicated to identifying and prosecuting those who use the Internet to prey upon our Nation's children.

Lastly, in order to aid law enforcement, the bill would reiterate the position of the Administration that all suppliers of web site domain names should investigate and correct inaccurate data regarding registered domain names so that law enforcement can more easily locate the hosts of such vile pictures of children. To aid Congress in understanding the need for more resources or legislation to combat the proliferation and distribution of child pornography, the bill would require the Department of Justice to report on the number of investigations, prosecutions and convictions of crimes involving the sexual exploitation of children.

This is the second bill Senator SCHUMER and I have introduced this session to protect our nation's children. Last month, we introduced the Keeping the Internet Devoid of Sexual-Predators Act of 2007, known as the KIDS Act, which would establish a database of e-mail addresses and other Internet identifying information of convicted sex offenders. The database information would then be available to commercial social networking sites for the purpose of screening their sites' to ensure convicted sex offender are not using the site to prey on children.

Protecting our children is a top priority for all members of Congress. I look forward to working with my colleagues to eradicate the victimization and exploitation of our children, the most innocent members of society, by enacting the KIDS Act and the SAFE Act.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 520. A bill to enhance ecosystem protection and the range of outdoor opportunities protected by statute in the

Skykomish River valley of the State of Washington by designating certain lower-elevation Federal lands as wilderness, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I rise today to reintroduce the Wild Sky Wilderness Act, a bill to protect some of Washington's most unique and remarkable public lands for families today and for future generations.

For more than six years, citizens, community leaders, groups and organizations have worked together with Representative Rick Larsen and me to make this proposal a reality. I am proud to offer our bill here in the Senate on their behalf. This is the fourth time I've introduced this bill, and I'm really excited about finally moving this bill across the finish line this year.

The Wild Sky Wilderness Act reflects the best values of my home State of Washington—environmental protection, stewardship of our land, and community partnership. It also respects the economic and recreational interests of the people of Snohomish County. Our bill will protect an important area while keeping it accessible for recreation and enjoyment today and for generations to come.

For many years, I've been concerned by the rapid growth taking place in Western Washington. It's no surprise that more people want to live and work in the region, but we need to make sure that development does not destroy the natural beauty that is such an important part of our State's identity and our quality of life. We also need to ensure that growth and development do not destroy native species of plants and animals that have flourished here for centuries.

So several years ago, I began to consider new wilderness legislation. I learned that we haven't added any new wilderness areas in Washington state since 1984. I knew that if we were going to protect public land, I wanted to do it in an inclusive way by seeking input from local communities and stakeholders and working with them to develop a sound proposal. I am proud to say that the fruits of our labor are now before the United States Senate. My partner in the House of Representatives, Congressman Larsen, and I worked alongside all of the local stakeholders every step of the way to select these particular areas in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie Forest.

The Wild Sky Wilderness will protect wildlife and promote clean water by preserving the landscapes that host many native plants and animals. We can still find many of the species that have historically called this area home, but their populations are much smaller today. If these animals are going to be here centuries from now, we must protect their habitats. This wilderness designation is especially critical for threatened species of salmon, steelhead and trout, and it will protect the upper reaches of water to ensure prime habitat and clean water.

In addition, our bill ensures that the public will have access to these remarkable, protected places. It's estimated that 2.4 million people live nearby in King, Snohomish and Skagit counties. Our bill will ensure they have new recreational opportunities in the Wild Sky Wilderness. In this hectic, fast-paced time, more and more people and their families are turning to outdoor recreation on our public lands. This bill will provide new opportunities for the public to use this land by directing the U.S. Forest Service to develop a series of hiking and equestrian trails.

In addition to the environmental protections and recreational opportunities, the Wild Sky Wilderness Area will be good for the local economy. Every climber, hiker, hunter and angler setting out for the Wild Sky Wilderness will be stopping at hotels, campgrounds, restaurants, and stores in the gateway communities of Index, Skykomish, Monroe, Miller River, Startup, Grotto, Baring, Sultan, and Gold Bar.

Over the years, so many people have worked hard to make this bill possible. I can't name all of them, but I do want to recognize one great leader who is not with us to see the progress she helped make possible, Karen Fant. Anyone involved in wilderness protection knows the legacy that Karen has left us through her years of advocacy for our state's natural places. Early on, Karen recognized the need to bring together and involve local people in efforts to protect wilderness. She cofounded and directed the Washington Wilderness Coalition, and she was instrumental in forming a statewide community of wilderness advocates.

To those who knew her—and especially those lucky enough to sample her famous cookies—Karen provided never-ending inspiration and enthusiasm to continue working to protect wilderness and wild lands in the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

I cannot summarize Karen's amazing four decades of service, but I think some of her many friends said it best when they wrote:

''There are thousands of miles of trails and millions of acres of wilderness that are protected due to her work and the work of others she organized to make a difference. As we walk these trails and gain renewal from these lands, we should all remember the work we shared and the fun and camaraderie we all experienced with Karen.''

With Karen's passing, we've lost a pioneer in the fight to protect our wild spaces, but thankfully she's left a clear trail and a generation of inspired, empowered advocates to continue her work.

I urge my colleagues to help my State take a great step forward in protecting our environment, improving recreation and supporting economic development by supporting the Wild Sky Wilderness Act.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of this bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 520

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 ''Wild Sky Wilderness Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. ADDITIONS TO THE NATIONAL WILDERNESS PRESERVATION SYSTEM.

(a) ADDITIONS.—The following Federal lands in the State of Washington are hereby designated as wilderness and, therefore, as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System: certain lands which comprise approximately 106,000 acres, as generally depicted on a map entitled ''Wild Sky Wilderness Proposal'' and dated February 6, 2007, which shall be known as the ''Wild Sky Wilderness''.

(b) MAPS AND LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall file a map and a legal description for the wilderness area designated under this Act with the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives. The map and description shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act, except that the Secretary of Agriculture may correct clerical and typographical errors in the legal description and map. The map and legal description shall be on file and available for public inspection in the office of the Chief of the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture.

SEC. 3. ADMINISTRATION PROVISIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) Subject to valid existing rights, lands designated as wilderness by this Act shall be managed by the Secretary of Agriculture in accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) and this Act, except that, with respect to any wilderness areas designated by this Act, any reference in the Wilderness Act to the effective date of the Wilderness Act shall be deemed to be a reference to the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) To fulfill the purposes of this Act and the Wilderness Act and to achieve administrative efficiencies, the Secretary of Agriculture may manage the area designated by this Act as a comprehensive part of the larger complex of adjacent and nearby wilderness areas.

(b) NEW TRAILS.—

(1) The Secretary of Agriculture shall consult with interested parties and shall establish a trail plan for Forest Service lands in order to develop—

(A) a system of hiking and equestrian trails within the wilderness designated by this Act in a manner consistent with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.); and

(B) a system of trails adjacent to or to provide access to the wilderness designated by this Act.

(2) Within two years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall complete a report on the implementation of the trail plan required under this Act. This report shall include the identification of priority trails for development.

(c) REPEATER SITE.—Within the Wild Sky Wilderness, the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to use helicopter access to construct and maintain a joint Forest Service and Snohomish County telecommunications repeater site, in compliance with a Forest Service approved communications site plan, for the purposes of improving communications for safety, health, and emergency services.

(d) FLOAT PLANE ACCESS.—As provided by section 4(d)(1) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1133(d)(1)), the use of floatplanes on Lake Isabel, where such use has already become established, shall be permitted to continue subject to such reasonable restrictions as the Secretary of Agriculture determines to be desirable.

(e) EVERGREEN MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT.—The designation under this Act shall not preclude the operation and maintenance of the existing Evergreen Mountain Lookout in the same manner and degree in which the operation and maintenance of such lookout was occurring as of the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION FOR LAND ACQUISITION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to acquire lands and interests therein, by purchase, donation, or exchange, and shall give priority consideration to those lands identified as ''Priority Acquisition Lands'' on the map described in section 2(a). The boundaries of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and the Wild Sky Wilderness shall be adjusted to encompass any lands acquired pursuant to this section.

(b) ACCESS.—Consistent with section 5(a) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1134(a)), the Secretary of Agriculture shall ensure adequate access to private inholdings within the Wild Sky Wilderness.

(c) APPRAISAL.—Valuation of private lands shall be determined without reference to any restrictions on access or use which arise out of designation as a wilderness area as a result of this Act.

SEC. 5. LAND EXCHANGES.

The Secretary of Agriculture shall exchange lands and interests in lands, as generally depicted on a map entitled ''Chelan County Public Utility District Exchange'' and dated May 22, 2002, with the Chelan County Public Utility District in accordance with the following provisions:

(1) If the Chelan County Public Utility District, within ninety days after the date of enactment of this Act, offers to the Secretary of Agriculture approximately 371.8 acres within the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest in the State of Washington, the Secretary shall accept such lands.

(2) Upon acceptance of title by the Secretary of Agriculture to such lands and interests therein, the Secretary of Agriculture shall convey to the Chelan County Public Utility District a permanent easement, including helicopter access, consistent with such levels as used as of date of enactment, to maintain an existing telemetry site to monitor snow pack on 1.82 acres on the Wenatchee National Forest in the State of Washington.

(3) The exchange directed by this Act shall be consummated if Chelan County Public Utility District conveys title acceptable to the Secretary and provided there is no hazardous material on the site, which is objectionable to the Secretary.

(4) In the event Chelan County Public Utility District determines there is no longer a need to maintain a telemetry site to monitor the snow pack for calculating expected runoff into the Lake Chelan hydroelectric project and the hydroelectric projects in the Columbia River Basin, the Secretary shall be notified in writing and the easement shall be extinguished and all rights conveyed by this exchange shall revert to the United States.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 74—DESIGNATING EACH OF FEBRUARY 7, 2007, AND FEBRUARY 6, 2008, AS ''NATIONAL WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SPORTS DAY''

Ms. SNOWE (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 74

Whereas women's athletics are one of the most effective avenues available for women of the United States to develop self-discipline, initiative, confidence, and leadership skills;

Whereas sports and fitness activities contribute to emotional and physical well-being;

Whereas women need strong bodies as well as strong minds;

Whereas the history of women in sports is rich and long, but there has been little national recognition of the significance of women's athletic achievements;

Whereas the number of women in leadership positions as coaches, officials, and administrators has declined drastically since the passage of title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Public Law 92-318; 86 Stat. 373);

Whereas there is a need to restore women to leadership positions in athletics to ensure a fair representation of the abilities of women and to provide role models for young female athletes;

Whereas the bonds built between women through athletics help to break down the social barriers of racism and prejudice;

Whereas the communication and cooperation skills learned through athletic experience play a key role in the contributions of an athlete at home, at work, and to society;

Whereas women's athletics has produced such winners as Flo Hyman, whose spirit, talent, and accomplishments distinguished her above others and who exhibited the true meaning of fairness, determination, and team play;

Whereas parents feel that sports are equally important for boys and girls and that sports and fitness activities provide important benefits to girls who participate;

Whereas early motor-skill training and enjoyable experiences of physical activity strongly influence life-long habits of physical fitness;

Whereas the performances of female athletes in the Olympic Games are a source of inspiration and pride to the people of the United States;

Whereas the athletic opportunities for male students at the collegiate and high school levels remain significantly greater than those for female students; and

Whereas the number of funded research projects focusing on the specific needs of women athletes is limited and the information provided by these projects is imperative to the health and performance of future women athletes: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates each of February 7, 2007, and February 6, 2008, as ''National Women and Girls in Sports Day''; and

(2) encourages local and State jurisdictions, appropriate Federal agencies, and the people of the United States to observe ''National Women and Girls in Sports Day'' with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 75—CONGRATULATING THE INDIANAPOLIS COLTS ON THEIR VICTORY IN SUPER BOWL XLI

Mr. LUGAR (for himself and Mr. BAYH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 75

Whereas, on Sunday, February 4, 2007, the Indianapolis Colts defeated the Chicago Bears by a score of 29–17 to win Super Bowl XLI;

Whereas Colts owner and chief executive officer Jim Irsay and the Irsay family have worked to build the Colts organization not only into a championship caliber team, but also a group dedicated to service in communities across the State of Indiana;

Whereas Tony Dungy is the first head coach of African-American descent to lead a team to victory in the Super Bowl;

Whereas Peyton Manning, having thrown for 247 yards and made 1 touchdown, was named the game's Most Valuable Player;

Whereas the Colts' defense and special teams were able to force 5 turnovers and to limit the Bears to 17 points;

Whereas Colts president Bill Polian, widely considered the ''architect'' of much of the Colts' recent success, and the Colts management have assembled a group of players and coaches that has worked together to win 4 straight championships in the Southern Division of the American Football Conference;

Whereas the Colts' regular season record of 12–4 marks the team's fourth straight year with at least 12 wins, and makes the Colts only the second team to achieve such consistent success in the history of the National Football League;

Whereas the Colts are committed to community leadership, working to help those in Indiana communities who are disadvantaged and underserved, through the generosity of the Irsay family and player groups such as the Peyback Foundation and D.R.E.A.M. Alive, Inc.;

Whereas tens of thousands of fans braved bitterly cold temperatures to line the streets of Indianapolis, Indiana for a victory parade and the rally that followed in the RCA Dome; and

Whereas Hoosiers from across Indiana and the Nation have rallied together to cheer the Colts not just for winning, but for winning the right way, with dignity and professionalism: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate congratulates the Indianapolis Colts on their victory in Super Bowl XLI.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 233. Mr. SMITH (for himself, Mr. STEVENS, and Mr. CRAPO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the joint resolution H.J. Res. 20, making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 234. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the joint resolution H.J. Res. 20, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 235. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the joint resolution H.J. Res. 20, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 236. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the joint resolution H.J. Res. 20, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 233. Mr. SMITH (for himself, Mr. STEVENS, and Mr. CRAPO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the joint resolution H.J. Res. 20, making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 25, between lines 13 and 14, insert the following:

''SEC. 20125. (a) In addition to amounts otherwise appropriated or made available in this division, $400,000,000 is appropriated to make safety net payments for fiscal year 2007 under section 101 of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 500 note; Public Law 106–393).

''(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, each amount provided by this Act is reduced by the pro rata percentage required to reduce the total amount provided by this Act by $400,000,000.

SA 234. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the joint resolution H.J. Res. 20, making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 65, line 8, strike '': (1)'' and all that follows through ''or (2)'' on line 10.

SA 235. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the joint resolution H.J. Res. 20, making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. AIDS DRUG ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Resolution, of the amount appropriated to the Department of Commerce to carry out the Advanced Technology Program, $75,000,000 shall be transferred to the Health Resources and Services Administration to carry out the AIDS Drug Assistance Program.

SA 236. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the joint resolution H.J. Res. 20, making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following: ''That the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007 (Public Law 109–289, division B) is amended by striking the date specified in section 106(3) and inserting 'March 1, 2007'.''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry be authorized to conduct a full committee hearing during the session of the Senate on Wednesday February 7, 2007, at 9:15 am in SD–106, Dirksen Senate Office Building. The purpose of this hearing will be to discuss the United States Department of Agriculture Farm Bill Proposal with Secretary of Agriculture, Michael Johanns.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 7, 2007, at 10 a.m. to mark up an original bill entitled ''Public Transportation Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007;'' immediately following the executive session, the Committee will meet in open session to conduct a hearing on ''Preserving the American Dream: Predatory Lending Practices and Home Foreclosures.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to hold a hearing during the sessions of the Senate on Wednesday, February 7, 2007, at 10 a.m., in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building. The purposes of the hearing is to discuss climate change research and scientific integrity.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to hold a hearing during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 7, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. The purpose of the hearing is to consider the President's Proposed budget for FY 2008 for the Department of Energy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session on Wednesday, February 7, 2007, at 10 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to hear testimony on ''The President's Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Proposal.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 7, 2007, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the Hazards of Electronic Voting—Focus on the Machinery of Democracy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 7, 2007 at 2:30 p.m. to hold a closed hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PRIVATE SECTOR AND CONSUMER SOLUTIONS TO GLOBAL WARMING AND WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Private Sector and Consumer Solutions to Global Warming and Wildlife Protection be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, February 7, 2007.

The agenda to be considered: Global Warming and Wildlife.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FOREIGN TRAVEL FINANCIAL REPORTS

In accordance with the appropriate provisions of law, the Secretary of the Senate herewith submits the following reports for standing committees of the Senate, certain joint committees of the Congress, delegations and groups, and select and special committees of the Senate, relating to expenses incurred in the performance of authorized foreign travel:

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Martha Scott Poindexter:									
United States	Dollar				10,228.70				10,228.70
India	Rupee		1,285.24						1,285.24
Elizabeth Croker:									
United States	Dollar				10,228.70				10,228.70
India	Rupee		1,285.24						1,285.24
Total			2,570.48		20,457.40				23,027.88

SAXBY CHAMBLISS,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry,
Jan. 4, 2007.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Paul Grove:									
United Arab Emerites	Dirham		842.00						842.00
Afghanistan	Afghani		300.00						300.00
China	Yuan		322.00						322.00
Japan	Yen		800.00						800.00
United States	Dollar				11,318.00				11,318.00
Tom Hawkins:									
United Arab Emerites	Dirham		842.00						842.00
Afghanistan	Afghani		300.00						300.00
China	Yuan		322.00						322.00
Japan	Yen		800.00						800.00
United States	Dollar				11,318.00				11,318.00
Jonathan Kamarck:									
Russia	Ruble		1,746.00				300.00		2,046.00
United States	Dollar				903.00				903.00
Ellen Stein:									
Russia	Ruble		1,746.00				300.00		2,046.00
United States	Dollar				903.00				903.00
Rachel Jones:									
Russia	Ruble		1,746.00				300.00		2,046.00
United States	Dollar				903.00				903.00
Heideh Shahmoradi-Holley:									
Russia	Ruble		1,746.00				300.00		2,046.00
United States	Dollar				903.00				903.00
Tim Rieser:									
Vietnam	Dollar		995.00				45.00		1,040.00
United States	Dollar				5,358.00				5,358.00
Katherine M. Kaufer:									
Germany	Dollar		850.00						850.00
Romania	New Leu		507.42						507.42
Bulgaria	Lev		464.00						464.00
United States	Dollar				6,442.55				6,442.55
Sid Ashworth:									
Germany	Dollar		850.00						850.00
Romania	New Leu		507.42						507.42
Bulgaria	Lev		464.00						464.00
United States	Dollar				7,278.55				7,278.55
Brian T. Wilson:									
Germany	Dollar		850.00						850.00
Romania	New Leu		507.42						507.42
Bulgaria	Lev		464.00						464.00
United States	Dollar				7,278.55				7,278.55
Galen Fountain:									
Kenya	Shilling		1,974.00						1,974.00
Uganda	Shilling		664.59						664.59
Italy	Euro		2,007.00						2,007.00
United States	Dollar				9,130.83				9,130.83
Jessica Frederick:									
Kenya	Shilling		1,974.00						1,974.00
Uganda	Shilling		664.59						664.59
Italy	Euro		2,007.00						2,007.00
United States	Dollar				9,130.83				9,130.83
Dianne Preece:									
Kenya	Shilling		1,974.00						1,974.00
Uganda	Shilling		664.59						664.59
Italy	Euro		2,007.00						2,007.00
United States	Dollar				9,130.83				9,130.83
Fitzhugh Elder:									
Kenya	Shilling		1,974.00						1,974.00
Uganda	Shilling		664.59						664.59
Italy	Euro		2,007.00						2,007.00
United States	Dollar				9,130.83				9,130.83
Warren Harper:									
Kenya	Shilling		1,974.00						1,974.00
Uganda	Shilling		664.59						664.59
Italy	Euro		2,007.00						2,007.00
United States	Dollar				9,130.83				9,130.83
Stacy McBride:									
Kenya	Shilling		1,974.00						1,974.00
Uganda	Shilling		664.59						664.59
Italy	Euro		2,007.00						2,007.00
United States	Dollar				9,130.83				9,130.83
Senator Richard J. Durbin:									
Pakistan	Rupee		309.00						309.00
Qatar	Rial		338.00						338.00
United States	Dollar				8,705.41				8,705.41
Michael Daly:									
Pakistan	Rupee		309.00						309.00
Qatar	Rial		338.00						338.00
United States	Dollar				8,705.41				8,705.41
Scott O'Malia:									
Switzerland	Franc		864.00						864.00
France	Euro		347.00						347.00
United States	Dollar				6,495.76				6,495.76

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Drew Willison:									
Switzerland	Franc		864.00						864.00
France	Euro		347.00						347.00
United States	Dollar				6,495.76				6,495.76
Total			49,560.80		137,792.97		1,245.00		188,598.77

THAD COCHRAN,
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations, Feb. 2, 2007.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Ambrose R. Hock:									
United States	Dollar				8,143.20				8,143.20
Kuwait	Dinar		611.42						611.42
Elaine A. McCusker:									
United States	Dollar				8,143.38				8,143.38
Kuwait	Dinar		604.55						604.55
Evelyn N. Farkas:									
United States	Dollar				12,487.00				12,487.00
Djibouti	Franc		365.00						365.00
Kenya	Shilling		227.00						227.00
Michael J. McCord:									
United States	Dollar				8,869.00				8,869.00
Italy	Dollar		263.00		28.00		6.00		297.00
Spain	Dollar		82.00						82.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		202.00				37.00		239.00
Lucian L. Niemeyer:									
United States	Dollar				8,600.35				8,600.35
Italy	Dollar		777.69		78.95				856.64
Spain	Dollar		75.55						75.55
United Kingdom	Dollar		132.65						132.65
Gregory T. Kiley:									
United States	Dollar				8,600.40				8,600.40
Italy	Dollar		645.50						645.50
Spain	Dollar		158.00						158.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		617.00						617.00
Senator Jeff Sessions:									
Jordan	Dinar		258.00						258.00
Israel	Dollar		709.00						709.00
Arch Galloway:									
Jordan	Dollar		258.00						258.00
Israel	Dollar		709.00						709.00
Charles S. Abell:									
Jordan	Dollar		305.00						305.00
Israel	Dollar		665.00						665.00
Senator Bill Nelson:									
Israel	Shekel		791.42				113.86		905.28
Jordan	Dinar		102.09				2.82		104.91
Lebanon	Pound		5.00				18.00		23.00
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		434.96				95.57		530.53
Bahrain	Dinar		110.84				7.95		118.79
Kuwait	Dinar		35.82				1.67		37.49
Pete Mitchell:									
Israel	Shekel		797.52				10.77		808.29
Jordan	Dinar		111.19				2.82		114.01
Lebanon	Pound		5.00				0.00		5.00
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		406.75				3.07		409.82
Bahrain	Dinar		117.10				7.95		125.05
Senator John McCain:									
Kuwait	Dollar		309.00						309.00
Pakistan	Dollar						35.00		35.00
Israel	Dollar						36.00		36.00
Senator Susan M. Collins:									
Kuwait	Dollar		309.00						309.00
Afghanistan	Dollar		5.00						5.00
Pakistan	Dollar		70.00						70.00
Israel	Dollar		156.00						156.00
Senator Lindsey O. Graham:									
Kuwait	Dollar		309.00						309.00
Senator Lindsey O. Graham:									
United States	Dollar				4,509.10				4,509.10
Senator John Thune:									
Kuwait	Dollar		406.00						406.00
Afghanistan	Dollar		75.00						75.00
Pakistan	Dollar		339.00						339.00
Israel	Dollar		434.00						434.00
United States	Dollar						25.00		25.00
Michael J. Kuiken:									
Niger	Dollar		324.00						324.00
Nigeria	Dollar		1,127.00						1,127.00
Chad	Dollar		640.00						640.00
United States	Dollar				12,403.04				12,403.04
Total			15,086.05		71,862.42		403.48		87,351.95

JOHN WARNER,
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, Jan. 31, 2007.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Valerie West:									
Austria	Euro		138.00						138.00
Italy	Euro		747.00						747.00
United States	Dollar				6,014.98				6,014.98
Garret Graves:									
Republic of Kenya	Shilling		1,333.00						1,333.00
United States	Dollar				7,942.00				7,942..00
Floyd Deschamps:									
Republic of Kenya	Shilling		1,315.00						1,315.00
United States	Dollar				7,854.74				7,854.74
Total			3,533.00		21,811.72				25,344.72

TED STEVENS,
Chairman, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation,
Dec. 31, 2006.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FOREIGN CURRENCIES AND APPROPRIATED FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Kathryn Clay:									
Japan	Dollar		839.84						839.84
	Dollar				8,287.13				8,287.13
Kenya	Dollar		1,440.00						1,440.00
	Dollar				7,476.31				7,476.31
Total			2,279.84		15,763.44				18,043.28

PETE V. DOMENICI,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources,
Feb. 1, 2007.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS FOR TRAVEL FROM JULY 1 TO SEPT. 30, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Stephen Higley:									
United States	Dollar				6,411.23				6,411.23
Belgium	Euro		310.00						310.00
Michael Goo:									
United States	Dollar				6,326.23				6,326.23
Belgium	Euro		310.00						310.00
Bettina Poirier:									
United States	Dollar				6,326.23				6,326.23
Belgium	Euro		310.00						310.00
Total			930.00		19,063.69				19,993.69

JAMES M. INHOFE,
Chairman, Committee on Environment and Public Works,
Jan. 26, 2007.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Frank Fannon:									
United States	Dollar				7,002.00				7,002.00
Brazil	Real		2,224.00						2,224.00
John Shanahan:									
United States	Dollar				8.166.68				8,166.68
Kenya	Shilling		1,440.00						1,440.00
Stephen Higley:									
United States	Dollar				8,451.85				8,451.85
Kenya	Shilling		1,728.00						1,728.00
Marc Morano:									
United States	Dollar				10,447.31				10,447.31
Kenya	Shilling		1,728.00						1,728.00
Michael Goo:									
United States	Dollar				7,869.14				7,869.14
Kenya	Shilling		2,016.00						2,016.00
Eric Thu:									
United States	Dollar				7,869.14				7,869.14
Kenya	Shilling		2,016.00						2,016.00
Total			11,152.00		49,806.12				60,958.12

JAMES M. INHOFE,
Chairman, Committee on Environment and Public Works,
Jan. 26, 2007.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Norm Coleman:									
Bahrain	Dinar		214.92				189.92		404.84
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		800.00				775.00		1,575.00
United States	Dollar				8,682.53				8,682.53
Senator Russ Feingold:.									
Kenya	Shilling		600.00						600.00
Ethiopia	Birr		700.00						700.00
United States	Dollar				9,172.00				9,172.00
Senator Chuck Hagel:.									
Japan	Yen		208.00						208.00
Vietnam	Dollar		251.00						251.00
United States	Dollar				8,969.00				8,969.00
Senator John Kerry:									
Egypt	Dollar		366.40						366.40
Jordan	Dollar		969.00						969.00
Syria	Dollar		875.32						875.32
Israel	Dollar		217.00						217.00
United States	Dollar				10,963.18				10,963.18
Senator Richard Lugar:									
Latvia	Dollar		378.00						378.00
Austria	Dollar		476.00						476.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		546.00						546.00
United States	Dollar				6,756.77				6,756.77
Jay Branegan:									
Germany	Euro		1,677.50						1,677.50
Cameroon	CFA		344.30						344.30
Nigeria	Dollar		868.00		708.00				1,576.00
Senegal	CFA		96.21		464.00				560.21
United States	Dollar				11,384.43				11,384.43
Isaac Edwards:									
Norway	Krone		316.00		50.00				366.00
United States	Dollar				6,059.00				6,059.00
Paul Foldi:									
United Kingdom	Pound		80.00						80.00
Switzerland	Franc		1,666.00						1,666.00
United States	Dollar				6,358.99				6,358.99
Grey Frandsen:									
Niger	CFA		364.00						364.00
Nigeria	Naira		1,041.00						1,041.00
Chad	CFA		479.00						479.00
United States	Dollar				12,403.04				12,403.04
Grey Frandsen:									
Kenya	Shilling		714.00						714.00
Ethiopia	Birr		672.00						672.00
United States	Dollar				9,172.00				9,172.00
Frank Lowenstein:									
Egypt	Dollar		366.40						366.40
Jordan	Dollar		969.00						969.00
Syria	Dollar		875.32						875.32
Israel	Dollar		217.00						217.00
United States	Dollar				8,278.43				8,278.43
Carl Meacham:									
Dominican Republic	Peso		560.00						560.00
Panama	Balboa		1,180.00						1,180.00
Venezuela	Bolivares		320.00						320.00
Chile	Peso		540.00						540.00
Peru	Nuevo Sol		576.00						576.00
Ecuador	Dollar		512.00						512.00
Guyana	Dollar		92.00						92.00
United States	Dollar				6,499.00				6,499.00
Thomas Moore:									
Austria	Euro		1,128.00						1,128.00
United States	Dollar				5,917.35				5,917.35
Austria	Euro		700.00						700.00
United States	Dollar				5,093.90				5,093.90
Kenneth Myers, Jr.:									
Latvia	Dollar		378.00						378.00
Austria	Dollar		476.00						476.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		546.00						546.00
United States	Dollar				6,756.77				6,756.77
Kenneth Myers, III:									
Latvia	Dollar		378.00						378.00
Austria	Dollar		476.00						476.00
United Kingdom	Dollar		546.00						546.00
United States	Dollar				6,756.77				6,756.77
Janice O'Connell:									
Jordan	Dollar		639.00						639.00
Syria	Dollar		195.31						195.31
Israel	Dollar		346.00						346.00
United States	Dollar				7,300.23				7,300.23
Michael Phelan:									
Germany	Euro		1,488.00		70.00		986.00		2,544.00
Chad	Franc		928.00				462.00		1,390.00
Ethiopia	Birr		822.00				885.00		1,707.00
Kenya	Shilling		1,152.00				1,114.00		2,266.00
Djibouti	Franc		478.00				150.00		628.00
United States	Dollar				13,241.97		60.00		13,301.97
Rexon Ryu:									
Japan	Yen		162.00						162.00
Vietnam	Dollar		283.00						283.00
United States	Dollar				8,969.00				8,969.00
Jennifer Simon:									
Switzerland	Franc		1,676.00						1,676.00
United States	Dollar				6,350.00				6,350.00
Jordan Talge:									
Bahrain	Dinar		214.92				195.55		410.47
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		800.00				763.00		1,563.00
United States	Dollar				9,554.04				9,554.04
Caroline Tess:									
Israel	Dollar		1,191.00						1,191.00
Syria	Dollar		273.00						273.00
Qatar	Dollar		160.00						160.00
Saudia Arabia	Dollar		430.00						430.00
Bahrain	Dollar		523.00						523.00
Kuwait	Dollar		146.00						146.00

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
United States	Dollar				8,860.15				8,860.15
Bernard Toon:									
Dominican Republic	Peso		560.00						560.00
Panama	Balboa		1,180.00						1,180.00
Argentina	Peso		3,348.00						3,348.00
Equador	Dollar		512.00						512.00
Guyana	Dollar		92.00						92.00
United States	Dollar				6,865.40				6,865.40
Patrick Garvey:									
Jordan	Dinar		1,414.00		25.00		360.00		1,799.00
Kuwait	Dinar		50.00						50.00
United States	Dollar				9,487.91				9,487.91
Keith Luse:									
Sri Lanka	Rupee		357.00						357.00
Cambodia	Riel		382.19						382.19
Thailand	Baht		1,340.00						1,340.00
Burma	Kyat		247.50						247.50
United States	Dollar				3,756.63				3,756.63
Christopher Stevens:									
Lebanon	Dollar		154.00						154.00
Syria	Dollar		850.00						850.00
Jordan	Dollar		546.00						546.00
Israel	Dollar		1,589.00						1,589.00
Saudi Arabia	Dollar				638.00				638.00
United States	Dollar				11,995.98				11,995.98
Puneet Talwar:									
Switzerland	Dollar		838.00						838.00
Lebanon	Dollar		504.00						504.00
Syria	Dollar		250.00						250.00
United States	Dollar				7,168.01				7,168.01
Total			51,876.29		224,727.48		5,940.47		282,544.24

RICHARD G. LUGAR,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, Jan. 22, 2007.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Arlen Specter:									
United States	Dollar				6,933.43				6,933.43
United Kingdom	British Pound		72.05						72.05
India	Rupee		1,546.59						1,546.59
Qatar	Riyal		311.71						311.71
Syria	Pound		355.59						355.59
Israel	Shekel		1,028.80						1,028.80
Italy	Euro		163.82						163.82
Scott Boos:									
United States	Dollar				6,330.30				6,330.30
United Kingdom	Pound		230.00						230.00
India	Rupee		2,009.77						2,009.77
Qatar	Riyal		387.00						387.00
Syria	Pound		250.00						250.00
Israel	Shekel		1,191.00						1,191.00
Italy	Euro		233.00						233.00
Total			7,779.33		12,580.16				20,359.49

ARLEN SPECTER,
Chairman, Committee on Judiciary, Jan. 29, 2007.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR AND PENSIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Adam Briddell:									
United States	Dollar				657.86				657.86
Italy	Euro		2,240.00						2,240.00
Total			2,240.00		657.86				2,897.86

MICHAEL B. ENZI,
Chairman, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, Dec. 20, 2006.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Edward B. Pusey:									
United States	Dollar				6,375.96				6,375.96
Germany	Euro		656.00						656.00

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Luxembourg	Euro		369.00						369.00
Italy	Euro		645.00						645.00
Dahlia Melendrez:									
United States	Dollar				6,355.96				6,355.96
Germany	Euro		656.00						656.00
Luxembourg	Euro		369.00						369.00
Italy	Euro		645.00						645.00
Total			3,340,00		12,731.92				16,071.92

LARRY E. CRAIG,
Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Dec. 11, 2006.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Paul Matulic			1,125.00						1,125.00
	Dollar				8,568.82				8,568.82
Thomas J. Pack			1,140.75						1,140.75
	Dollar				8,568.82				8,568.82
Gregory Thielmann			1,272.00						1,272.00
	Dollar				7,619.77				7,619.77
David Grannis			1,463.00						1,463.00
	Dollar				8,581.77				8,581.77
Jennifer Wagner			1,736.00						1,736.00
	Dollar				8,568.82				8,568.82
Todd Rosenblum			828.00						828.00
	Dollar				1,966.00				1,966.00
Eric Rosenbach			2,372.00						2,372.00
	Dollar				8,441.00				8,441.00
Evan Gottesman			1,172.00						1,172.00
	Dollar				9,123.77				9,123.77
Lorenzo Goco			1,612.00						1,612.00
	Dollar				3,151.18				3,151.18
Randall Bookout			1,730.00						1,730.00
	Dollar				3,151.18				3,151.18
Louis Tucker			1,780.00						1,780.00
	Dollar				3,704.20				3,704.20
Nancy St. Louis			1,839.00						1,839.00
	Dollar				6,079.78				6,079.78
Christopher White			1,839.00						1,839.00
	Dollar				6,079.78				6,079.78
Darren Dick			1,839.00						1,839.00
	Dollar				6,079.78				6,079.78
Melvin Dubee			2,375.00						2,375.00
	Dollar				8,441.00				8,441.00
Michael Davidson			2,420.00						2,420.00
	Dollar				8,440.86				8,440.86
John Dickas			2,447.00						2,447.00
	Dollar				8,441.00				8,441.00
Total			28,989.75		115,007.53				143,997.28

PAT ROBERTS,
Chairman, Committee on Intelligence, Jan. 26, 2007.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), CODEL FRIST FOR TRAVEL FROM NOV. 30 TO DEC. 2, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator William H. Frist, M.D.									
Mexico	Pesos		514.00						514.00
Stephen Rademaker:									
Mexico	Pesos		510.00						510.00
Anna M. Gallagher:									
Mexico	Pesos		590.00						590.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
Mexico	Pesos						6,211.63		6,211.63
Total			1,614.00				6,211.63		7,825.63

WILLIAM H. FRIST,
Majority Leader, Dec. 13, 2006.

*Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State, and the Department of Defense under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), CODEL FRIST FOR TRAVEL FROM SEPT. 30 TO OCT. 5, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator William H. Frist, M.D.:									
Pakistan	Rupee		199.22						199.22

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), CODEL FRIST FOR TRAVEL FROM SEPT. 30 TO OCT. 5, 2006—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Kuwait	Dinar		260.00						260.00
Senator Mel Martinez:									
Pakistan	Rupee		199.22						199.22
Kuwait	Dinar		260.00						260.00
Amy Call:									
Pakistan	Rupee		184.00						184.00
Kuwait	Dinar		260.00						260.00
Eric Ueland:									
Pakistan	Rupee		184.00						184.00
Kuwait	Dinar		260.00						260.00
John Klemmer:									
Pakistan	Rupee		184.00						184.00
Kuwait	Dinar		260.00						260.00
Anna Gallagher:									
Pakistan	Rupee		184.00						184.00
Kuwait	Dinar		260.00						260.00
Delegation Expenses:*									
Estonia	Kroon						1,237.55		1,237.55
Pakistan	Rupee						2,138.01		2,138.01
Afghanistan	Afghani						1,007.12		1,007.12
Kuwait	Dinar						2,933.67		2,933.67
Iraq	Dinar						924.32		924.32
Jordan	Dinar						2,034.36		2,034.06
Total			2,694.44				10,274.73		12,969.17

WILLIAM H. FRIST,
Majority Leader, Dec. 13, 2006.

*Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State, and the Department of Defense under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95–384, and S. Res. 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
H. Knox Thames:									
United States	Dollar				6,822.24				6,822.24
Poland	Zloty		1,041.00						1,041.00
Dorothy Douglas Taft:									
United States	Dollar				6,500.26				6,500.26
Poland	Zloty		1,288.37						1,288.37
Kyle Parker:									
United States	Dollar				6,687.91				6,687.91
Poland	Zloty		1,719.93						1,719.93
Erika Schlager:									
United States	Dollar				6,844.51				6,844.51
Poland	Zloty		3,679.52						3,679.52
Cliff Bond:									
United States	Dollar				6,798.23				6,698.23
Poland	Zloty		3,821.00						3,821.00
Ron McNamara:									
United States	Dollar				6,500.26				6,500.26
Poland	Zloty		1,740.00						1,740.00
Janice Helwig:									
Germany	Euro				486.33				486.33
Poland	Zloty		3,457.00						3,457.00
Shelly Ham:									
United States	Dollar				12,028.98				12,028.98
Kazakhstan	Tenge		795.00						795.00
United Kingdom	Pound		1,420.00						1,420.00
Kyle Parker:									
United States	Dollar				9,664.55				9,664.55
Tajikistan	Somoni		595.00						595.00
Kyrgyzstan	Som		466.00						466.00
H. Knox Thames:									
United States	Dollar				7,249.17				7,249.17
Tajikistan	Somoni		682.00						682.00
Kyrgyzstan	Som		718.45						718.00
Shelly Ham:									
United States	Dollar				5,608.32				5,607.32
Kyrgyzstan	Som		932.00						932.00
Sean Woo:									
United States	Dollar				8,341.28				8,341.28
Laos	Kip		444.00						444.00
Thailand	Baht		218.00						218.00
South Korea	Won		1,680.00						1,680.00
Total			24,697.27		83,531.54				108,228.81

SAM BROWNBACK,
Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Jan. 9, 2007.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), DEMOCRATIC LEADER FOR FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Marcel Lettre II:									
United States	Dollar				9,506.05				9,506.05
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		1,030.00						1,030.00
United Kingdom	Pound		312.37						312.37

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95–384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), DEMOCRATIC LEADER FOR FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2006—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Oman	Rial		309.00						309.00
Total			1,651.37		9,506.05				11,157.42

HARRY REID,
Democratic Leader, Jan. 24, 2007.

CONGRATULATING THE INDIANAPOLIS COLTS FOR WINNING SUPER BOWL XLI

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 75, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 75) congratulating the Indianapolis Colts on their victory in Super Bowl XLI.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. LUGAR. Madam President, I am pleased to join my colleague Senator BAYH in submitting a resolution congratulating the Indianapolis Colts on their historic season, culminating Sunday in a thrilling victory over the Chicago Bears in Super Bowl XLI.

Like so many of my fellow Hoosiers, I have enjoyed cheering on the Colts since the Irsay family brought them to Indianapolis almost a quarter of a century ago. Over the years Colts owner and CEO Jim Irsay and president Bill Polian have brought together a remarkable group of dedicated professionals such as Tony Dungy and players who through their hard work and dedication to community service are a credit to the Colts organization, the City of Indianapolis, and the State of Indiana.

Special recognition should be given to Tony Dungy as the first head coach of African-American descent to lead his team to victory in the Super Bowl. I have enjoyed following Coach Dungy remarkable leadership and appreciate the example he sets for all Hoosiers.

I am hopeful that each of my colleagues in the Senate will join Senator BAYH and me in congratulating the Colts on this signal achievement.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 75) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 75

Whereas, on Sunday, February 4, 2007, the Indianapolis Colts defeated the Chicago Bears by a score of 29–17 to win Super Bowl XLI;

Whereas Colts owner and chief executive officer Jim Irsay and the Irsay family have worked to build the Colts organization not only into a championship caliber team, but also a group dedicated to service in communities across the State of Indiana;

Whereas Tony Dungy is the first head coach of African-American descent to lead a team to victory in the Super Bowl;

Whereas Peyton Manning, having thrown for 247 yards and made 1 touchdown, was named the game's Most Valuable Player;

Whereas the Colts' defense and special teams were able to force 5 turnovers and to limit the Bears to 17 points;

Whereas Colts president Bill Polian, widely considered the ''architect'' of much of the Colts' recent success, and the Colts management have assembled a group of players and coaches that has worked together to win 4 straight championships in the Southern Division of the American Football Conference;

Whereas the Colts' regular season record of 12–4 marks the team's fourth straight year with at least 12 wins, and makes the Colts only the second team to achieve such consistent success in the history of the National Football League;

Whereas the Colts are committed to community leadership, working to help those in Indiana communities who are disadvantaged and underserved, through the generosity of the Irsay family and player groups such as the Peyback Foundation and D.R.E.A.M. Alive, Inc.;

Whereas tens of thousands of fans braved bitterly cold temperatures to line the streets of Indianapolis, Indiana for a victory parade and the rally that followed in the RCA Dome; and

Whereas Hoosiers from across Indiana and the Nation have rallied together to cheer the Colts not just for winning, but for winning the right way, with dignity and professionalism: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate congratulates the Indianapolis Colts on their victory in Super Bowl XLI.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2007

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m., Thursday, February 8; that on Thursday, following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that there then be a period for the transaction of morning business for 60 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak therein during the period for morning business, with the first 30 minutes under the control of the majority, with Senator WYDEN allocated 20 minutes of that 30 minutes and Senator NELSON of Florida the following 10 minutes; that the next 30 minutes be under the control of the Republicans; further, that at the close of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the nomination of GEN George Casey; that there be 30 minutes of debate remaining on the nomination, with the time equally divided and controlled between Senators LEVIN and MCCAIN or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of time, without further intervening action or debate, the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of the nomination; that upon disposition of the nomination, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate resume legislative session and then proceed to consideration of Calendar No. 18, H.J. Res. 20, the continuing funding resolution.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I appreciate the ability to move forward on this joint resolution. The distinguished Republican leader and I are going to spend some time tomorrow talking about amendments to this joint resolution. The Republican leader has been consistent in asking for amendments to the continuing resolution, and staff has exchanged paper on this matter. We are going to see what we can do to meet the demands of the Republicans.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Madam President, the Senate just entered into an agreement which establishes parameters for the final debate on the nomination of General Casey. The vote on confirmation will occur around 11:30 a.m. tomorrow. We don't know the exact time because it is according to how much time is used by the leaders, and other matters may get in the way.

After we dispose of that nomination, the Senate will begin consideration of the continuing funding resolution. As I indicated, the Republican leader and I have had discussions about this CR, and we will continue to have discussions as we move forward with this most important legislation.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate today, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:59 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, February 8, 2007, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate February 7, 2007:

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS/COMMANDING GENERAL, UNITED STATES ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, AND APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY, WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 601 AND 3036:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. ROBERT L. VAN ANTWERP, JR., 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. MARC L. WARREN, 0000

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. TRACY L. GARRETT, 0000

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be admiral

ADM. TIMOTHY J. KEATING, 0000

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

GINO L. AUTERI, 0000
PETER G. BREWER, 0000
JAMES J. BURKS, 0000
LINNES L. CHESTER, JR., 0000
LESLIE L. DIXON, 0000
KEVIN W. GLASZ, 0000
THOMAS S. HAINES, JR., 0000
MARK A. KOPPEN, 0000
LESLIE K. NESS, 0000
BRUCE D. PETERS, 0000
BRIAN L. RIGGS, 0000
MARK S. WHITE, 0000
GLENN A. YAP, 0000
JESUS E. ZARATE, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

BRIAN E. BERGERON, 0000
DOUGLAS B. CURRY, 0000
DOUGLAS E. FORD, 0000
LEE A. FULSAAS, 0000
JAY D. GRAVER, 0000
SCOTT R. GREENING, 0000
TIMOTHY C. KIRKPATRICK, 0000
STEVEN L. KLYN, 0000
ALLAN S. PARKE, 0000
JOHN K. PAUL III, 0000
MICHAEL E. POTH, 0000
GLENN L. TERRY, 0000
FRANCESCA VASTAFALLDORF, 0000
JAMES A. WIMSATT III, 0000
LOLO WONG, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

BRIAN D. AFFLECK, 0000
JIMMIE D. BAILEY II, 0000
JAMES R. BENNION, 0000
KEITH E. BRANDT, 0000
GERRY L. BROWER, 0000
JEFFREY N. DAVILA, 0000
PAUL S. DOAN, 0000
ALDO J. DOMENICHINI, 0000
DANIEL K. FLOOD, 0000
SPENCER J. FRINK, 0000
MARK D. GOODWIN, 0000
TIMOTHY P. GREYDANUS, 0000
DOUGLAS J. GRIDER, 0000
MICHAEL D. GRINKEMEYER, 0000
BRIAN H. HALL, 0000
BARTLETT H. HAYES, 0000
WOODSON S. JONES, 0000
BRIAN S. KENDALL, 0000
JOSEPH J. LEGAN, 0000
JOHN T. MANSFIELD, 0000
BRIAN F. MCCRARY, 0000
KEITH H. MORITA, 0000
DIANE C. NAPOLI, 0000
RANDALL H. NEAL, 0000
SANDRA S. OSSWALD, 0000
RORY G. OWEN, 0000
WILLIAM B. PERRY, 0000
TOD S. RUSSELL, 0000
ROBERT A. SCHMITZ, 0000
GARY N. STOKES, 0000
CHARLES S. TEDDER, 0000
GUILLERMO J. TELLEZ, 0000
WILLIAM A. THOMAS, JR., 0000
WILLIAM E. VENANZI, JR., 0000
LORNA A. WESTFALL, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

WILLIAM R. BAEZ, 0000
ROBERT K. BOGART, 0000
TIMOTHY D. BONNIWELL, 0000
MATTHEW J. BRONK, 0000
SOTO D. CANDELARIO, 0000
RENEE D. CARLSON, 0000
WILLIE T. CHI, 0000
MARGARET A. CURRY, 0000
DANNY R. ELLER, 0000
CHRISTOPHER A. GARZA, 0000
KATHLEEN A. GATES, 0000
MARTIN E. JORDAN, 0000
JAMES F. KNOWLES, 0000
RICHARD A. MCCLURE, 0000
EVERETT S. ONG, 0000
ERIC R. SCHMIDT, 0000
DARRELL S. SMITH, 0000
BRENT A. SONDAY, 0000
COREY M. STANLEY, 0000
BRYAN K. TALLENT, 0000
RICHARD A. VANDERWEELE, 0000
JAMES E. VANGILDER IV, 0000
JOHN K. WALTON, 0000
MICHAEL D. WEBB, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

KENT D. ABBOTT, 0000
JAYE E. ADAMS, 0000
PER K. AMUNDSON, 0000
DINA M. ANDREOTTI, 0000
CHESTER P. BARTON III, 0000
KRISTEN J. BEALS, 0000
RACHEL L. BECK, 0000
CELESTE S. BLANKEN, 0000
DAVID E. BLOCKER, 0000
KENNETH J. BOOMGAARD, 0000
CHRISTOPHER J. BORCHARDT, 0000
LINDA R. BOYD, 0000
KIMBERLY R. BRADLEY, 0000
JOSEPH V. BROWNE, 0000
KEVIN BRYAN, 0000
DAVID S. BUSH, 0000
MARK E. CAMPBELL, 0000
THOMAS J. CANTILINA, 0000
ALESIA C. CARRIZALES, 0000
SCOTT C. CARRIZALES, 0000
JAMES A. CHAMBERS, 0000
ARTEMIO C. CHAPA, 0000
MOLINDA M. CHARTRAND, 0000
JOHN H. CHOE, 0000
DIXON L. CHRISTIAN, 0000
VALERIE J. CLEGG, 0000
JASMIN K. COLE, 0000
JOSEPH CONNOLLY III, 0000
JOHN J. COTTON, 0000
MITCHELL W. COX, 0000
STEVEN J. CYR, 0000
MONICA A. DALRYMPLE, 0000
PIERRE ALAIN L. DAUBY, 0000
EDWIN P. DAVIS, JR., 0000
YVONNE M. DIETRICH, 0000
REYNOLD R. M. DLIMA, 0000
PETER G. DREWES, 0000
RITA L. DUBOYCE, 0000
CASEY E. DUNCAN, 0000
JAMES M. EGBERT, JR., 0000
CHRISTINE R. ERDIELALENA, 0000
JOYCE P. FIEDLER, 0000
DOUGLAS S. FILES, 0000
VAL W. FINNELL, 0000
MICHAEL L. GALLENTINE, 0000
ARTHUR J. GAMACHE, JR., 0000
VINOD K. GIDVANIDIAZ, 0000
STEPHEN A. GILL, 0000
HOWARD R. GIVENS, 0000
PAUL D. GLEASON II, 0000
SANDRA L. GRAVES, 0000
KERYL J. GREEN, 0000
PATRICK M. GROGAN, 0000
MELINDA B. HENNE, 0000
MICHAEL J. HIGGINS, 0000
PATRICK E. HILL, 0000
MARK A. HINTON, 0000
DUNCAN G. HUGHES, 0000
KATHRYN G. HUGHES, 0000
JAMES E. HUIZENGA, 0000
GREGORY S. HYLAND, 0000
CONSTANCE L. JACKSON, 0000
JOHN F. JAMES, 0000
SAMUEL O. JONES IV, 0000
SARAH S. JONES, 0000
ROBERT F. KACPROWICZ, 0000
WARREN R. KADRMAS, 0000
PATRICK S. KELLEY, 0000
GREGORY A. KENNEBECK, 0000
ROBERT S. KENT, 0000
CHETAN U. KHAROD, 0000
STEVEN M. KINDSVATER, 0000
TODD T. KOBAYASHI, 0000
PETER J. KOBES, 0000
DONALD C. KOWALEWSKI, 0000
ROBERT J. KOWALSKI, JR., 0000
DONALD J. LANE, 0000
JANICE M. LANGER, 0000
HENRY K. K. LAU, 0000
JIMMY J. S. LAU, 0000
DAVID P. LAUGHLIN, 0000
CRYSTINE M. LEE, 0000
ADMIRADO A. LUZURIAGA, 0000
WALTER M. MATTHEWS, 0000
JOHN D. MCARTHUR, 0000
JEFFREY D. MCNEIL, 0000
ANITA L. MCSWAIN, 0000
EVAN R. MEEKS, 0000
MICHAEL L. MILLER, 0000
DANIEL I. MIRSKI, 0000
TERENCE B. MITCHELL, 0000
ANDREW E. MOORE, 0000
PATRICK M. MUEHLBERGER, 0000
DAVID W. MUNITZ, 0000
CABOT S. MURDOCK, 0000
JEFFREY G. NALESNIK, 0000
SALLY W. NALESNIK, 0000
JUSTIN B. NAST, 0000
DOUGLAS A. NELSON, 0000
STEPHEN L. NELSON, JR., 0000
THOMAS C. NEWTON, 0000
WILFREDO J. NIEVES, 0000
STEVEN L. OLSEN, 0000
DONALD T. OSBORN, 0000
JOSEPH A. OUMA, 0000
ROBERT G. PATTERSON, 0000
CHRISTOPHER P. PAULSON, 0000
BARAK PERAHIA, 0000
KENNY J. PETERSON, 0000
JOSEPH A. POCREVA, 0000
MANOJ RAVI, 0000
LYRAD K. RILEY, 0000
JOY A. N. RODRIGUEZ, 0000
DAVID M. ROGERS, 0000
ROBERT J. SCHIMMEL, 0000
KEITH E. SCHLECHTE, 0000
JAMES M. SCOTT III, 0000
MELINDA D. SCREWS, 0000
GUY M. SHOAF, 0000
FERNANDO SILVA, 0000
PETER T. SIPOS, 0000
PAMELA D. SMITH, 0000
BRANDON T. SNOOK, 0000
JOHN B. STETSON, 0000
ROBERT T. SULLIVAN, 0000
GREGORY B. SWEITZER, 0000
DEREK A. TAGGARD, 0000
MICHAEL A. TALL, 0000
NATHAN L. TAYLOR, 0000
STEVEN B. TAYLOR, 0000
ROBERT E. THAXTON, 0000
NICOLE M. THOMAS, 0000
ALICIA L. TSCHIRHART, 0000
DANIEL R. TUCKEY, 0000
ANTHONY P. TVARYANAS, 0000
LAURENCE A. ULISSEY, 0000
GINA G. VITIELLO, 0000
ANTHONY W. WALDROUP, 0000
CRAIG A. WARDELL, 0000
DANIEL J. WATTENDORF, 0000
LEE D. WILLIAMES, 0000
PAMELA M. WILLIAMS, 0000
WILLIAM E. WINTER III, 0000
BRUCE A. WOODFORD, 0000
EDWARD B. WOODWARD, 0000
YI YANG, 0000
ROBERT R. YORK, 0000
JEFFREY M. YOUNG, 0000
SHAWN P. ZARR, 0000
JIANZHONG J. ZHANG, 0000
AN ZHU, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUALS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADES INDICATED IN THE REGULAR AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531(A):

To be lieutenant colonel

ANTHONY J. PACENTA, 0000
BARNEY E. SELPH, 0000

To be major

GWENDOLYN A. FINLEY, 0000
CHARLES J. MALONE, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

TANSEL ACAR, 0000

LAURA A. AESCHLIMANN, 0000
COURTNEY A. ANDERSON, 0000
DEBORAH ASHCRAFT OLMSCHEID, 0000
AREZOO BARANI, 0000
ELHAM BARANI, 0000
STEVEN W. BLACK, 0000
ERIC W. BLUDAU, 0000
SETH R. BRIGGS, 0000
BRYAN E. CARDON, 0000
JASON A. CARTER, 0000
JACK K. CHUNG, 0000
PAUL M. CREER, 0000
MICHAEL J. DAILEY, 0000
JOHN C. DAVIS, 0000
PEGGY L. DICKSON, 0000
WILLIAM J. DICKSON, 0000
KERRI FONT, 0000
JEFFREY A. FORD, 0000
STEPHEN R. GASPAROVICH, 0000
USHA S. GOKHALE, 0000
SHANNON K. GRABARKEWITZ, 0000
JEREMY D. HAMAL, 0000
SHANE R. HANSON, 0000
JOSHUA M. HETHCOX, 0000
FRED P. KREY, 0000
SCOTT J. LAFONT, 0000
BEN S. LEE, 0000
DAVID R. LUKE III, 0000
JAMES F. MASON, 0000
CHRIS Y. MAYEDA, 0000
ROBERT B. MCLEOD, 0000
ROGER L. MILLER, 0000
BRIAN G. MIN, 0000
JEFFREY A. MOELLER, 0000
MICHELLE M. MOFFA, 0000
LEON A. NIEH, 0000
JAMES W. PLEDGER II, 0000
BRIAN RHEUDE, 0000
MARK D. ROBERTS, 0000
JEREMY F. SCARPATE, 0000
DONALD R. SCHMITT, 0000
DANIEL J. SIMON, 0000
ERIC D. SMITH, 0000
JUAN M. TEODORO, 0000
STUART P. THOMPSON, 0000
SCOTT E. THOMSON, 0000
CHAD M. WATTS, 0000
AMY E. WESTERMAN, 0000
BRANDON H. WILLIAMS, 0000
DAVID A. ZIMLIKI, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

BRIAN G. ACCOLA, 0000
DERICK H. ADAMS, 0000
SAMUEL E. AIKELE, 0000
NIMA A. ALINEJAD, 0000
ANDREW T. ALLEN, 0000
CANDENA L. ALLENBRAND, 0000
JOSHUA B. ALLEY, 0000
GREGORY W. ANDERSON, 0000
MARK A. ANDERSON, 0000
PETER I. ANDERSON, 0000
SHANE K. ANDERSON, 0000
FLORIN D. ANDRECA, 0000
JONATHAN L. ARNHOLT, 0000
AARON S. ASHABRANER, 0000
MICHAEL S. ATHA, 0000
NORMAN D. BAKER, JR., 0000
TIMOTHY P. BALLARD, 0000
ROBERT L. BALTZER, JR., 0000
ERIC W. BARNES, 0000
ANDY S. BARNETT, 0000
JASON BARNETT, 0000
JOHN P. BARON, 0000
MICHAEL J. BENCA, 0000
RONALD M. BERNARDIN III, 0000
JONATHAN M. BISHOP, 0000
DAVID J. BONILLA, 0000
EDWARD J. BORMAN, 0000
LANCE H. BORUP, 0000
JEFFEREY L. BOWDEN, 0000
KENNETH J. BRASLOW, 0000
REBEKAH G. BRISCOE, 0000
MATTHEW W. BROWN, 0000
SANDRA BRUNO, 0000
STEPHEN A. BURKY, 0000
TREVER M. BURNETT, 0000
ANTOINETTE T. BURNS, 0000
CASSANDRA J. BURNS, 0000
GLENN D. BURNS, 0000
KENT D. BURR, 0000
GEORGE J. BUSE, 0000
DAVID M. CALL, 0000
CHRISTOPHER N. CARAGAN, 0000
JEFFREY J. CARLSON, 0000
MICHAEL C. CAROZZA, 0000
LYDIA CARPENTER, 0000
YOVANNI CASABLANCA, 0000
HEATHER X. CERESTE, 0000
CHRISTY Y. H. CHAI, 0000
EDWARD CHAMPOUX, 0000
MICHAEL J. CHASE, 0000
MICHAEL CHEN, 0000
MARC A. CHILDRESS, 0000
JARED A. CHUGG, 0000
TRICIA L. CLARK, 0000
PETER M. CLIFTEN, 0000
FRANCIS J. CLORAN, 0000
JASON G. COISMAN, 0000
AMY E. COLEMAN, 0000
DEAN R. CRANNEY, 0000
PETER J. CRONIN, 0000
SCOTT J. CROSBY, 0000
JUSTIN L. CUMMINGS, 0000
MATTHEW J. DARLING, 0000
EVERETT J. DE LEON, 0000
PATRICK D. DEAN, JR., 0000
ADAM M. DEBIN, 0000
KAYLYNN DECARLI, 0000
STEVEN D. DEMARTINI, 0000
MICHAEL V. DEMASI, 0000
MICHAEL J. DERR, 0000
JUSTIN F. DEVITO, 0000
ERIN M. DOLAN, 0000
KENDRA L. DOLAN, 0000
JOHN R. DORSCH, 0000
ELIZABETH DUNCAN, 0000
ANTHONY M. DURSO, 0000
MARYANN J. ELACATE, 0000
ROBERT L. EMERY, 0000
RICHARD ENDORF, 0000
KELLY M. ENGLUND, 0000
GREGORY A. ERICKSON, 0000
JEFFREY S. FAIT, 0000
KEVIN A. FAJARDO, 0000
MARION B. FARNSWORTH, 0000
JACQUELINE S. FERNANDES, 0000
CECELIA M. FICEK, 0000
IRENE FOLARON, 0000
LEELEE E. FRANCISCO, 0000
JULIE A. FREILINO, 0000
BRIAN L. FRENCH, 0000
TRAVIS W. GERLACH, 0000
DANIELLE L. GIDDINS, 0000
MATTHEW C. GILL, 0000
TERRY A. GODFREY, 0000
ERIKA G. GONZALEZ, 0000
ANNE GRAY, 0000
ELIZABETH A. GREENE, 0000
DAVID S. GROUNDS, 0000
BRANDON T. GROVER, 0000
ALAN D. GUHLKE, 0000
GREGORY D. GUTKE, 0000
PATRICK A. HAGEMAN, 0000
CHARLES J. HAGGERTY, 0000
LENONIE M. HANLEY, 0000
MELISSA E. HANNA, 0000
RYAN D. HANSON, 0000
HERBERT J. HARMAN, 0000
KIRBY G. HARVEY, JR., 0000
STEVEN D. HELD, 0000
GIAN P. HERNANDEZ, 0000
ERIC A. HIGH, 0000
WILLIAM M. HILTON, 0000
BRADLEY S. HOCHSTETLER, 0000
BRIAN K. HOGAN, 0000
FAWN S. HOGAN, 0000
ROBERT L. HOLMES, 0000
JESSICA G. HORNE, 0000
STEPHANIE E. HORTON, 0000
MATTHEW D. HOWELL, 0000
LARA F. HUFFMAN, 0000
JONATHAN C. JACKSON, 0000
NORRIS J. JACKSON, 0000
HANS C. JENKINS, 0000
CASEY JIMENEZFERREIRA, 0000
KEITH J. JOE, 0000
ROY L. JOHNSON III, 0000
ANDREA R. JUDY, 0000
CARRIE A. JUDY, 0000
JEREMY S. KENNEDY, 0000
JESSICA A. KENT, 0000
MATTHEW R. KEYSOR, 0000
DAVID D. KIM, 0000
GARY S. KIM, 0000
KELLY S. KING, 0000
SCOTT A. KING, 0000
KRISTI N. KINSEY, 0000
DAVID J. KIRBY, 0000
SARAH V. KRINGER, 0000
DAVID E. KUHLMAN, 0000
TRISTAN T. LAI, 0000
JEFFREY M. LAMMERS, 0000
DANIEL R. LAMOTHE, 0000
FRANCESCA M. LANE, 0000
THOMAS M. LARGE, 0000
BRIAN D. LAYTON, 0000
DEWAYNE C. LAZENBY, 0000
BENJAMIN D. LEDERER, 0000
VINCENT J. LEE, 0000
MICHELLE K. LEGGETT, 0000
AARON D. LEIS, 0000
RUSSELL L. LEMMON, 0000
MARK R. LENTHE, 0000
MICHELLE R. LESTER, 0000
ADRIAN G. LETZ, 0000
HUI L. LI, 0000
MATTHEW B. LIPPSTONE, 0000
JOSEPH D. LOVE, 0000
FRANK L. LOYD IV, 0000
SEAN MACDERMOTT, 0000
MATTHEW M. MALAN, 0000
VALERIE J. MALLOY, 0000
KENNETH A. MARRIOTT III, 0000
BRYANT R. MARTIN, 0000
JOSHUA MATTISON, 0000
LENA M. MAYES, 0000
OLIVER MAYORGA, 0000
DEIRDRE M. MCCULLOUGH, 0000
JOSEPH H. MCDERMOTT, 0000
KERI J. MCHUGH, 0000
MARIEFRANCE M. MCINTEE, 0000
GREGORY M. MEIS, 0000
KENT A. MELDRUM, 0000
MICHAEL MICHEL, 0000
MARVIN J. MIKESKA, 0000
CHRISTINA M. MILLHOUSE, 0000
AASIF H. MIRZA, 0000
JENNIFER M. MOHR, 0000
NISHA N. MONEY, 0000
BENJAMIN E. MONTGOMERY, 0000
ZACHARY R. MUCHER, 0000
JOHN J. MURDOCK, 0000
SCOTT R. NASPINSKY, 0000
CUONG M. NGUYEN, 0000
NEIL B. NIPPER, 0000
ERIK V. NOTT, 0000
LANCE M. NUSSBAUM, 0000
ERIK D. OBERG, 0000
ELIZABETH A. OCONNOR, 0000
KEVIN W. ODONNELL, 0000
MARY J. M. ODTOHAN, 0000
JASON F. OKULICZ, 0000
DEREK A. OLDHAM, 0000
KRISTINA E. ORIO, 0000
PETER J. OSTERBAUER, 0000
TREMIKAE R. OWENS, 0000
PAUL C. PALECEK, 0000
VASUDHA A. PANDAY, 0000
TARANG V. PATEL, 0000
CHRISTINE M. PATTON, 0000
THOMAS B. PAYNTER, 0000
NATHAN H. PEKAR, 0000
MARIA E. PEREZJOHNSON, 0000
JOHN K. PLEMMONS, 0000
ANDREA M. PORROVECCHIO, 0000
PAUL PUCHTA, 0000
BRADLEY S. PUTTY, 0000
AARON R. QUINN, 0000
ROLANDO Y. RAMOS, 0000
CARL S. RAMSEY, 0000
JENNIFER R. RATCLIFF, 0000
LANCE D. REAL, 0000
CHRISTOPHER M. REED, 0000
DAVID G. REEL, 0000
LUCIENNE L. REIDDUNCAN, 0000
JOHN S. RENSHAW, 0000
RICHARD D. RHODES, 0000
DEVIN A. RICKETT, 0000
IAN C. RIDDOCK, 0000
HEATHER D. RIGGS, 0000
JON K. B. RIGGS, 0000
JANELLE L. ROBERTSON, 0000
JON M. ROBITSCHEK, 0000
JONATHAN M. ROGERS, 0000
JOHN RUSHTON, 0000
MICHAEL J. RUSSELL, 0000
TOMEKA D. RUSSELL, 0000
RAFAEL SANTIAGO, 0000
TAMAR E. SAUTTER, 0000
TREVOR J. SCHAR, 0000
TANJA R. SCHERM, 0000
CARRIE A. SCHMID, 0000
MELISSA SCHOENWETTER, 0000
ERICH W. SCHROEDER, 0000
DANIEL R. SCHULTEIS, 0000
ERIK R. SCHWALIER, 0000
TROY M. SCHWARTZ, 0000
ANDREW D. SEDIVY, 0000
CARRIE L. SELVARAJ, 0000
JAMES D. SENECHAL, 0000
AALOK D. SHAH, 0000
TAVIS M. SHAW, 0000
ERIC SHERMAN, 0000
JEFFREY W. SIMMONS, 0000
SUSANNAH L. SIMONE, 0000
CHRISTY R. SKIBICKI, 0000
BENJAMIN D. SMITH, 0000
BRENT W. SMITH, 0000
CHRISTIAN J. SMITH, 0000
JEANINE A. SOMMERVILLE, 0000
THOMAS D. SPRINKLE, 0000
JENNINGS R. STALEY, 0000
ERIC S. STOVER, 0000
JONATHAN L. STREETER, 0000
IVETTE E. SUBER, 0000
DREW N. SWASEY, 0000
JASON SWEENEY, 0000
WILLIAM D. TALLEY, JR., 0000
ARLO M. TAN, 0000
PEI Y. TANG, 0000
GREGORY H. TAYLOR, 0000
AARON S. THAKER, 0000
THOMAS J. THERRIEN, 0000
ELSA THOMAS, 0000
MONICA J. TILLMAN, 0000
JUSTIN J. TINGEY, 0000
CHRISTOPHER M. TSUEDA, 0000
JOHN M. TUDELA, 0000
MARISSA M. VALENCIA, 0000
LOUIS M. VARNER, 0000
GUY C. VENUTI, 0000
FRANKLIN D. WADDELL, 0000
CLAUDINE T. WARD, 0000
CHRISTOPHER M. WEBBER, 0000
BENJAMIN D. WEINTRAUB, 0000
DAVID J. WEITZ, 0000
SUK C. WHANG, 0000
BRIAN K. WHITE, 0000
BRYAN M. WHITE, 0000
ANNETTE L. WILLIAMS, 0000
JON P. WINKLER, 0000
OLIVER J. WISCO, 0000
JESSICA M. WRIGHT, 0000
MATTHEW W. WRIGHT, 0000
DARRELL M. ZAUGG, 0000
SCOTT M. ZELASKO, 0000
ALEXANDER J. ZENZICK, 0000
DAVID H. ZONIES, 0000

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

TODD A. PLIMPTON, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

PERRY L. HAGAMAN, 0000
WILLIAM A. HALL, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SPECIALIST CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major

DAVID W. ADMIRE, 0000
SUZANNE A. AKULEY, 0000
DOUGLAS W. AVILLA, 0000
LORIE Y. BARKER, 0000
RACHELLE M. BESEMAN, 0000
WILLIAM J. BOWMAN, 0000
KIMBERLY D. BRENDA, 0000
ALEXANDER K. BRENNER, 0000
TRACY H. BROWN, 0000
BRIAN E. BURK, 0000
RICHARD CAPO, 0000
RONALD A. CARDEN, 0000
PAUL T. CIECHOSKI, 0000
LARRY P. CLIFTON, 0000
JACQUELINE L. COLEY, 0000
ROBERT F. COLLINS, 0000
TIMOTHY S. CONGDON, 0000
PETER J. CONTOS, 0000
KYLE G. COOPER, 0000
THEODORE W. CROY III, 0000
SAEZ J. CRUZ, 0000
JOHN P. DANA, 0000
CHARLES K. DEAN, 0000
JOHN F. DETRO, 0000
JAMES C. DICKINSON, 0000
GAIL A. EVANS, 0000
SCARLETT A. FOSTER, 0000
JAMES C. FULTON, 0000
MICHAEL S. GAGNET, 0000
MICHAEL K. GARCIA, 0000
FLORIE GONZALES, 0000
JAY M. HARDY, 0000
PAUL J. HAWKENSON, 0000
NEIL T. HEDDEN, 0000
CHRISTOPHER L. HINTZ, 0000
FREDDIE C. HOBSON, 0000
KEVIN M. HOUCK, 0000
KENNETH E. HYDE, 0000
RODERICK KELLY, 0000
TOMMY W. LAIRD, JR., 0000
SHELENA I. LAY, 0000
ESTHER L. LAZO, 0000
IAN E. LEE, 0000
ANDREW E. LEIGH, 0000
DAVID S. LEVY, 0000
LARRY T. LINDSAY, 0000
SUE L. LOVE, 0000
ROBERTO E. MARIN, 0000
STEPHANIE A. MEYER, 0000
JOHN A. MILLWARD, 0000
ROBERT D. MONTZ, 0000
KEARY J. MUDIE, 0000
ROBERT P. NUTTER, 0000
ARNE E. OAS, 0000
EDWARD B. OBRIAN, 0000
DAWN L. ORTA, 0000
JAMES G. PAIRMORE, 0000
MARLIN D. PAYNE, JR., 0000
EVAN J. PETERSEN, 0000
ANN M. PIERCE, 0000
LANCE J. PLATT, 0000
KEITH A. POWELL, 0000
JAMES L. PULLIAM, 0000
MARC C. RACITI, 0000
JERRY L. RIDER, 0000
CHARLES A. ROBERTS, 0000
LAWRENCE A. ROBINSON, 0000
JOSEPH T. SENESI, 0000
HOLLIS L. SMITH, JR., 0000
JORGE E. SMITHLEON, 0000
LEANDRO SOLIS, JR., 0000
CAMERON C. STOKES, 0000
KERRYN L. STORY, 0000
MARK D. THELEN, 0000
RONNA L. TRENT, 0000
FRANKLIN L. TUCKER, 0000
BETH A. VANDERPOOL, 0000
JOSEPH W. WALBERT, JR., 0000
ROY E. WALLACE, 0000
SHELDON WATSON, 0000
RHONDA WYNDER, 0000
KATHLEEN E. YANCOSEK, 0000
ARTHUR F. YEAGER, 0000
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THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY NURSE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major

JAMES A. ADAMEC, 0000
ELIZABETH E. ADAMS, 0000
RICHARD C. ALES, 0000
JEFFREY M. ALLERDING, 0000
MAEVELYN A. ANDALIS, 0000
LARRY B. ARAMANDA, 0000
JESSICA J. ARENS, 0000
VON M. ARNEY, 0000
FRANKIE B. BAILEY, 0000
RODDEX G. BARLOW, 0000
NEVADA D. BEDWELL, JR., 0000
ANNABEL J. BIGLEY, 0000
JEFFERY R. BORDERS, 0000
PHILLIP T. BRAY, 0000
WILLIAM J. BROWN, 0000
WINSTON C. BRUCE, 0000
KARI A. BRULEY, 0000
ANISSA J. BUCKLEY, 0000
JESS A. CALOHAN, 0000
ROMICO D. CAUGHMAN, 0000
MEKEISHA M. CAULK, 0000
ERIC K. CHA, 0000
MONIQUE R. COURTSCARTER, 0000
PAUL M. CRUM, 0000
PATRICIA L. DAVIS, 0000
STEVEN W. DAVIS, 0000
THOMAS J. DERION, 0000
JODY L. DUGAI, 0000
ROBERT P. DUPREY, JR., 0000
JAMES A. EADS, 0000
CHRISTOPHER L. ERKKILA, 0000
PAUL F. ESTES, 0000
CARABALLO D. ESTRADA, 0000
DARRELL B. EVANS, 0000
BRETT W. EVERS, 0000
JONATHAN F. FELLION, 0000
STACEY L. FERREIRA, 0000
ELIZABETH A. FINDLEY, 0000
CHARLES M. FISHER, JR., 0000
JAMES R. FOX, 0000
TAMARA S. FUNARI, 0000
KRISTEN J. GOODWIN, 0000
KENNETH R. GORE, 0000
AMY J. HADSALL, 0000
GREGORY D. HALL, 0000
ROBIN R. HARROLD, 0000
CARLA M. HERRERA, 0000
JENISE L. HILLS, 0000
DANIELLE T. HOCKEY, 0000
LAURA M. HUDSON, 0000
TODDY F. INGRAM, 0000
BONNIE J. JEANICE, 0000
JACK M. JENKINSON, 0000
JIMMIE C. JOHNSON II, 0000
JAROLD T. JOHNSTON, JR., 0000
JERROMY L. JONES, 0000
JOHN D. KEENER, 0000
MARK C. KILLEBREW, 0000
JOHNNY KING III, 0000
JULIE E. LEE, 0000
JENNIFER D. LORILLA, 0000
CHRISTINE M. LUDWIG, 0000
THERESA C. MACK, 0000
BRUCE MATHEWS, 0000
TERRY MATHEWS, 0000
DENISE A. MCFARLAND, 0000
WILLIAM J. MEEK II, 0000
ELBRIDGE A. MERRITT, 0000
VIVIANNA MESTAS, 0000
CARRIE B. MILES, 0000
GENERA D. MILLER, 0000
MICHAEL K. MOHAMMADI, 0000
RANDALL L. MOORE, 0000
ANNE M. MORGAN, 0000
TINA M. MORGAN, 0000
LELAND B. MORGANS, 0000
JOHN A. MURPHY, JR., 0000
TINA J. MURRY, 0000
LISA K. MUTZIG, 0000
STACEY E. NAPPER, 0000
JAMES R. NOLIN, 0000
KELLIE J. NORRIS, 0000
DORENE A. OWEN, 0000
TROY J. PALMER, 0000
SHARON Z. PARKER, 0000
KIM L. PARKS, 0000
BRANDI L. PECK, 0000
CLAUDIA A. PETERSON, 0000
CLAUSYL J. PLUMMER, 0000
AMBER L. POCRNICH, 0000
PRENTICE R. PRICE, 0000
RIKKINA G. PULLIAM, 0000
RODOLFO G. QUINTANA, JR., 0000
THOMAS O. RAWLINGS, 0000
WESLEY A. REYNOLDS, 0000
ARMI T. RHODES, 0000
SHERRI K. RIBBING, 0000
LAURA E. RICARDO, 0000
CHERYL C. RIVERA, 0000
SONYA R. ROBERTS, 0000
AMY K. ROY, 0000
PERRY C. RUIZ, 0000
JEFFREY D. RUMFIELD, 0000
RANDALL M. SCHAEFER, 0000
JODELLE M. SCHROEDER, 0000
DARIN S. SCHWARTZ, 0000
BENJAMIN E. SEELEY, 0000
DAWN M. SEELEY, 0000
PAUL A. SEXTON, 0000
JACK D. SHAPIRO, 0000
GREGORY V. SHUMATE, 0000
LEILANI A. SIAKI, 0000
JERREMIE V. SIEGFRIED, 0000
ANN C. SIMS, 0000
KEVIN E. SNYDER, 0000
WARREN A. STEWART, 0000
TINA M. STREKER, 0000
MICHAEL G. SWINDLE, 0000
BING TANWINTERS, 0000
MEEMIE J. THA, 0000
KENNETH J. THOMPSON, 0000
BRADLEY C. TIBBETTS, 0000
PAUL R. WARE, 0000
KEITH A. WARHURST, 0000
KEVIN M. WHELAN, 0000
EUNOTCHOL WHITE, 0000
MARK WILKINSON, 0000
CONREAU L. WILLIAMS, 0000
VANESSA WORSHAM, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY VETERINARY CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major

DENNIS R. BELL, 0000
MICHAEL BERECZ, 0000
STEPHANIE L. BOYD, 0000
RONALD L. BURKE, 0000
TAYLOR B. CHANCE, 0000
MARK G. CHAPPELL, 0000
MATTHEW J. ENROTH, 0000
GERRI L. FLETCHER, 0000
CHAD D. FOSTER, 0000
MICHELLE E. GOODNIGHT, 0000
MARGARET A. HANSON, 0000
CARY HONNOLD, 0000
BRYAN D. HUX, 0000
GWYNNE E. KINLEY, 0000
NORMAN KREISELMEIER, 0000
ERIC LOMBARDINI, 0000
ANDREW L. MCGRAW, 0000
AUDREY C. MCMILLANCOLE, 0000
RACHEL S. MOULTON, 0000
ROBERT PAUL, 0000
CONNIE W. SCHMITT, 0000
TRACY H. SCHMITT, 0000
KRISTIE L. SOUDERS, 0000
BRETT J. TAYLOR, 0000
APRIL ULMER, 0000
KENT J. VINCE, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major

RONALD J. AQUINO, 0000
ORTIZ E. ARROYO, 0000
CAROL A. ASADOORIAN, 0000
ROBERT T. ASHBURN, 0000
PRINCESS L. ATUNRASE, 0000
SEREKA L. BARLOW, 0000
MICHAEL F. BELENKY, 0000
ALVIN BLACKMON III, 0000
JEFFERY K. BLACKWELL, 0000
GERALD L. BONNER, JR., 0000
MICHAEL W. BOYE, 0000
DAVID A. BOYER, 0000
PATRICK J. BRADY, 0000
DANIEL D. BRIDON, 0000
BURKE L. BRISTOW, 0000
ALAN D. BRYANT, 0000
PATRICK M. CAREY, 0000
CLAYTON A. CARR, 0000
PHILLIP W. CHRISTY, 0000
DAMON P. CLEATON, 0000
JAMES F. COLE, 0000
JUSTIN D. COLE, 0000
GARY S. COOPER, 0000
JASON B. CORLEY, 0000
MATTHEW T. COX, 0000
JAMES E. CRAIG, 0000
GARRICK L. CRAMER, 0000
RICHARD L. CURTIS, 0000
LORNETTE D. DALLAS, 0000
COREY V. DAUGHTREY, 0000
JASON S. DAVIS, 0000
LANA G. DAVIS, 0000
CLARISSA DEJESUSMORALES, 0000
DAVID A. DERRICK, 0000
MICHAEL DESENA, 0000
DAVID L. DOUGLAS, 0000
JAMES A. EDDIS III, 0000
JASON FAIRBANKS, 0000
MATTHEW A. FARISHON, 0000
SEAN P. FARLEY, 0000
GLEN J. FIORENZA, 0000
LEE C. FREEMAN, 0000
OSCAR S. FRIENDLY, 0000
BRADY A. GALLAGHER, 0000
JAMES H. GERLACH, 0000
KATHLEEN M. GIBSON, 0000
GEORGE O. GILBERT, JR., 0000
JACOB H. GIN, 0000
PAUL C. GRAVES, 0000
ANTHONY D. GRAY, 0000
NIZAMETTIN GUL, 0000
MICHAEL HAEDT, 0000
VERONICA L. HAGER, 0000
JAMES T. HAMACHER, 0000
MICHELLE HANNON, 0000
SHIRLEY L. HARP, 0000
DARIN L. HARPER, 0000
ANDREW J. HARTMAN, 0000
BERNARD HARVEY, 0000
CORY L. HEINEKEN, 0000
KENNETH S. HELGREN, 0000
ROBERT C. HOERAUF, 0000
TIMOTHY J. HUNT, JR., 0000
RAYMOND J. JABLONKA, 0000
DOUGLAS R. JACKSON, 0000
FREDERICK C. JACKSON, 0000
MARY A. JOHNSON, 0000
TAMMIE M. JONES, 0000
STEVIE T. JORDAN, 0000
NICOS KARASAVVA, 0000
ALEXANDER K. KAYATANI, 0000
AMY S. KING, 0000

ANTHONY M. KING, 0000
DANNY KITTRELL, JR., 0000
CLEMENS S. KRUSE, 0000
THOMAS M. LANDINO, 0000
KENDRA L. LAWRENCE, 0000
JOHN W. LEE, 0000
SEAN C. LESTER, 0000
JACQUELINE N. LEWIS, 0000
DANIEL M. LIEDL, 0000
ROBERT A. LINDSAY, 0000
ROBERT G. LOWEN, 0000
PETER B. MARKOT, 0000
WINICO M. MARTINEZ, 0000
JAMES N. MASTERSON, 0000
CHRISTOPHER D. MAYHUGH, 0000
YVETTE M. MCCREA, 0000
DARRYL A. MCGUIRE, 0000
DAVID S. MCILWAIN, 0000
SEAN A. MCMURRY, 0000
STEVEN A. MEADOW, 0000
MARK D. MELLOTT, 0000
MICHAEL S. MENDENHALL, 0000
SCOTT C. MENKING, 0000
WANDA L. MICHAELS, 0000
DAVID R. MILLER, 0000
DANIEL MISIGOY, 0000
SHELLEY N. MIZELLE, 0000
HEIDI P. MON, 0000
JAMES A. MORRISON, 0000
JITTAWADEE MURPHY, 0000
BERNADETTE A. NITER, 0000
MARCO A. OCHOA, 0000
TERRIE L. PITTMAN, 0000
MATOS J. PIZARRO, 0000
MARK C. PLOOSTER, 0000
PETER J. PRESLEY, 0000
JOSE F. QUESADA, 0000
MCKINLEY N. RAINEY, 0000
PETER A. RAMOS, 0000
LYLE D. RASMUSSEN, JR., 0000
DEVON O. REED, 0000
JEFFREY L. REIBESTEIN, 0000
CRAIG D. RENNARD, 0000
CABRERA E. REYES, 0000
DANIEL E. REYNOLDS, 0000
RANDALL W. RHEES, 0000
FRANK E. RIGGLE, JR., 0000
SHANE A. ROACH, 0000
CODY R. ROBERSON, 0000
JASON L. ROBERTS, 0000
ADMINDA L. RODRIGUEZ, 0000
DAVID L. ROLLINS, 0000
PHILLIP D. ROOKS, 0000
KURT E. SCHAECHER, 0000
TIMOTHY A. SHARPE, 0000
JEFFREY S. SIGMON, 0000
MICHAEL S. SMITH, 0000
SAUDIA D. SMITH, 0000
NELSON S. SO, 0000
EDWARD SONAK, 0000
STEPHEN T. SPEER, 0000
RAYMOND D. SPIAK, JR., 0000
ERIC SPOTTS, 0000
SCOTT J. STOKOE, 0000
KEVIN L. STRAIT, 0000
SCOTT F. SWANDAL, 0000
NICOLA A. THOMPSON, 0000
ARISTOTLE A. VASELIADES, 0000
RICHARD VELAZQUEZ, 0000
CARYN R. VERNON, 0000
GEORGE C. WALKER, 0000
KENNETH L. WALTERS, 0000
LAWANDA D. WARTHEN, 0000
HANS H. WEI, 0000
STATON W. WEST, 0000
JO A. WHISENHUNT, 0000
DANIEL M. WOODLOCK, 0000
TODD M. YOSICK, 0000
HASSAN ZAHWA, 0000
PATRICK A. ZENK, 0000
DAVID R. ZINNANTE, 0000
REBECCA A. ZINNANTE, 0000
JOHN P. ZOLL, 0000
D0000
D0000

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate Wednesday, February 7, 2007:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

J. MICHAEL MCCONNELL, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

THE ABOVE NOMINATION WAS APPROVED SUBJECT TO THE NOMINEE'S COMMITMENT TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS TO APPEAR AND TESTIFY BEFORE ANY DULY CONSTITUTED COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE.

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be admiral

ADM. WILLIAM J. FALLON

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. THOMAS W. TRAVIS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. DAVID H. CYR

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. DOUGLAS J. ROBB

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIGADIER GENERAL FRANK J. CASSERINO
BRIGADIER GENERAL STEPHEN P. GROSS
BRIGADIER GENERAL CLAY T. MCCUTCHAN
BRIGADIER GENERAL FRANK J. PADILLA
BRIGADIER GENERAL LOREN S. PERLSTEIN
BRIGADIER GENERAL JACK W. RAMSAUR II
BRIGADIER GENERAL BRADLEY C. YOUNG

To be brigadier general

COLONEL FRANK E. ANDERSON
COLONEL PATRICK A. CORD
COLONEL CRAIG N. GOURLEY
COLONEL DONALD C. RALPH
COLONEL WILLIAM F. SCHAUFFERT
COLONEL JACK K. SEWELL, JR.
COLONEL RICHARD A. SHOOK, JR.
COLONEL LANCE D. UNDHJEM
COLONEL JOHN T. WINTERS, JR.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. JAMES M. DUBIK

IN THE AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MICHAEL D. JACOBSON AND ENDING WITH TERRILL L. TOPS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 18, 2007.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH STUART C. CALLE AND ENDING WITH EDWIN O. RODRIGUEZPAGAN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 18, 2007.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN RECOGNITION OF ARTHUR A. JUTTON ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. WALSH of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today with great pride, to honor someone who is very close to me and for whom I have the greatest respect; Mr. Arthur A. Jutton. Known as Art or Mr. Jutton to his colleagues, Art served as my Chief of Staff since my first day in office until his recent retirement this month. As one of the longest serving staff members here in the House of Representatives, there are very few Hill staffers and Washington professionals who did not know or have the utmost respect for him. I cannot begin to describe all the contributions that Art has made throughout what seems like an endless tenure here on Capitol Hill.

Art began his career working for former Congressman John Terry back in 1970. He served as Mr. Terry's District Representative until 1972. Art then worked for former Congressman Bill Walsh, my father, as his Field Representative from 1972 to 1978. In 1978, Art moved down to Washington D.C. to serve as the Administrative Assistant to former Congressman Gary Lee until 1982. In 1983, Art became the Administrative Assistant to former Congressman Gerry Solomon and served in that post until 1988 when he became my Chief of Staff. For the most part, all of the Members of Congress that Art has served have represented the Central New York region. As a Central Yorker himself, Art has helped all of us work diligently on behalf of the people of that region and also for the greater good of the country.

During his time in government, Art became a pillar of strength among those with whom he worked with. From his first days until his last minute, Art carried a work ethic second to none and was an everlasting source of knowledge. In the late 1970s, he started the New York State Republican Administrative Assistant Association. This group would meet once a month for a breakfast to discuss the issues that were not only on the political forefront, but primarily issues that affected the citizens of New York State. These meetings have since turned into the New York Republican Chiefs of Staff breakfasts that continue to this day. Over the years, Art became a mentor to all staff that was lucky enough to have worked with him. Though sticking true to his beliefs, he had an uncanny ability to maintain an open mind and adjust with the times as they changed.

Art not only created close relationships with staffers, but with all the employees of the House of Representatives. Every morning, bright and early, you could find Art in the Rayburn cafeteria sharing a cup of coffee with the Superintendent's staff. It was these early morning talks that Art credited as the source for the most useful information and inside tips.

Madam Speaker, I am happy for Art on his retirement and extremely proud of the 37 years of service he has given the people of Central New York. I know that although not here in Washington, Art will find a way to stay involved. The work he accomplished was done with the highest level of professionalism, a vigorous work ethic, and most importantly a loving heart. On behalf of my constituents, the constituents of the aforementioned former members and all of the wonderful staff with whom he worked with, I personally thank Art Jutton for all he has done. We will miss him.

RECOGNIZING THE 92ND BIRTHDAY OF DANNY QUILL

HON. PATRICK J. MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I am proud to rise before you today to recognize the 92nd birthday of Danny Quill, decorated World War II veteran and Sergeant of Arms for the Yardley VFW Post 6393. Mr. Quill is the oldest and longest standing member of the Yardley VFW Post and the Knowles-Doyle American Legion Post 317. His service to this country began in 1942, and ever since he has inspired generations of men and women who have had the privilege of knowing him.

Mr. Quill was originally assigned to Washington, D.C. with the 176th Infantry Division responsible for protecting President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Following this assignment, Private First Class Quill was transferred to Fort Benning, Georgia, where he served as a machine gun instructor. Mr. Quill began his tour overseas with the 91st Infantry Division in Africa, but was quickly transported to Italy.

Alongside Polish and English Army regiments, Mr. Quill, a member of the 5th Army, saw his first combat near Naples under the command of General Mark Clark. From there, Madam Speaker, PFC Quill engaged in heavy combat as a machine gunner during campaigns through Appennino Mountains and Po Valley. Madame Speaker, so extreme and deadly was the fighting there, PFC Quill suffered the loss of 13 assistant ammunition loaders, along with many other men serving beside him.

His bravery and courageous service earned Mr. Quill a Combat Infantry Badge, Three Bronze Stars, a European Campaign Medal, a European-African Campaign Medal, a World War Two Victory Medal, and a Good Conduct Medal.

When Mr. Quill returned home, his sense of duty held strong, so with the same passion he began serving his community, a role he has played now for the better half of a century. For such enduring commitment to his family, friends and neighbors; to the men and women of his community and his country, Mr. Quill deserves the utmost respect and unconditional admiration. Madam Speaker, Mr. Quill stands as an ever-steady example of the American ideal of integrity and character he fought for then and inspires today.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL FOR COMMISSION ON UNFAIR TAX BREAKS AND SUBSIDIES

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker. I am today introducing another bill intended to help reduced waste and inequity in the Federal budget.

There has been much discussion of individual spending items—"earmarks"—requested by individual members. They are not all bad, but I agree that some need closer scrutiny. That's why I have introduced a bill, H.R. 595, the Stimulating Leadership in Cutting Expenditures, or "SLICE" Act, to give the President a constitutionally sound version of a line-item veto that can force Congress to reconsider individual spending items.

But we need to recognize that earmarks are not the whole story. Much waste and inequity in the budget results not from 1-year spending items, but from ongoing tax breaks and subsidies that are built into the budget and will persist unless and until there are changes in relevant law.

Like earmarks, not all tax breaks and subsidies are bad—in fact, I think many are good for our country and deserve to continue or even be expanded. One example would be the tax breaks and other provisions to promote renewable energy and to help Americans become more efficient in their use of energy. And there are other examples as well.

But there is also an array of direct subsidies, tax breaks and indirect assistance created for the special benefit of a relatively small number of beneficiaries, sometimes at the expense of others.

Too often, such provisions have persisted because of the phenomenon that once made it nearly impossible for Congress to close unneeded military bases—the cost of each one is relatively small in overall terms, but very important to a few States or Congressional Districts, with the result that the potential budgetary benefit of a reform is not great enough to overcome the strong opposition from its defenders.

So, the bill I am introducing today would resolve this dilemma in the same way that an earlier Congress resolved the similar problem of eliminating unneeded military bases. It would do that by establishing an independent, bipartisan, and expert commission to review special-interest tax breaks and subsidies to see which should be ended or revised.

But this would not be just another commission to produce another report fated only to gather dust on congressional shelves. Instead, like the special commissions that have reviewed military bases, it would be key to a

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

process that would require Congress not just to read the report but to vote on whether to adopt its recommendations.

Here's how my bill would work:

BIPARTISAN CUTS COMMISSION

The Commission on Unfair Tax Breaks and Subsidies, or ''CUTS Commission'', would consist of five members. Its chair would be a person named jointly by the Speaker and the Senate majority leader. The Speaker and the majority leader of the Senate would each pick one other member, and so would the minority leaders in each Chamber. Members would be chosen on the basis of their expertise and to represent a fair balance of views.

The Commission's job would be to identify and evaluate payments, benefits, services, or tax breaks to see if they meet the test of a reasonable expectation that they will bring a return to the public at least equal to the value of the cost to the taxpayers.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The scope of this review would not include payments made to or tax breaks benefiting individuals, to state or local government or Indian tribes, or Native corporations organized under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, or to nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations.

It also would not cover support for research and development based on peer-reviewed or other open, competitive and merit-based procedures where the subject is in the public interest and the work is not likely to be done, or done with equal benefit to the public, by the private sector.

Similarly, the review would not include payments or tax breaks primarily benefiting public health, safety or protection of the environment; the development and use of renewable energy; improved energy efficiency; or education.

Finally, the Commission would not review matters of national security, including homeland security, compliance with trade agreements or treaties, or procurement contracts—and could not propose new programs or taxes or the termination of federal agencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission would have a year to complete its work. Within that time, it would first prepare a preliminary report for review by the Government Accountability Office, GAO, and then a final report to Congress.

The Commission's report would specify which changes in subsidies the commission is recommending—and any recommendation supported by at least four of the five members of the Commission would be assured of prompt consideration by Congress.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS

Under the bill, recommendations with that high degree of bipartisan support on the commission would have to be introduced as bills, and each committee to which they were referred would have a 20-day deadline to reporting them.

A committee could consider only amendments that would terminate or reduce an inequitable subsidy, except that the tax-writing committees could offset revenue increases with broad-based tax cuts, they could not use limited tax breaks of the kind that would have been subject to a line-item veto under the Line-Item Veto Act of 1996. If a committee failed to meet the deadline for reporting, it would be discharged.

Bills reported from committees would go to the Rules Committees of each Chamber. If more than one bill is reported, Rules would consolidate them into one measure which would go to the floor. After 5 days, excepting weekends and holidays, a motion to proceed to its consideration would be privileged and not debatable and, if adopted, the bill would be considered under procedures limiting the time for debate. Similar procedures would apply to conference reports after each Chamber had acted.

In short, Congress could not ignore consensus recommendations by the Commission. It would have to debate them and then vote on whether to adopt them.

POTENTIAL FOR SAVINGS

It is not possible to say exactly how much this bill will save the taxpayers—that depends on what the Commission might recommend and how many of their recommendations Congress would approve. I have seen estimates that the kinds of subsidies and tax breaks covered by this bill could be costing tens of billions of dollars annually just in terms of special-interest spending programs, not to mention special tax breaks—such as provisions to suspend the tariffs on certain items—many of which are of particular benefit to just one or a few companies. So, I think the potential is considerable.

EQUITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

And as important as the savings that could come from enactment of my bill is the increased budget equity and congressional accountability that it would promote. Special-interest subsidies, whether through spending or tax breaks, are great for the beneficiaries but they aren't always great for the taxpayers and they often are harmful to competing companies or other entities that don't get the benefit of the subsidies.

So, trimming or eliminating that kind of subsidies could save money and would remove inequities—and requiring those of us in Congress to stand up and be counted on whether to trim or eliminate some of them would increase our accountability to the taxpayers, to those hurt by the subsidies, and to the American people.

For these reasons, Madam Speaker, I think this bill deserves the support of our colleagues. For their benefit, here is an outline of its major provisions.

OUTLINE OF COMMISSION ON UNFAIR TAX BREAKS AND SUBSIDIES (''CUTS'') BILL

Commission—5 members: chair appointed jointly by House Speaker and Senate Majority Leader, plus one each appointed by House Speaker, Senate Majority Leader, and House and Senate Minority Leaders. Members to be chosen on basis of expertise and to reflect diverse views. No Federal employees on the commission, but agencies can detail people to provide technical expertise.

Duration—Commission would have one year to complete its review and report to Congress.

Scope of Review—Commission would review payments, benefits, services, and tax breaks provided to companies, joint ventures, associations, etc. but not to individuals, state or local governments, Indian tribes and Alaska Native Corporations, or tax-exempt nonprofits. Review would not cover support for research and development based on open, merit-based competition if it is consistent with public interest and federal agency purposes and private sector cannot reasonably be expected to do it as well. Also outside scope of review: matters involving public health or safety or the environment; development or use of renewable energy; greater energy efficiency; national security (including homeland security); or education. Review also would not involve matters needed to comply with international trade or treaty obligations or federal procurement contracts.

Report—Commission's preliminary report would be reviewed by GAO; final report would go to Congress with recommendations for changing or eliminating subsidies covered by commission's review. Any recommendation backed by at least 4 commission members would have to be introduced as legislation.

Action by Congress—Committees would be limited in amending bills to adopt recommendations by at least 4 of the 5 commission members and would have to report them for floor action with time limits on debate. So, Congress would have to act on those recommendations.

IN TRIBUTE TO FATHER ROBERT F. DRINAN: MAN OF GOD, POLITICAL LEADER, AND EDUCATOR

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 5, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Father Robert F. Drinan, his enduring faith, and lifelong commitment to human rights. Father Drinan passed on January 28, 2007, at his residence in the Georgetown University Jesuit community in Washington, DC. He was 86 years old and had recently been ill with pneumonia and congestive heart failure.

Father Drinan was an unwavering defender of the civil and human rights of all Americans. His commitment to these principles was anchored by his religious conviction and a fundamental belief in the rights of all people to be respected and protected by their governments and elected leaders. It was this conviction that led Father Drinan to politics in 1970 when he sought a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. During his tenure in Congress, Father Drinan was an outspoken opponent of the Vietnam war and was the first person to call for the impeachment of President Nixon. Father Drinan was re-elected four times, serving from 1971 until 1981. He stepped down in accordance with a directive from Pope John Paul II, barring priests from holding public office.

Father Drinan was the first Roman Catholic priest to serve as a voting member of the U.S. Congress. I had the honor of serving with him on the Judiciary Committee during the Watergate proceedings. He was a man of deep convictions, a passionate leader and a good friend. Long after he left Congress, Father Drinan continued to be a vocal supporter of human rights. Through his words and his actions he demanded morality in our political leadership. Ever committed to his work, Father Drinan spent the past 21 years as a professor at the Georgetown Law Center where he focused on legal ethics and international human rights.

We all mourn the loss of Father Robert F. Drinan, a man who committed his life to standing up for what he believed. He will be greatly missed.

RECOGNIZING GRANT SAMPSON FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Grant Sampson, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Grant has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Grant has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Grant Sampson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CELEBRATING THE MEMORY OF BARBARA McNAIR

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, on Saturday, February 4, 2007, after a long battle with throat cancer, pioneering singer and actress Barbara McNair passed away. I rise today to remember and memorialize this important American.

Born March 4, 1934, in Racine, Wisconsin, Ms. McNair began performing at an early age. Encouraged by a family that saw her potential, Barbara McNair began singing at 5 years old in the local churches. She would later go on to study at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago and thereafter attended the University of California, Los Angeles, before moving to New York City to pursue her dream of becoming an entertainer.

A 1957 engagement at New York's Village Vanguard earned her the notice which would eventually lead to her first Broadway performance in the play ''The Body Beautiful'' a year later. She went on to star in the Broadway musical ''No Strings'' in 1963. While Barbara McNair continued to gain a following as a nightclub singer throughout the early 1960s, her big break came with a win on Arthur Godfrey's television show, Talent Scouts. Her appearance on the show led to bookings at The Purple Onion and the Cocoanut Grove. Reviewing a nightclub appearance in late 1965, a New York Times writer commented that the ''strikingly beautiful'' McNair ''does not have to depend on looks alone. She is a highly knowledgeable performer who projects an aura of beauty, a warm personality and an appealing sense of fun.'' She soon became one of the country's most popular headliners and a guest on such television variety shows as The Steve Allen Show, Hullabaloo, The Bell Telephone Hour, and The Hollywood Palace, while recording for the Coral, Signature, and Motown labels.

Towards the end of the 1960s, as opportunities were opening up for African-American women in film and television, Barbara McNair made her Hollywood acting debut in 1968 in the film, ''If He Hollers, Let Him Go.'' The following year she starred with Elvis Presley in his 1969 film ''Change of Habit'' and as Sidney Poitier's wife in the 1970 film ''They Call Me MISTER Tibbs!'' As she told the Washington Post in 1969, she found movie acting ''a more rewarding kind of work than singing. When I'm working in a club, I must go from one song to another rapidly and I don't have much time to express myself emotionally. In a movie, you can concentrate on one scene at a time.''

In 1969, Barbara McNair expanded her love of performing onscreen by becoming the host of her own syndicated variety series, The Barbara McNair Show. While the show was on the air for only two seasons, as one of the few television shows of the period to have a black host, it marked a tremendous step forward for African-Americans in general and African-American women in specific.

Barbara McNair retained a devoted following and continued to perform until shortly before her passing. While Ms. McNair is no longer with us, her music and contributions to breaking down the race and gender barriers on television live on.

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND JAPANESE AMERICAN MONUMENT ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 161, to adjust the boundary of the Minidoka Internment National Monument in Idaho to include the Nidoto Nai Yoni (''Let it not happen again'') memorial. This memorial commemorates the Japanese Americans of Bainbridge Island, Washington, who were the first to be forcibly removed from their homes and relocated to internment camps during World War II.

In 1942, 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry were forcibly removed from their homes and placed in internment camps—two-thirds of these were American citizens, none of which had ever shown disloyalty to the American cause. Forced to live under harsh conditions, the last internment camp closed 4 long years later.

These innocent Americans were treated unjustly by their own government during a time of war, simply because of their national origin, and such a crime against them must not go unnoticed. The memorial is rightly named with the words, ''Let it not happen again,'' for it is important to remember the past mistakes of our government in an effort to avoid future ones.

As we recognize this, we must strive to ensure that all Americans know about these mistakes to prevent their repetition. H.R. 161 helps accomplish this by requiring the Secretary of the Interior to coordinate the development of interpretive and educational materials and programs regarding the Bainbridge Island Japanese Americans.

In times of war it may be easy to get carried away and put labels on those around us, assuming what their political ideals are based solely on their national origin or religious background. But as we have seen in World War II, such assumptions are unjust and can lead to disastrous consequences for a group of individuals.

I thank my colleague, Mr. INSLEE, for introducing this important legislation, to ensure that we never let such unjust practices occur in this great Nation again. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

HONORING THE TOWN OF WOLCOTT ON ITS 200TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. WALSH of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 200th anniversary of the town of Wolcott. This small town rests on the shore of Lake Ontario and currently has a population just under 4,700.

Named after Gov. Oliver Wolcott of Massachusetts, Wolcott was founded in 1807. The original town of Wolcott included what are now the present day towns of Huron, Rose, Butler, and Wolcott. At that time, the area was part of Seneca County.

In 1806, one of Wolcott's first settlers, Jonathan Melvin, purchased 500 acres in what would eventually become the village of Wolcott. Mr. Melvin built a gristmill and sawmill along with a frame house for his family, which he painted black. Known to be a very generous man, Mr. Melvin donated land for the construction of a local school and church.

One of the landmarks of Wolcott is the statue of Venus Rising from the Sea. In 1913 the statue was placed at the four corners in Wolcott at the site of the old town pump. Constructed of cast iron, the fountain has been a landmark in Wolcott for over eight decades. Venus Rising from the Sea is one of only eight such statues in America.

Production of iron was one of Wolcott's early main industries. The town was one of the two principle locations of the iron industry for western New York. The Wolcott furnace was located north of the village of Wolcott along the west bank of Wolcott Creek, on what is now Furnace Road. The Wolcott furnace was put into operation in 1821. The iron was formed into castings and hauled to Clyde, once the Erie Canal was constructed and began serving as the major transportation hub for bringing Wayne County products to market. The furnace remained operational until 1869 when the last run of iron making in Wolcott was completed. Today, Wolcott's main industries are fruit farming and food processing.

On behalf of the constituents of the 25th District of New York, I congratulate the town of Wolcott on its 200th anniversary.

HONORING JAMES A. MICHENER

HON. PATRICK J. MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of America's most prominent 20th century authors, James A. Michener.

Born on February 3, 1907 and raised in Doylestown, PA by his adopted family, this great man would have been 100 years old this weekend and I find it fitting to commemorate his great contributions to our society on this day.

The author of over 40 great works, Michener is one of the United States' most important literary figures and one of the 8th district's most notable sons. His most famous work, Tales of the South Pacific, was based on his experiences while serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II. This descriptive account of soldiers' lives during the war was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1948 for its great ability to show the human side of war.

Throughout his career, Madam Speaker, Mr. Michener continued to explore the human side of our American experience with many stirring novels, including The Bridges at Toko-Ri, Alaska, Chesapeake, and Centennial. These excellent glimpses into our national history and character illustrate the genius of Mr. Michener, who in 1977 was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, our nation's highest civilian honor.

Although most of his works were literary, Mr. Michener was truly a man of the world, a citizen servant, and a promoter of the arts.

Madam Speaker, from running for Congress in 1962, to serving on the Advisory board for NASA, to his appointment as cultural ambassador to numerous countries, Mr. Michener has left an indelible mark on our Nation.

Indeed, he has also left a strong mark on the 8th district of Pennsylvania, where he donated large sums of money directed to the promotion of the arts. In 1988, the James A. Michener Art Museum opened in Doylestown, PA, promising to preserve and display the rich artistic heritage of the Bucks County region. With the help of many donors who shared in Mr. Michener's vision this museum stands today as one of the great collections of Pennsylvanian art.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commemorating this fixture of American literary history. Truly, James A. Michener was an experienced traveler, a dedicated citizen and an inspiring writer.

In commemoration of the centennial of his birth, I am proud and honored to remind this body of his many contributions to our Nation.

REINTRODUCTION OF THE COLORADO NORTHERN FRONT RANGE MOUNTAIN BACKDROP PROTECTION STUDY ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today I am again introducing the Colorado Northern Front Range Mountain Backdrop Protection Study Act. I introduced similar bills in the 107th and 108th Congresses, and last year the legislation was passed by the House but the Senate did not complete action on it before the end of the 109th Congress.

The bill is intended to help local communities identify ways to protect the Front Range Mountain Backdrop in the northern sections of the Denver-metro area, especially the region just west of the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology site. The Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest includes much of the land in this backdrop area, but there are other lands involved as well.

Rising dramatically from the Great Plains, the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains provides a scenic mountain backdrop to many communities in the Denver metropolitan area and elsewhere in Colorado. The portion of the range within and adjacent to the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest also includes a diverse array of wildlife habitats and provides many opportunities for outdoor recreation. The open-space character of this mountain backdrop is an important esthetic and economic asset for adjoining communities, making them attractive locations for homes and businesses. But rapid population growth in the northern Front Range area of Colorado is increasing recreational use of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest and is also placing increased pressure for development of other lands within and adjacent to that national forest.

We can see this throughout Colorado and especially along the Front Range. Homes and shopping centers are sprawling up valleys and along highways that feed into the Front Range. This development then spreads out along the ridges and mountain tops that make up the backdrop. We are in danger of losing to development many of the qualities that have helped attract new residents. So, it is important to better understand what steps might be taken to avoid or lessen that risk—and this bill is designed to help us do just that.

Already, local governments and other entities have provided important protection for portions of this mountain backdrop, especially in the northern Denver-metro area. However, some portions of the backdrop in this part of Colorado remain unprotected and are at risk of losing their open-space qualities. This bill acknowledges the good work of the local communities to preserve open spaces along the backdrop and aims to assist further efforts along the same lines.

The bill does not interfere with the authority of local authorities regarding land use planning. It also does not infringe on private property rights. Instead, it will bring the land protection experience of the Forest Service to the table to assist local efforts to protect areas that comprise the backdrop. The bill envisions that to the extent the Forest Service should be involved with federal lands, it will work in collaboration with local communities, the state and private parties.

Madam Speaker, I strongly believe it is in the national interest for the Federal Government to assist local communities to identify ways to protect the mountain backdrop in this part of Colorado. The backdrop beckoned settlers westward and presented an imposing impediment to their forward progress that suggested similar challenges ahead. This first exposure to the harshness and humbling majesty of the Rocky Mountain West helped define a region. The pioneers' independent spirit and respect for nature still lives with us to this day. We need to work to preserve it by protecting the mountain backdrop as a cultural and natural heritage for ourselves and generations to come. For the information of our colleagues, I am attaching a fact sheet about this bill.

COLORADO NORTHERN FRONT RANGE MOUNTAIN BACKDROP PROTECTION STUDY ACT

Generally: The bill would help local communities preserve the Front Range Mountain Backdrop in the northern sections of the Denver-metro area in a region generally west of the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology site.

Front Range Mountain Backdrop: The backdrop consists of the mountainous foothills, the Continental Divide and the peaks in between that create the striking visual backdrop of the Denver-metro area and throughout Colorado. Development in the Denver-metro area is encroaching in the Front Range backdrop area, and thus adversely affecting the esthetic, wildlife, open space and recreational qualities of this geographic feature. Now is the time to shape the future of this part of the Front Range. There is a real but fleeting opportunity to protect both protect Rocky Flats—a ''crown jewel'' of open space and wildlife habitat—and to assist local communities to protect the scenic, wildlife, and other values of the mountain backdrop.

What the bill does:

Study and Report: The bill requires the Forest Service to study the ownership patterns of the lands comprising the Front Range Mountain Backdrop in a region generally west of Rocky Flats, identify areas that are open and may be at risk of development, and recommend to Congress how these lands might be protected and how the federal government could help local communities and residents to achieve that goal.

Lands Covered: The bill identifies the lands in southern Boulder, northern Jefferson and eastern Gilpin Counties in the Second Congressional District; specifically, an area west of Rocky Flats and west of Highway 93, south of Boulder Canyon, east of the Peak-to-Peak Highway, and north of the Golden Gate Canyon State Park road.

What the bill would not do:

Affect Local Planning: The bill is designed to complement existing local efforts to preserve open lands in this region west of Rocky Flats. It will not take the place of—nor disrupt—these existing local efforts.

Affect Private Property Rights: The bill merely authorizes a study. It will not affect any existing private property rights.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 5, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to fully support the goals and ideals of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. In 2005, African Americans accounted for nearly 50 percent of all new HIV infections, despite representing nearly twelve percent of the total population. The HIV/AIDS infection rate among Black men is six times that of white

men and the rate among Black women is sixteen times that of white women. More children with AIDS are African American than all other race and ethnic groups combined. There is no question that we must continue to devote considerable attention and resources to support the efforts of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day and its mission to build capacity and increase the awareness, participation and support for HIV prevention, care and treatment among African Americans in particular. For these many reasons, I urge you to support the passage of H. Con. Res. 35, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

While a cure for HIV/AIDS remains just beyond our reach, there are many known factors that contribute to the devastating effects that HIV/AIDS continues to have in the African American community in particular. For example, we know that the stigmatization surrounding those with HIV/AIDS deters many from being tested and learning about treatment needed to prolong their lifespan. We also know that economic issues such as the need for more inexpensive housing, substantial increases in livable wages and affordable health care, weakens community ties making it difficult to build capacity, disseminate information and target interventions. It is also evident that funds are needed to support these initiatives, perform meaningful outreach and provide organizations with the resources necessary to serve this vulnerable population.

It is important for us to increase knowledge about preventative measures, educational techniques, capacity building and outreach to find targeted solutions to the problem of HIV/AIDS in the Black Community. In the State of New York alone there are 33,747 Black Americans living with HIV/AIDS. Sadly, this number will continue to grow at exponential rates without the attention, care and resources supported by the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. While it is important to direct resources to Black Americans and others who are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS, we must remember that HIV/AIDS does not discriminate. It is estimated that between 1,039,000 and 1,185,000 infected persons live in the United States and approximately 40,000 new infections occur each year. Those affected belong to all gender, racial, ethnic, religious, socio economic and regional configurations. Those affected are mothers and fathers, sisters and our brothers, bosses, friends, and children.

The devastating effect of HIV/AIDS impacts us all. Confronting this international crisis will require the collective efforts of researchers, legislators, clergy members, community activists and organizations, and all others committed to reducing the force of HIV/AIDS. We must work together to find solutions that are scaleable and make possible innovations that result in value adding and sustainable positive changes.

Observance of the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day provides an opportunity for governments, national AIDS programs, churches, community organizations and individuals to communicate the importance of the fight against HIV/AIDS. If we have any hope of ending conversations about the injurious effects of HIV/AIDS, we must immediately devote the time, energy and resources needed to educate, treat and prevent against future transmission.

RECOGNIZING MATTHEW HELM FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Matthew Helm, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 138, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Matthew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Matthew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Matthew Helm for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN HONOR OF VERNA M. WOOLFOLK-SLOAN

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak in honor of Verna M. Woolfolk-Sloan, who passed away on Wednesday, January 31, at the age of 81. Verna lived in Central California's Monterey County for more than 50 years. In that time she built a great record of personal, professional, and community achievement in advancing equal employment opportunity for women and minorities.

Verna was born in Providence, Kentucky and received straight A's throughout school, indicative of professional successes to come. She graduated as class Valedictorian from Rosenwald High School. Verna married Sergeant First Class Robert D. Sloan and they traveled throughout the United States and Germany with their son Joseph. They first set down roots in Seaside with her husband's 1955 posting to Fort Ord. A lifelong learner, Verna studied at Monterey Peninsula College, was awarded high honors in a Masters Degree in Business Administration from Golden Gate University, and later completed a Ph.D. in Organizational Psychology from International University.

Verna's motivation for education and equal opportunity came from her paternal grandparents, former slaves, who established Woolfolk School as the first Black secondary school in Kentucky. These principles guided her civil service career, which she began in 1956 as a simple typist, before climbing the career ladder as an accountant, manager, and ultimately Director of the U.S. Army's Equal Opportunity Office, which monitored and oversaw equal employment opportunity programs at Fort Ord and Fort McArthur. Here, she was the highest-ranking civilian employee at these bases.

Retiring after forty years of civil service employment gave Verna an opportunity to become ever more deeply involved in her local community as a volunteer. She was a Golden Heritage life member, Secretary and Executive Committee member of the Monterey Peninsula's branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and held seats on the boards of many Christian, cultural, and women's organizations. Verna was a role model and inspiration to countless young women and minorities in her local Monterey County, and was recognized with a number of awards, including the Outstanding Woman of Achievement Award and the Outstanding Equal Opportunity Officer award.

She is survived by her sister Eloise Wells of Marina, her brother Thomas Woolfolk of Chicago, grandson Joseph Sloan, Jr. of Atlanta, along with numerous beloved family members, including two great great nieces, one great great nephew, and three godchildren. Many of her family are also based in Seaside or Monterey County, which will ensure her legacy is continued and her work remembered in the district.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the House, I would like to extend our Nation's deepest thanks for Verna's service to the United States and her local community. Her dedication and commitment opened the door to equal opportunity for many to whom that door would have otherwise been closed, and I know that I speak for every member of Congress when I say that it is our honor to recognize her today.

TOM MARTIN

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, every once in a while, someone great comes along who flawlessly fills a position and epitomizes the role he or she performs. Tom Martin, long-time aide and Field Representative to Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe, is such a person.

Tom spent almost 35 years working in state and local government, retiring only after a serious health condition forced him from the job he loved. These many years of public service earned him the well-deserved nickname ''Godfather of Field Deputies.'' It's widely acknowledged that few people in the region have done as much as Tom has for so many. And his upbeat demeanor is always matched with seemingly effortless action. For Tom, helping people has always been second-nature.

I do not think I have ever seen Tom without a smile on his face, or heard him say ''no'' to someone. From 1969 until his retirement in 2005, Tom worked to improve the lives of his neighbors and enhance the community. During that time, the South Bay saw many changes, but one thing remained constant: Tom was always there to listen and to assist those who came to him with their problems, concerns, and ideas.

No item was too small for Tom when it came to helping others and he seemed to involve himself in everything. He ensured that the lights would be promptly fixed in Marina del Ray. He made limiting growth at LAX and its modernization a priority. And he was instrumental in engineering the land swap that saved Los Angeles Air Force Base in the most

recent base closure round. Over the years, Tom worked closely with me and my office and grew to be a personal friend.

But I never saw 'working' with Tom as work. Each meeting, each conversation was more of an interaction with an old friend than official business. His personal generosity integrated itself into the way he approached his job and how he lives his life.

Today, I honor his career and his service to the community. And I wish Tom improving health and Jeri and Tom many, many more years of happiness together.

DEPARTMENT OF PEACE

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to support the establishment of a Department of Peace and Nonviolence as a cabinet-level office of the executive branch of our government. I agree with Representative KUCINICH that war and the threat of war have dominated international relationships for much too long. As a participant in the Civil Rights Movement, as a human being who has faced the barrel of a loaded gun armed only with the philosophy of peace, it has been my belief for many years that war is obsolete as a tool of our foreign policy. But I realize that position may be too progressive for many of my colleagues to accept.

But maybe, just maybe at this moment in our nation's history, when we find ourselves struggling with the hopeless legacy of violence, maybe, just maybe we might be willing to consider the methods of peace as an intelligent, strategic alternative to war. At this very moment our sons and daughters are battling in the middle of an unnecessary war, a war we started, hoping that we could force democracy to grow.

But Mahatma Gandhi once said that violence begets violence. And a recipient of the Nobel Prize for Peace, Martin Luther King, Jr., once said if we as a people want peaceful ends, we must use peaceful means. When will the warring factions in Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and the United States be willing to say they have spilled enough innocent blood? When will they say it is time for us to lay down the tools and instruments of war? Today, can we hear the words of Gandhi, perhaps stronger now than ever before, ''We must choose non-violence or non-existence''?

Are we finally willing to hear the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., ''We must learn to live as brothers and sisters or perish as fools''? Can we, the most powerful nation in the world, use our influence, to raise these questions and give peace a chance?

Madam Speaker, as a nation and as a people we have researched, written about, studied, constructed, deployed and spent trillions of dollars on the best ways to destroy humanity. We have used the power of fear to dominate world affairs. What would happen if the most powerful nation on earth took the lead and through this Department of Peace decided to put even half of those resources toward developing ways to sustain humanity, ways to keep the peace in spite of competing international interests, and ways to gain influence using the power of diplomacy and negotiation?

Without constructive, alternative policies, without viable tools that leaders of nations and leaders of human kind can reach for, peace will always be a vanishing ideal that holds no substance. If we truly believe that peace is our ultimate goal, then we must use the resources of this great nation to that end. We must use the brilliance of American intelligence to develop the methods and mechanisms of peace, even more actively than we develop the mechanisms of war. That's why we need a Peace Academy that will create a diplomatic corps armed with the tools of peaceful influence.

We are all one people, Madam Speaker. We are one family, the human family, and we must find a way to understand each other, to make peace, and learn to live together.

THE GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH AND DATA MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2007

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce the Global Change Research and Data Management Act of 2007 with my colleague from South Carolina, Mr. INGLIS. This bill updates the existing law that formally established the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) in 1990. This bill is also similar to the Global Change Research and Data Management Act that I introduced in the 107th and 108th Congresses.

Over the past decade, the USGCRP has significantly advanced our scientific knowledge of Earth's atmosphere and climate and has provided us with a wealth of new data and information about the functioning of our planet.

However, the program has not produced sufficient information, both in terms of content and format, to be the basis for sound decisions. The program has focused nearly all of its resources and efforts on scientific inquiry. Only one broad assessment of the impact of global change on society has ever been attempted by the program, and that assessment was completed nearly 7 years after its Congressionally mandated deadline. The local, state, regional, and national policymakers responsible for managing resources, fostering economic development, and responding to natural disasters need information to guide their decisions. In my view, it is critical that Congress reorient the USGCRP toward a user-driven research endeavor.

The recent release of the policy summary from the Fourth Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Working Group I, has helped solidify the growing scientific consensus that our climate is changing. This international effort had government support from around the world, including strong involvement from the U.S., and is a summary of the latest science about our climate. It reports that the Earth is warming—sea temperatures are rising, glaciers are melting, and air temperatures worldwide are increasing.

Most of the public and policy makers also agree that the climate is changing, but disagreement remains about how much is the result of human activities. I think this bill deserves the support of people on both sides of that argument.

We need to move beyond debates about whether global change is occurring and allocating responsibility for the changes. I continue to believe fervently that we must do all we can to soften our impact on the environment and to slow the pace of global change. But we are going to have to deal with climate change with some mix of mitigation and adaptation. We must acknowledge the interdependence of our social, economic and environmental systems and learn to anticipate and adjust to changes that will inevitably occur.

In its 2003 review of the Administration's draft strategic plan for the USGCRP, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) acknowledged the need for research to evaluate strategies to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of global change, and the Academy recommended that the plan be revised to enhance efforts to support decision-making. The Global Change Research and Data Management Act of 2007 reorients the program to accomplish these goals.

The NAS praised the Administration for including the development of decision support tools in the strategic plan, but criticized the plan for its failure to ''recognize the full diversity of decision makers'' and for failing to ''describe mechanisms for two-way communication with stakeholders.''

The Global Change Research and Data Management Act would address these criticisms by requiring the Administration to identify and consult with members of the user community in developing the USGCRP research plan. The bill would also mandate the involvement of the National Governors Association in evaluating the program plan from the perspective of the user community. These steps would help to ensure that the information needs of the policy community will be met as generously as the funding needs of the academic community.

The 1990 law outlined a highly specific organizational structure for the USGCRP. Our bill would eliminate this detailed organizational structure and provide the President with the flexibility to assemble an Interagency Committee and organizational structure that will best deliver the products Congress is requesting. Our bill would, however, retain many of the key features of current law—the requirements for a ten-year strategic plan, for periodic assessments of the effects of global change on the natural, social, and economic systems upon which we depend, and for increased international cooperation in global change science.

Our bill would establish a new interagency working group to coordinate federal policies on data management and archiving. Advances in computer, monitoring, and satellite technologies have vastly expanded our ability to collect and analyze data. We must do a much better job of managing and archiving these important data resources to support the work of current and future scientists and policymakers.

I would like to thank Mr. INGLIS from South Carolina for cosponsoring of this bill. Crafting a new approach for the USGCRP is a nonpartisan issue—increasing access to better and more relevant science is something that we all can agree will help us make better decisions.

As is clear from the current debate in response to the release of the IPCC report, we have yet to agree on how much more information, if any, is needed before we take actions to slow the effects of human activities on global change. These are tough policy questions that we will continue to wrestle with. This bill does not offer specific policy direction, but it does affirm the need for the continued strong federal support for global change research, and it does map out a new emphasis on the production of information needed to inform these important policy debates. As the world's leader in science and technology, it is incumbent on us to develop solutions that will protect our planet's resources and permit continued economic and social progress for our Nation and for the world.

UNITED STATES CARIBBEAN ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP—ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF IMPORTANCE

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I stand before you today to acknowledge the importance of the economic relationship between the United States and the Caribbean and to enter into the RECORD an article from the Carib News by Tony Best entitled ''A Picture of U.S.-Barbados Trade.''

For many years, the United States has cultivated a trade relationship with the Caribbean that goes far beyond rum. As a result, both the U.S. and the Caribbean have benefited. In recent years, trade in the areas of natural gas, garments, seafood, sodium hydroxide, peroxide, and textiles are noteworthy.

A focus on Trinidad and Tobago is particularly important because Trinidad and Tobago is an abundant energy producing nation with 60 percent of the oil reserves in the Caribbean. The U.S. receives the majority of its natural gas imports from this resource rich nation and imported over $1.7 billion of various energy commodities in 2005. That is remarkable.

In turn, the U.S. has exported approximately $491 million in industrial commodities such as computers, cell phone transmission equipment, and lab furnaces, just to name a few, to Trinidad and Tobago.

Another key trade area is with textiles. The nation of Haiti exported $169 million in garments, while the U.S. reciprocated with imports of $124 million.

The Caribbean U.S. trade relationship continues to grow and provide mutually beneficial benefits for both the U.S. and the Caribbean nations.

A PICTURE OF U.S.-BARBADOS TRADE

(By Tony Best)

How solid is your knowledge of U.S.-Caribbean trade? To find out take the trade test.

First question: Name the Caricom state which has a whopping $6 billion trade surplus with the U.S.?

Second query: Identify the country which exports tens of millions of dollars in live crustaceans—mostly aquatic species with a hard shell and many legs, such as lobsters, crabs and shrimp—every year but ends up with a $1 billion deficit with the U.S.

How about the nation whose beer exports went through the roof but its garment exports have fallen sharply in recent years. At the same time, this country bought large amounts of sodium hydroxide and peroxide from the U.S.

Then there is the coastal state, which often sells more sweaters, pullovers, vests and other garments to the U.S. than it buys American made T-shirts and tank tops?

Finally, list the island whose Cricket World Cup construction could boost its trade with the U.S.

If you identified Trinidad and Tobago as the Caribbean nation, one of the 16 Western Hemisphere nations with a healthy trade balance with the economic giant next door, you would be right on the money. But if your answer about the exporter of $45 million in lobsters and crabs to Florida and other parts of the U.S. as the Dominican Republic you would be away off base. Actually, the country was the Bahamas.

On the other hand Jamaica's textile industry was not a strong exporter in 2005, the latest year for which there was trade data. Exports of Jamaica-made garments plunged to $55.5 million down from $82 million the year before. However, it did export $23.5 million in beer, up by 82 percent over 2004 but bought $113 million in sodium hydroxide and peroxide, a 119 percent jump. It exported 60 percent more aluminum ores and concentrate to the U.S. in 2005 than it did in 2004. Those exports amounted to almost $69 million.

Like Jamaica, Haiti exports large amounts of textiles but unlike its Caricom partner, the French-speaking republic exported almost $100 million more in garments to the U.S. than it bought, $169 million in exports as compared with $124 million in imports of T-shirts, tank tops and knit or crocheted items. But the U.S. turned around and sold an extra $52.4 million in miscellaneous knitted or crocheted fabrics to Haiti.

Barbados, which will play host to the Cricket World Cup final in April, is experiencing a construction boom and analysts believe the major sporting event could trigger more trade with the U.S.

The picture of Caribbean-U.S. trade was sketched from U.S. Census Bureau data and published in a guide on U.S. trade in the Western Hemisphere distributed by World City, a journal that emphasizes global trade.

What the figures and analyses show, according to trade specialists, is that as Caribbean nations continue their efforts to diversify their economies, export trade with the U.S. hasn't come close to reducing the dominant role played by the U.S.

Energy-rich Trinidad and Tobago is by far the most successful Caribbean exporter and that's attributed to the fact that the twin-island nation is the largest natural gas supplier to the U.S., which bought $3.3 billion in liquefied natural gas from the ethnically diverse country. Trinidad controls 60 percent of Caribbean's oil reserves. In 2005, for instance, it sold $3.3 billion in petroleum gases to the U.S.; $1.2 billion in ammonia; $1.2 billion in crude oil; $972 million in non-crude oil; $714 million in acyclic alcohols; and $101 million in nitrogenous fertilizers.

On the other side of the trade ledger, the U.S. exported almost $250 million in machinery to Trinidad, over $46 million in electrical equipment for line telephony; $36 million in computers; and $29 million in ''transmission apparatus for cellular phones. Add another $28 million in industrial or lab furnaces and ovens; $84 million in low value shipments; and $18 million in iron or steel tubes and pipefittings and it would become clear that Trinidad and Tobago's industrial base is expanding.

In much the same way that Jamaica's oil imports from the U.S. skyrocketed to unbelievable levels in 2005, Barbados saw its refined oil imports rise by 127 percent, going to almost $18 million.

In the end, Barbados sold a mere $32 million in goods to the U.S. while it imported close to $400 million. Its deficit with the economic colossus in the north was $360 million. Between them their trade rose by 10 percent, reaching $424.7 million.

Guyana was another Caribbean state whose trade with the U.S. rose in 2005. Exports went up marginally, by less than two percent but the amount of U.S.-made goods jumped by 26 percent, reaching $175 million, less than half of what Barbados bought and close to 10 percent of Jamaica's imports of American commodities, which were valued at $1.6 billion.

Guyana's key exports were aluminum ores and concentrate valued at just under $50 million; $32 million in live crustaceans; and $11 million in diamonds. Interestingly, the top U.S. commodity exported to Guyana was listed as ''charitable items,'' with a value of about $42 million.

As for Guyana's neighbors, the Census Bureau's data stated that in 2005:

St. Lucia-U.S. trade rose by almost 40 percent in 2005, reaching $167 million. The U.S. had a surplus of $107 million.

U.S. trade with Antigua jumped by almost 50 percent, reaching $149 million. U.S. export went up by 51 percent and Antigua's by less than two percent.

St. Kitts-Nevis exported $49 million to the U.S.

That was more than the combined totals of Dominica $3.3 million, Grenada $5.8 million; St. Antigua's $4.4 million and Vincent's $15.6 million.

It exported more than Barbados did to the U.S. Electrical supplies, transformers and other power supplies, electric motors, generators and sets accounted for more than $36 million of the total.

The Bahamas, whose negative trade picture of $1 billion made it Caricom's largest, was third on the list of Western Hemisphere countries with large trade deficits.

Barbados was fourth on the trade deficit ridden partners of the U.S. followed by Haiti, Antigua, Belize, St. Lucia, Suriname, Grenada, Guyana, St. Kitts-Nevis, and St. Vincent.

RECOGNIZING WILL GORMAN FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Will Gorman, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 214, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Will has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Will has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Will Gorman for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RESOLUTION HONORING THE EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

HON. CHRISTOPHER P. CARNEY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. CARNEY. Madam Speaker, our Nation must remain vigilant against all threats to the homeland, including acts of terrorism and natural disasters. Department of Homeland Security employees stand willing, ready, and able to respond should catastrophe strike. They work long hours to deter, detect, and prevent acts of terrorism against the homeland.

As protectors of our Nation's borders, airports, seaports, rail lines, and other transit systems, they are always on call. Together with other agencies and departments of the Federal Government, they work with State, local, and tribal partners to enhance preparedness at all levels of Government.

On January 24th, the Department of Homeland Security marked its fourth anniversary. The Department, which has more than 208,000 employees, plays a vital role in ensuring the Nation's security and preparing the American people for future catastrophes.

In light of this anniversary, it is fitting and appropriate for the House of Representatives to take a moment to honor the employees of the Department for their contributions in protecting the homeland and the sacrifices they make to protect the American people.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MRS. PLACIDA PEÑA BARRERA

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Placida Peña Barrera on her reaching the milestone of her 80th birthday. She is one of the most inspiring members of the community in the City of Laredo and in the State of Texas.

Mrs. Placida Peña Barrera was born on July 13, 1926, in the City of Guerra in the great State of Texas. She moved to Roma, Texas, and commuted to Rio Grande City to attend high school, where she graduated in 1945. Five years later, she met Raymundo Barrera and together they raised six children. She was committed to being the best mother for her children.

With her husband's retirement, she decided to work as a clerk for the Laredo Independent School District, while also taking classes at Texas A&M International University. Placida graduated from Texas A&M International University in 1978, at the age of 52 with a degree in teaching.

Mrs. Barrera has worked consistently to uplift the lives of children in Laredo, Texas, through her 22 years of teaching at United Independent School District. While there, she established the Laredo chapter of the NASA's Young Astronauts program. For her work, she was awarded certificates of appreciation. She and her husband were also recognized by the Department of Journalism at the University of Texas at Austin for their publication of "U.S. Latinos and Latinas and World War Two Oral History."

After serving her community as an educator for nearly two decades, Mrs. Barrera retired in 2000, and is enjoying her time with her husband and their grandchildren. It is because of her work that the youth in the community were able to realize their potential to create a new and better future for themselves.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to have had the opportunity to recognize the dedication of Mrs. Placida Peña Barrera to her community, and ask you to join me in honoring her on her birthday. I thank you for your time.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARY BONO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mrs. BONO. Madam Speaker, yesterday, February 6, 2007, I was unable to attend suspension votes due to personal illness.

Were I present for the rollcall votes, I would have voted in the following manner for the following votes:

1. Rollcall Vote No. 76, H.R. 161, the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Monument Act of 2007—Vote: "Yea."

2. Rollcall Vote No. 77, H.R. 386, the Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District Conveyance Act of 2007—Vote: "Yea."

HONORING BEST BUDDIES

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I would like to call your attention to Best Buddies, an organization founded the same year I was first elected to Congress, in 1989. If Best Buddies has one message, it can be articulated by its founder, Anthony K. Shriver, who lives in Miami and has stated "that every person has a gift. And that every person can contribute." This message is emblematic of what makes America successful and, in turn, has made Best Buddies a thriving international organization serving thousands of deserving individuals every year.

The main concept behind this organization is simple, yet profoundly effective. Best Buddies establishes one-on-one friendships between people with and without intellectual disabilities. This simple concept allows those who are often excluded because of their differences, the opportunity to engage socially and become integrated into society. Best Buddies' efforts in our communities are commendable and I encourage all Americans to embrace this organization, its ideals and initiatives.

Best Buddies also opens doors and provides opportunities for people with disabilities. Through the support of this organization, many are able to attain jobs allowing them to earn an income, pay taxes and work alongside others in our workforce. For students, Best Buddies' initiatives at schools and colleges are helping the intellectually disabled integrate socially with their peers. In the past, many were often separated into special education classes making their social life somewhat isolated. To address this issue, Best Buddies has established several programs at different levels, from Best Buddies Middle Schools and a Peer Buddy system in High Schools, to Best Buddies Colleges. All three programs use the founding principles of this organization, allowing students with and without intellectual disabilities to create friendships and bonds that will last a lifetime.

The success of Best Buddies can be attributed to the indelible experiences, not only for those with intellectual disabilities, but for the many volunteers and buddies involved with this tremendous program. I am proud that the main headquarters is located in South Florida, in my Congressional district, and I look forward to supporting Best Buddies as it continues to grow and positively affect so many lives.

IN RECOGNITION OF GILBERT RIVERA

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ Madam Speaker, I rise today on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to recognize the life and contributions of a tremendous community advocate, businessman, and cherished friend, Gilbert Rivera.

In 1957, Gilbert Rivera migrated from Puerto Rico with his mother, father and twelve brothers and sisters to Bedford Stuyvesant with little money, and a dream to one day own his own business.

After graduating from Automotive High School and serving in the U.S. army, Gil started a small construction firm. But with his drive and determination, the company did not stay small for long and overtime grew to become one of the largest Hispanic owned contracting and building supply businesses in New York City. AM&G's diverse portfolio of projects includes landmarks admired by preservationists, such as Carnegie Hall, Erasmus Hall HS, and Columbia University as well as residential buildings on Fifth Avenue.

But despite his good fortune, Gil never forgot his roots. He stayed in Brooklyn, placing a premium on working to better neighborhoods and communities, and continuing to create jobs for young people.

One of the many things that made Gilbert Rivera unique was that he used his success to improve the lives of everyone he touched. He was a socially conscious, philanthropic man who was a loyal and generous supporter of the causes he believed in. He founded the Hispanic Business Group to advocate for greater business opportunities for Hispanic owned businesses with corporate America and was actively involved with numerous community organizations, including the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, Brooklyn Botanic Gardens, Brooklyn Bridge Park, and the scholarship fund for young Latinos.

During his time with us, he walked upon this earth and used the power of his beliefs and determination to instill hope and inspiration, not only to his family but in all who knew him. Therefore, Madam Speaker, I rise with my colleagues in the House of Representatives to

honor the life and contributions of Gilbert Rivera—a true American success story.

INTRODUCTION OF ''MORE WATER AND MORE ENERGY ACT''

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I am today again introducing legislation to facilitate the use of water produced in connection with development of energy resources for irrigation and other uses in ways that will not adversely affect water quality or the environment.

The bill is similar to one I introduced in the 109th Congress (as H.R. 5011) that passed the House last year but on which the Senate did not complete legislative action. It is cosponsored by Representative PEARCE of New Mexico, who is the ranking Republican member on the Natural Resources Committee's Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources and also by Representative EDWARDS of Texas. I greatly appreciate their support.

The bill's purpose is to help change an energy-industry problem into an opportunity, not just for oil and gas producers but for everyone else who would benefit from increased supplies of usable water.

Especially in the arid west, that covers everyone—not least our hard-pressed ranchers and farmers.

The focus of the bill is what's called ''produced water''—the underground water extracted in connection with development of energy sources like oil, natural gas or coalbed methane. It would do two things:

First, it would direct Reclamation and the USGS to identify the obstacles to greater use of produced water and how those obstacles could be reduced or eliminated without adversely affecting water quality or the environment.

Second, it would provide for federal help in building 3 pilot plants to demonstrate ways to treat produced water to make it suitable for irrigation or other uses, again without adversely affecting water quality or the environment.

At least one of these pilot plants would be in Colorado, Utah, or Wyoming. At least one would be in one of the three States of New Mexico, Arizona or Nevada. And there would be at least one each in California and Texas. This is to assure that, together, the plants would demonstrate techniques applicable to a variety of geologic and other conditions.

Under the bill, the federal government could pay up to half the cost of building each plant, but no more than $1 million for any one plant. No federal funds could be used for operating the plants.

The bill's goal is reflected in its title—the ''More Water and More Energy Act of 2006.''

The extent of its potential benefits was shown by the testimony of Mr. David Templet at a hearing on the similar bill of mine the House considered last year.

Mr. Templet testified in support of that bill on behalf of the Domestic Petroleum Council and several other groups, including the Colorado Oil & Gas Association. He noted that produced water is the most abundant byproduct associated with the production of oil and gas, with about 18 billion barrels being generated by onshore wells in 1995.

And he pointed out that if only an additional 1% of that total could be put to beneficial use, the result would be to make over 75 billion gallons annually available for use for irrigation or other agriculture, municipal purposes, or to benefit fish and wildlife.

Now, remember that in the West we usually measure water by the acre-foot—the amount that would cover an acre to the depth of one foot—and an acre-foot is about 32,8560 gallons, so an additional 75 billion gallons is more than 230,000 acre-feet—more water, indeed.

And at the same time making produced water available for surface uses, instead of just reinjecting it into the subsurface, can help increase the production of oil and gas.

At least year's hearing, this was illustrated by the testimony of Dr. David Stewart, a registered professional engineer from Colorado. He cited the example of an oil field in California from which an estimated additional 150 million barrels of oil could be recovered if water were removed from the subsurface reservoir. And he pointed out that where oil recovery is thermally enhanced, a reduced amount of underground water means less steam—and so less cost—is needed to recover the oil.

The potential for having both more water and more energy is also illustrated by the example of a project near Wellington, Colorado, that treats produced water as a new water resource. An oil company is embarking on the project to increase oil production while a separate company will purchase the produced water to supplement existing supplies, eventually allowing the town of Wellington and other water users in the area to have increased water for drinking and other purposes.

In view of its potential for leading to both ''more water'' and ''more energy'' I was pleased but not surprised that last year the Administration, through the Interior Department, testified that it ''agrees that the goals of the bill are commendable and the needs that could be addressed are real'' and that the roles the bill would assign to the Bureau of Reclamation and the USGS are consistent with the missions and expertise of those agencies.

In view of all this, Madam Speaker, I submit that this bill—and its promise of helping provide our country with both more water and more energy—deserves the support of the House.

For the benefit of our colleagues, here is a summary of the bill's provisions:

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS OF THE ''MORE WATER AND MORE ENERGY ACT''

Section One—provides a short title (the ''More Water and More Energy Act of 2007''), sets forth several findings regarding the basis for the bill, and states the bill's purpose: ''to facilitate the use of produced water for irrigation and other purposes without adversely affecting water quality or the environment, and to demonstrate ways to accomplish that result.''

Section Two—defines terms used in the bill.

Section Three—requires the Interior Department (through the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Geological Survey) to conduct a study to identify the technical, economic, environmental, legal, and other obstacles to increasing the extent to which water produced in connection with energy development can be used for irrigation and other purposes without adversely affecting water quality or the environment, and legislative, administrative, and other actions that could reduce or eliminate those obstacles. Results of the study are to be reported to Congress within a year after enactment.

Section Four—provides that within existing authorities and subject to appropriation of funds, the Interior Department is to provide financial assistance for development of facilities to demonstrate the feasibility, effectiveness, and safety of processes to increase use of produced water for irrigation, municipal or industrial uses, or other purposes without adversely affecting water quality or the environment. The section specifies that assistance is to be provided for at least one project in (1) Colorado, Utah, or Wyoming; (2) New Mexico, Arizona, or Utah; (3) California; and (4) Texas. Assistance to any facility cannot exceed $1 million and cannot be used for operation or maintenance. The section specifies that assistance under this bill can be in addition to other federal assistance under other provisions of law.

Section Five—requires the Interior Department to—(1) consult with the Department of Energy, EPA, and appropriate Governors and local officials; (2) review relevant information developed in connection with other research; (2) include as much of that information as Interior finds advisable in the report required by section 1; (3) seek the advice of people with relevant professional expertise and of companies with relevant industrial experience; and (4) solicit comments and suggestions from the public.

Section Six—specifies that nothing in the bill is to be construed as affecting—(1) the effect of any State law, or any interstate authority or compact, regarding the use of water or the regulation of water quantity or quality; or (2) the applicability of any Federal law or regulation.

Section Seven—authorizes appropriation of—(1) $1 million for the study required by section 1; and (2) $5 million to implement section 4.

IN RECOGNITION OF RIGHTING HISTORICAL UNTRUTHS, RUTH J. SIMMONS FORCES BROWN TO ATONE FOR INVOLVEMENT IN SLAVERY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD an article in the Washington Post discussing a Brown University committee's call for the institution to make amends by building a memorial, creating a center for the study of slavery and injustice and increasing efforts to recruit minority students, particularly from Africa and the West Indies. It is good to see the subject of slavery and the question of reparations being addressed with integrity and grace.

The article announces the findings of the university's Committee on Slavery and Justice. Appointed three years ago by Brown's president, Ruth J. Simmons, the committee recently investigated Brown's historical legacy, focusing specifically on its involvement in the transatlantic slave trade. The descendant of slaves and the first African American president of an Ivy League institution, Ruth Simmons has been steadfast in her commitment to uncovering the truths of Brown's past in ways that are academically and historically rigorous and just.

Arguably one of the most traumatic events in western history, the issue of slavery continues to instigate debate. Most recently questions of reparations, repairing the lives of those forced into the barbarous institution of slavery, often discussed in the form of repaying debts owed to descendants of slaves, have proven divisive at best and controversial at least. Although not called reparations, as reported in the article, the committee's recommendations are substantive and represent a form of repair. The committee's findings offer an example of the many ways that conversations and inquiries around reparations may be had in intelligent and sensible ways.

As stated in the article, the argument around reparations is not about a simple monetary gain, rather at the core of the debate is the need to acknowledge a part of our history that not anyone has fully come to terms with. It is important that we recognize and champion Brown's lead. This issue is central to who we are as a people and to who we are as a country.

[From the New York Times, Oct. 19, 2006]

PANEL SUGGESTS BROWN U. ATONE FOR TIES TO SLAVERY

(By Pam Belluck)

BOSTON, OCT. 18.—EXTENSIVELY DOCUMENTING *Brown University's* 18th-century ties to slavery, a university committee called Wednesday for the institution to make amends by building a memorial, creating a center for the study of slavery and injustice and increasing efforts to recruit minority students, particularly from Africa and the West Indies.

The Committee on Slavery and Justice, appointed three years ago by Brown's president, Ruth J. Simmons, a great-granddaughter of slaves who is the first black president of an Ivy League institution, said in a report: ''We cannot change the past. But an institution can hold itself accountable for the past, accepting its burdens and responsibilities along with its benefits and privileges.''

The report added, ''In the present instance this means acknowledging and taking responsibility for Brown's part in grievous crimes.''

The committee did not call for outright reparations, an idea that has support among some African-Americans and was a controversial issue at Brown several years ago. But the committee's chairman, James T. Campbell, a history professor at Brown, said he believed the recommendations ''are substantive and do indeed represent a form of repair.''

The committee also recommended that the university publicly and persistently acknowledge its slave ties, including during freshmen orientation. Dr. Campbell said he believed that the recommendations, if carried out, would represent a more concrete effort than that of any other American university to make amends for ties to slavery.

''I think it is unprecedented,'' Dr. Campbell said, adding that a few other universities and colleges have established memorials, study programs or issued apologies, but not on the scale of the Brown recommendations. It was not clear how much the committee's recommendations would cost to carry out.

''We're not making a claim that somehow Brown is uniquely guilty,'' Dr. Campbell said. ''I think we're making a claim that this is an aspect of our history that not anyone has fully come to terms with. This is a critical step in allowing an institution to move forward.''

Even in the North, a number of universities have ties to slavery. Harvard Law School was endowed by money its founder earned selling slaves for the sugar cane fields of Antigua. And at Yale, three scholars reported in 2001 that the university relied on slave-trading money for its first scholarships, endowed professorship and library endowment.

Dr. Simmons issued a letter in response to the report, soliciting comments from the Brown community and saying she had asked for the findings to be discussed at an open forum. She declined to give her own reaction, saying, ''When it is appropriate to do so, I will issue a university response to the recommendations and suggest what we might do.''

She said ''the committee deserves praise for demonstrating so steadfastly that there is no subject so controversial that it should not be submitted to serious study and debate.''

Initial reaction to the recommendations seemed to be appreciative.

''It sounds to me like this makes sense,'' said Rhett S. Jones, a longtime professor of history and Africana studies at Brown. ''I did not expect the committee would emerge saying, Well, you know, Brown should write a check.

''I never thought that was in the cards. I'm not sure I think it's even appropriate that a university write a check, even though it's pretty widely agreed on that Brown would not be where it is if it were not for slave money. These recommendations seem to me to be appropriate undertakings for the university.''

Brown's ties to slavery are clear but also complex. The university's founder, the Rev. James Manning, freed his only slave, but accepted donations from slave owners and traders, including the Brown family of Providence, RI. At least one of the Brown brothers, John, a treasurer of the college, was an active slave trader, but another brother, Moses, became a Quaker abolitionist, although he ran a textile factory that used cotton grown with slave labor.

University Hall, which houses Dr. Simmons's office, was built by a crew with at least two slaves.

''Any institution in the United States that existed prior to 1865 was entangled in slavery, but the entanglements are particularly dense in Rhode Island,'' Dr. Campbell said, noting that the state was the hub through which many slave ships traveled.

The issue caused friction at Brown in 2001, when the student newspaper, the Brown Daily Herald, printed a full-page advertisement produced by a conservative writer, listing ''Ten Reasons Why Reparations for Slavery Is a Bad Idea And Racist Too.''

The advertisement, also run by other college newspapers, prompted protests by students who demanded that the paper pay ''reparations'' by donating its advertising fee or giving free advertising space to advocates of reparations.

The Brown committee was made up of 16 faculty members, students and administrators, and its research was extensive.

''The official history of Brown will have to be rewritten, entirely scrapped,'' said Omer Bartov, a professor on the committee who specializes in studying the Holocaust and genocide.

The report cites examples of steps taken by other universities: a memorial unveiled last year by the University of North Carolina, a five-year program of workshops and activities at Emory University, and a 2004 vote by the faculty senate of the University of Alabama to apologize for previous faculty members having whipped slaves on campus.

Katie Zezima contributed reporting.

TRIBUTE TO PHILLIP BRADLEY BELCHER FOR THE AWARD OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Phillip Belcher, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1433, and by earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Phillip has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the years Phillip has been involved in scouting, he has earned 31 merit badges and held numerous leadership positions, serving as Senior Patrol Leader and Den Chief for Cub Scouts. Phillip is a member of the Tribe of Mic-O-Say and is in the Order of the Arrow.

For his Eagle Scout project, Phillip built concrete stairs at the Rolling Hills Community Church.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Phillip Belcher for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am proud to rise today to introduce the High School Athletics Accountability Act. As opportunities for girls and women to participate in sports and athletics have been made increasingly available, women's participation has grown exponentially. Nearly 2.6 million high school girls now participate in organized sports, as opposed to 294,015 in 1971 before Title IX was enacted. Athletic participation has brought with it confidence and camaraderie among young women, giving them memories and friends that will last a lifetime.

Despite our progress, persistent attacks against equality for women's sports require that we continue to protect the rights our nation's young women deserve. Currently high schools are not required to disclose any data on equity in sports, making it difficult for high schools and parents to ensure fairness in their athletics programs. The High School Athletics Accountability Act requires that high schools report basic data on the number of female and male students in their athletic programs and the expenditures made for their sports teams. The data will help high schools improve opportunities for girls in sports, and thereby help high schools and parents of schoolchildren foster fairness in athletic opportunities for girls and boys. Ultimately better information will encourage greater participation of all students in athletics.

Without information about how athletic opportunities and benefits are being allocated at the high school level, female students may be

deprived of their chance to play sports. For many young women, sports are often their ticket to higher education. A survey conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations indicates that female students receive 1.25 million fewer opportunities to play high school sports than do male students, which translate into many lost opportunities for athletic scholarships. Other studies show that student athletes tend to graduate at higher rates, perform better in school and are less likely to use drugs and alcohol. Women athletes also tend to have more confidence, better body image, and higher self-esteem than female non-athletes—critical attributes that help them succeed throughout their lives. We must give our schools the tools they need to identify inequities in their programs so that current and future generations of women can enjoy the benefits of sports.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort to help girls move toward equality in athletics at every level and in every community across the nation.

INTRODUCTION OF THE LIBERTY AMENDMENT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Liberty Amendment, which repeals the 16th Amendment, thus paving the way for real change in the way government collects and spends the people's hard-earned money. The Liberty Amendment also explicitly forbids the federal government from performing any action not explicitly authorized by the United States Constitution.

The 16th Amendment gives the federal government a direct claim on the lives of American citizens by enabling Congress to levy a direct income tax on individuals. Until the passage of the 16th amendment, the Supreme Court had consistently held that Congress had no power to impose an income tax.

Income taxes are responsible for the transformation of the federal government from one of limited powers into a vast leviathan whose tentacles reach into almost every aspect of American life. Thanks to the income tax, today the federal government routinely invades our privacy, and penalizes our every endeavor.

The Founding Fathers realized that ''the power to tax is the power to destroy,'' which is why they did not give the federal government the power to impose an income tax. Needless to say, the Founders would be horrified to know that Americans today give more than a third of their income to the federal government.

Income taxes not only diminish liberty, they retard economic growth by discouraging work and production. Our current tax system also forces Americans to waste valuable time and money on complacence with an ever-more complex tax code. The increased interest in flat-tax and national sales tax proposals, as well as the increasing number of small businesses that questioning the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) ''withholding'' system provides further proof that America is tired of the labyrinthine tax code. Americans are also increasingly fed up with an IRS that continues to ride roughshod over their civil liberties, despite recent ''pro-taxpayer'' reforms.

Madam Speaker, America survived and prospered for 140 years without an income tax, and with a federal government that generally adhered to strictly constitutional functions, operating with modest excise revenues. The income tax opened the door to the era (and errors) of Big Government. I hope my colleagues will help close that door by cosponsoring the Liberty Amendment.

HIRE A VETERAN WEEK

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Speaker, I rise to support H. Con. Res. 5, a resolution supporting ''Hire a Veteran Week.'' Supporting our troops should not be confined just to the battlefield; supporting our troops extends beyond their time in active duty. The liberties we enjoy today were earned through the bravery and sacrifice of patriotic Americans. America must never turn her back on her veterans.

Historically, unemployment of veterans is higher than in the civilian populations. This is a national tragedy. Veterans are hard-working, self-sacrificing patriots. Unfortunately, many employers simply do not understand the skills, capabilities, and tremendous value that veterans bring to any workplace. Through efforts such as ''Hire a Veteran Week,'' coupled with those of the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs and Labor, Veteran Service Organizations, and various non-profit groups, we will bring attention to the benefit of hiring veterans.

I am very pleased to see that the unemployment rate for veterans has fallen by one-third since 2005. Although the unemployment rate is still higher than the civilian population, these new numbers are clear evidence that progress is being made. As with most progress, we must not be content to rest on past accomplishments. I will not be happy until every veteran who wants to work is able to make a good living for themselves and their families.

To those companies that have hired a veteran, I say, ''thank you.'' I have never met a business owner who has regretted hiring a veteran, and appreciate their willingness to understand the value of our veterans and make room for them in their organization.

While I say it all the time, I can never say it enough. ''Thank you'' to the men and women of our Armed Forces for guaranteeing freedom for all Americans. May God bless you, and may God bless America.

IRAQ POLICY

HON. PETER HOEKSTRA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Madam Speaker, I believe that Congress should continue to encourage an open and robust debate about its Iraq policy. I found former Speaker Newt Gingrich's recent testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the situation in Iraq of particular interest. I would like to share it with my colleagues.

[From Gingrich Communications, Jan. 23, 2007]

THE COST OF DEFEAT IN IRAQ AND THE COST OF VICTORY IN IRAQ

TESTIMONY TO SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

(By Newt Gingrich)

Chairman Biden, Ranking Member Lugar, and members of the committee: Thank you for allowing me to testify.

This is an extraordinarily important series of hearings on a topic of enormous national importance.

The United States finds itself in a global struggle with the forces of Islamic fascism and their dictatorial allies.

From a fanatic American near Chicago who attempted to buy hand grenades to launch a personal Jihad in a Christmas mall, to 18 Canadians arrested for terrorist plots, to the Scotland Yard disruption of a plot in Britain to destroy ten civilian airliners in one day that if successful would have shattered worldwide confidence in commercial aviation and potentially thrown the world into a deep economic contraction.

We are confronted again and again with a worldwide effort to undermine and defeat the system of law and order which has created more prosperity and more freedom for more people than any previous system.

The threats seem to come in four different forms:

First, from individuals who are often self recruited and randomly inspired through the internet, television and charismatic social and religious friendships.

Second, from organized non state systems of terror of which Al Qaeda, Hezbollah and Hamas are the most famous. Additional groups have sprung up and provide continuity, training, and support for terrorism.

Third, from dictatorships in the Middle East most notably Iran and Syria who have been consistently singled out by the State Department (including in 2006) as the largest funders of state supported terrorism in the world. These dictatorships are investing in more advanced conventional weapons and in chemical and nuclear weapons.

Fourth, from a strange assortment of anti-American dictatorships including North Korea, Venezuela and Cuba.

This coalition of the enemies of freedom has growing power around the world. Its leaders are increasingly bold in their explicit hostility to the United States.

To take just two recent examples: Ahmadinejad of Iran has said ''[t]o those who doubt, to those who ask is it possible, or those who do not believe, I say accomplishment of a world without America and Israel is both possible and feasible.'' He has also said that Israel should be ''wiped off the map.'' Chavez of Venezuela, just last week in a joint appearance with the Iranian leader in Latin America, announced a multi billion dollar fund to help countries willing to fight to end ''American imperialism.''

Both of these statements were on television and are not subject to misinterpretation.

Similarly there are many web pages and other public statements in which various terrorists have described in great detail their commitment to killing millions of Americans. I described these publicly delivered threats in a speech on the fifth anniversary of 9/11 which I gave at the American Enterprise Institute. The text of this speech is attached as an appendix to this testimony.

These threats might be ignored if it were not for the consistent efforts to acquire nuclear and biological weapons by these enemies of freedom

I first wrote about the extraordinary increase in the threat to our civilization from nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists in Window of Opportunity in 1984. Attached to this testimony is a copy of the relevant pages from this book.

It is not accurate to suggest today that people were not aware of terrorism or were not warning about the threat to America's very survival prior to 9/11.

Many sophisticated observers and professional military and intelligence officers have been issuing these warnings for two decades.

What has been amazing to watch has been the absolute inability of our system of government to analyze the problem and react effectively.

It is this collapse of capacity for effectiveness which is at the heart of our current dilemma.

The United States is now in a decaying mess in Afghanistan and an obviously unacceptable mess in Iraq.

While this language may seem harsh to defenders of the current policy, it is sadly an accurate statement of where we are.

Efforts to think through and solve the problems of Afghanistan and Iraq have to be undertaken in a context of looking at a wider range of challenges to American leadership around the world and potentially to our very survival as a country. These larger challenges are described in my attached presentation entitled ''The Real World and The Real War''.

With these caveats I want to focus on the challenge of Iraq.

TWO VERY HARD PATHS FORWARD IN IRAQ

America is faced with two very hard paths forward in Iraq.

We can accept defeat and try to rebuild our position in the region while accommodating the painful possibility that these enemies of freedom in Iraq—evil men, vicious murderers, and sadistic inflictors of atrocities will have defeated both the millions of Iraqis who voted for legal self government and the American people and their government.

Alternatively we can insist on defeating the enemies of America and the enemies of the Iraqi people and can develop the strategies and the implementation mechanisms necessary to force victory despite the incompetence of the Iraqi government, the unreliability of Iraqi leaders, and the interference of Syria and Iran on behalf of our enemies.

Both these paths are hard. Both involve great risk. Both have unknowable difficulties and will produce surprise events.

Both will be complicated.

Yet either is preferable to continuing to accept an ineffective American implementation system while relying on the hope that the Iraqi system can be made to work in the next six months.

THE INHERENT CONFUSION IN THE CURRENT STRATEGY

There are three fundamental weaknesses in the current strategy.

First, the strategy relies on the Iraqis somehow magically improving their performance in a very short time period. Yet the argument for staying in Iraq is that it is a vital AMERICAN interest. If we are seeking victory in Iraq because it is vital to America then we need a strategy which will win even if our Iraqi allies are inadequate. We did not rely on the Free French to defeat Nazi Germany. We did not rely on the South Koreans to stop North Korea and China during the Korean War. When it mattered to American vital interests we accepted all the help we could get but we made sure we had enough strength to win on our own if need be.

President Bush has asserted that Iraq is a vital American interest. In January 2007 alone he has said the following things:

But if we do not succeed in Iraq, we will leave behind a Middle East which will endanger America in the future.

[F]ailure in one part of the world could lead to disaster here at home. It's important for our citizens to understand that as tempting as it might be, to understand the consequences of leaving before the job is done, radical Islamic extremists would grow in strength. They would be emboldened. It would make it easier to recruit for their cause. They would be in a position to do that which they have said they want to do, which is to topple moderate governments, to spread their radical vision across an important region of the world.

If we were to leave before the job is done, if we were to fail in Iraq, Iran would be emboldened in its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Our enemies would have safe havens from which to launch attacks. People would look back at this moment in history and say, what happened to them in America? How come they couldn't see the threats to a future generation?

The consequences of failure are clear: Radical Islamic extremists would grow in strength and gain new recruits. They would be in a better position to topple moderate governments, create chaos in the region, and use oil revenues to fund their ambitions. Iran would be emboldened in its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Our enemies would have a safe haven from which to plan and launch attacks on the American people. On September the 11th, 2001, we saw what a refuge for extremists on the other side of the world could bring to the streets of our own cities. For the safety of our people, America must succeed in Iraq.

Iraq is a central component of defeating the extremists who want to establish safe haven in the Middle East, extremists who would use their safe haven from which to attack the United States, extremists and radicals who have stated that they want to topple moderate governments in order to be able to achieve assets necessary to effect their dream of spreading their totalitarian ideology as far and wide as possible.

This is really the calling of our time, that is, to defeat these extremists and radicals, and Iraq is a component part, an important part of laying the foundation for peace.

The inherent contradiction in the administration strategy is simple. If Iraq matters as much as the President says it does (and here I agree with the President on the supreme importance of victory) then the United States must not design and rely on a strategy which relies on the Iraqis to win.

On the other hand if the war is so unimportant that the fate of Iraq can be allowed to rest with the efforts of a new, weak, untested and inexperienced government then why are we risking American lives.

Both propositions cannot be true.

I accept the President's analysis of the importance of winning in Iraq and therefore I am compelled to propose that his recently announced strategy is inadequate.

The second weakness is that the current strategy debate once again focuses too much on the military and too little on everything that has not been working. The one instrument that has been reasonably competent is the combat element of American military power. That is a very narrow definition and should not be expanded to include the non-combat elements of the Department of Defense which also have a lot of difficulties in performing adequately.

The great failures in the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns have been in non-combat power. Intelligence, diplomacy, economic aid, information operations, support from the civilian elements of national power. These have been the great centers of failure in America's recent conflicts. They are a major reason we have done so badly in Iraq. The gap between the President's recent proposals and the required rethinking and transforming of our non-combat instruments of power is simply breathtaking.

No military leader I have talked with believes military force is adequate to win in Iraq. Every one of them insists that the civilian instruments of power are more important than the combat elements. They all assert that they can hold the line for a while with force but that holding the line will ultimately fail if we are not using that time to achieve progress in nonmilitary areas.

This failure of the non-combat bureaucracies cannot be solved in Iraq. The heart of the problem is in Washington and that brings us to the third weakness in the current strategy.

The third weakness in the current strategy is its inability to impose war-time decision-making and accountability in Washington.

The interagency process is hopelessly broken.

This is not a new phenomenon. I first wrote about it in 1984 in Window of Opportunity when I asserted:

[W]e must decide what sort of executive-branch planning and implementation system are desirable.

At a minimum, we will need closer relationships between the intelligence agencies, the diplomatic agencies, the economic agencies, the military agencies, the news media and the political structure. There has to be a synergism in which our assessment of what is happening relates to our policies as they are developed and implemented. Both analyses and implementation must be related to the new media and political system because all basic policies must have public support if they are to succeed.

Finally, once the professionals have mastered their professions and have begun to work in systems that are effective and coordinated, those professionals must teach both the news media and the elected politicians. No free society can for long accept the level of ignorance about war, history, and the nature of power which has become the norm for our news media and our elected politicians. An ignorant society is on its way to becoming an extinct society.

In 1991 my concern for replacing the broken interagency system with an integrated system of effective coordination was heightened when General Max Thurmond who had planned and led the liberation of Panama told me unequivocally that the interagency process was broken.

In 1995 that process was reinforced when General Hartzog described the failures of the interagency in trying to deal with Haiti.

As early as 2002 it was clear that the interagency had broken down in Afghanistan and I gave a very strong speech in May 2003 at the American Enterprise Institute criticizing the process.

By the summer of 2003 it was clear the interagency was failing in Iraq and by September and October 2003 we were getting consistent reports from the field of the gap between the capability of the combat forces and the failure of the civilian systems.

No senior officer in the Defense Department doubts that the current interagency cannot work at the speed of modern war. They will not engage in a fight with the National Security Council or the State Department or the various civilian agencies which fail to do their job. But in private they will assert over and over again that the interagency system is hopelessly broken.

It was very disappointing to have the President focus so much on 21,500 more military personnel and so little on the reforms needed in all the other elements of the executive branch.

The proposals for winning in Iraq outlined below follow from this analysis.

KEY STEPS TO VICTORY IN IRAQ

1. Place General Petraeus in charge of the Iraq campaign and establish that the Ambassador is operating in support of the military commander.

2. Since General Petraeus will now have responsibility for victory in Iraq all elements of achieving victory are within his purview and he should report daily to the White House on anything significant which is not working or is needed

3. Create a deputy chief of staff to the President and appoint a retired four star general or admiral to manage Iraq implementation for the Commander in Chief on a daily basis.

4. Establish that the second briefing (after the daily intelligence brief) the President will get every day is from his deputy chief of staff for Iraq implementation.

5. Establish a War Cabinet which will meet once a week to review metrics of implementation and resolve failures and enforce decisions. The President should chair the War Cabinet personally and his deputy chief of staff for Iraq implementation should prepare the agenda for the weekly review and meeting.

6. Establish three plans: one for achieving victory with the help of the Iraqi government, one for achieving victory with the passive acquiescence of the Iraqi government, one for achieving victory even if the current Iraqi government is unhappy. The third plan may involve very significant shifts in troops and resources away from Baghdad and a process of allowing the Iraqi central government to fend for itself if it refuses to cooperate.

7. Communicate clearly to Syria and Iran that the United States is determined to win in Iraq and that any further interference (such as the recent reports of sophisticated Iranian explosives being sent to Iraq to target Americans) will lead to direct and aggressive countermeasures.

8. Pour as many intelligence assets into the fight as needed to develop an overwhelming advantage in intelligence preparation of the battlefield.

9. Develop a commander's capacity to spend money on local activities sufficient to enable every local American commander to have substantial leverage in dealing with local communities.

10. Establish a jobs corps or civil conservation corps of sufficient scale to bring unemployment for males under 30 below 10 percent (see the attached oped by Mayor Giuliani and myself on this topic).

11. Expand dramatically the integration of American purchasing power in buying from Iraqi firms pioneered by Assistant Secretary Paul Brinkley to maximize the rate of recovery of the Iraqi economy.

12. Expand the American Army and Marine Corps as much as needed to sustain the fights in Iraq and Afghanistan while also being prepared for other contingencies and maintaining a sustainable rhythm for the families and the force.

13. Demand a war budget for recapitalization of the military to continue modernization while defeating our enemies. The current national security budget is lower as a percentage of the economy than at any time from Pearl Harbor through the end of the Cold War. It is less than half the level Truman sustained before the Korean War.

14. The State Department is too small, too undercapitalized and too untrained for the demands of the 21st century. There should be a 50 percent increase in the State Department budget and a profound rethinking of the culture and systems of the State Department so it can be an operationally effective system.

15. The Agency for International Development is hopelessly unsuited to the new requirements of economic assistance and development and should be rethought from the ground up. The Marshall Plan and Point Four were as important as NATO in containing the Soviet Empire. We do not have that capability today.

16. The President should issue executive orders where possible to reform the implementation system so it works with the speed and effectiveness required by the 21st century.

17. Where legislation is needed the President should collaborate with Congress in honestly reviewing the systems that are failing and developing new metrics, new structures and new strategies.

18. Under our Constitution it is impossible to have this scale of rethinking and reform without deep support from the legislative branch. Without Republican Senator Arthur Vandenburg, Democratic President Harry Truman could never have developed the containment policies that saved freedom and ultimately defeated the Soviet Empire. The President should ask the bipartisan leaders of Congress to cooperate in establishing a joint Legislative-Executive working group on winning the war and should openly brief the legislative branch on the problems which are weakening the American system abroad. Only by educating and informing the Congress can we achieve the level of mutual understanding and mutual commitment that this long hard task will require.

Thank you for this opportunity to share these proposals.

HONORING FORT WORTH HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT ROSA NAVEJAR

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, today I'm honored to recognize the accomplishments of Rosa Navejar, winner of the 2006 Coors Hispanic Leader of the Year Award.

This wonderful award goes to a good woman who has had a great career. Thirty years ago, Rosa Navejar's professional journey began in the banking industry where her command of Spanish and her commitment to all customers set her apart. She always viewed her work as not just a job but as a mission. Throughout her career, she took time to mentor young people many of whom are now leaders themselves.

In 2001, Rosa left banking to make history as the first female Hispanic to lead the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. She helped revitalize and reshape the Chamber as a force for good throughout the community. Under her leadership, the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber has grown in size and influence. Perhaps the greatest example of this is the Hispanic Leadership Development Course. This unique program trains today the Hispanic leaders of tomorrow.

In life, there are those who seek to make a profit. And then there are people like Rosa Navejar: those who seek to make a difference. Thanks to her life, legacy and leadership, our community is stronger, better and more united than ever before.

Rosa Navejar truly represents the spirit of engagement, passion and success.

I congratulate my friend Rosa for this award. And I thank her for her efforts.

IN HONOR OF D. WAYNE HOLDEN & SHERMAN L. TOWNSEND

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize Mr. D. Wayne Holden and Mr. Sherman L. Townsend for their distinguished contributions to my home state of Delaware. In 2001, the Delaware Community Foundation established an award, now known as the Allen Cup Award, in order to honor the achievements of philanthropic leaders that posses the vision and drive to affect meaningful change throughout Delaware, and more specifically in the central and southern regions of my home state. I cannot think of two more deserving recipients.

Wayne Holden, a Dover, Delaware native, has always been deeply passionate about improving his community. Many of his philanthropic projects are carried out through The Thank You Fund, a donor-advised fund that he and his wife, Betsy, started through the Delaware Community Foundation (DCF). The Holdens are responsible for supporting numerous charitable organizations ranging from the Nature Conservancy to the DCF Youth Philanthropy Board.

Wayne has also played a pivotal role in preserving the quality of Delaware's communities. At a time when the Schwartz Center for the Arts and the Dover Art League experienced serious financial instability, Wayne donated his own leadership skills and financial resources in order to save these organizations. Through his work as First Vice President at Merrill Lynch in Dover, Wayne has been able to inspire others to create charitable legacies and thus furthered his own philanthropic mission of improving Delaware.

Sherman Townsend, has worked alongside Wayne on the Board of the Delaware Community Foundation and also in business as the First Vice President for Investment at Merrill Lynch. Throughout his many endeavors, Sherman has been successful at building a legacy of leadership and charity within his community. As an active board member of the DCF since 1986, he has helped the foundation grow and flourish. His noble efforts have secured $2 million grants, established a $3.3 million endowment and lead to partnerships with organizations such as the United Way.

Sherman's philanthropic spirit shines brightly in all aspects of his life. In addition to advising and helping his clients build charitable legacies, he and his family have established a fund which supports many important organizations such as, the Children's Beach House, Meals on Wheels, and the Bayhealth Foundation. Sherman has further demonstrated his dedication to the community through his involvement on the University of Delaware Board of Trustees, paying particular attention to the development of scholarships for students and the School of Nursing.

I could speak for hours and still not do these two men justice. Their contributions will

have a lasting impact upon our state and I am truly grateful for all they have done. I cannot think of two men more fit to receive the Allen Cup Award. I wish the Delaware Community Foundation warm wishes as they bestow this honor upon such deserving recipients.

INTRODUCTION OF THE OGLALA SIOUX TRIBE ANGOSTURA IRRIGATION PROJECT REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce the Oglala Sioux Tribe Angostura Irrigation Project Rehabilitation and Development Act. This legislation authorizes much-needed efficiency improvements to the irrigation facilities at the Angostura Unit, a Federal Bureau of Reclamation dam on the Cheyenne River in South Dakota. These improvements will restore critical water resources and promote economic development on the nearby Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

This bill provides important resources to the citizens of South Dakota and the Lakota people of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. It authorizes funds to carry out the Bureau of Reclamation's recommended improvements to the irrigation facilities at the Angostura dam. The dam provides substantial economic benefits to many South Dakotans. It provides irrigation to 12,218 acres of land which benefits ranchers and agricultural producers in the area, and it supports an important recreational boating and fishing industry which is enjoyed by many of our citizens.

Until now, however, the Angostura dam has failed to provide any of these economic benefits to the members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe who live just 20 miles downstream of the dam on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The Oglala Sioux Tribe has long relied on the resources provided by the Cheyenne River, which forms part of the northern boundary of its reservation. Long before the dam was constructed as part of the Pick-Sloan Missouri River Basin Project, the tribe relied on the river as an important economic resource. Since it was completed, however, the dam has taken an enormous toll on the tribe. The dam curbed the Cheyenne River's natural flow, reducing water quality on the reservation, diminishing natural riparian habitats, adversely impacting fish and wildlife and forcing important tribal agricultural enterprises to shut their doors.

The bill implements the Bureau of Reclamation's preferred alternative in its revised water management plan for the Angostura Unit, which calls for improved efficiencies in irrigation operations that will free up additional water resources for both existing water users and the tribe. In addition, the legislation would authorize the creation of a trust fund to compensate the tribe for the devastating economic impacts and loss of natural resources caused by the operation of the dam. The fund will be used to promote economic and infrastructure development on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and enhance the education, health and general welfare of the Oglala Lakota people.

I hope that my distinguished colleagues will take up and pass this legislation quickly. It will allow all of us in South Dakota to better use our natural resources, while keeping our solemn commitment to deal fairly and honorably with the Oglala Sioux Tribe and the Lakota people of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. I ask for your help and support in moving it forward.

McCLATCHY COMPANY SESQUICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the McClatchy Company's 150 years of journalism in Sacramento. On this date in 1857, the first issue of the Daily Bee was published in Sacramento marking the historic establishment of what is now the second largest newspaper company in the United States. Headquartered in Sacramento, the McClatchy Company and the Sacramento Bee have earned a legacy of providing reliable news for Sacramentans and the nation.

The rise of the McClatchy Company began with founding editor James McClatchy who moved west from New York during the height of the Gold Rush. The company's newspapers would be owned and operated by McClatchy family members for the next 130 years. James McClatchy helped craft the company's values of quality journalism, free expression and community service.

The Sacramento Bee was one of the first newspapers on the West Coast. In the newspaper's first editorial, McClatchy explained the name of the newspaper: ''The name of The Bee has been adopted as being different from that of any other paper in the state and as also being emblematic of the industry which is to prevail in its every department.'' Over the years, the McClatchy Company expanded on that name and characterization by establishing the Fresno Bee in 1922 and acquiring the Modesto Bee in 1927.

In recent times, the McClatchy Company has continued to expand its portfolio. In 2006, it acquired 32 daily newspapers when it purchased Knight Ridder. Today, the McClatchy Company is the second largest newspaper company in the United States and publishes 32 newspapers in 16 different states with unparalleled market success. These achievements were evident in 1999, when the McClatchy Company revenues exceeded $1 billion. By 2004, the McClatchy Company entered its 20th consecutive year of daily circulation growth, an achievement unmatched by any other newspaper company in the United States.

Throughout the decades, the McClatchy Company newspapers have been honored for their journalistic integrity through numerous awards. McClatchy's flagship newspaper, the Sacramento Bee, has earned numerous distinctions, including Pulitzer prizes for Editorial writing, Beat Reporting and twice for the Public Service Gold Medal.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to the McClatchy Company for its distinguished commitment to journalistic integrity and success throughout the years. As the McClatchy Company's colleagues and friends gather to honor their 150th anniversary, I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing them continued prosperity.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO WHMI RADIO, HOWELL, MI, ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the accomplishments of WHMI radio in Howell, Michigan, on the occasion of the station's 50th anniversary celebration scheduled for one week from today, on February 14, 2007.

Serving Livingston County since Valentine's Day, February 14, 1957, WHMI has grown through the past five decades into a modern broadcast station serving the fastest-growing county in Michigan.

Awards for broadcast excellence and community service fill a wall at the station's state-of-the-art facility, exhibiting innumerable testimonies to the commitment of WHMI and its service to its community, listeners, and supporters.

Today, under the ownership of Greg and Marcia Jablonski, WHMI broadcasts a classic rock hits format with local news, sports, traffic, and weather via a signal that covers all of Livingston County and reaching into the outskirts of the Detroit, Ann Arbor, Flint and Lansing markets.

When the station was launched in 1957, the Valentine's Day start-up was very fitting as the call letters, WHMI, stand for ''Heart of Michigan.'' The theme was drawn from an advertising campaign of the late 1950s that promoted Livingston County as a good place to live. WHMI has grown with the community and today reflects the pulse of Livingston County life. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring WHMI's 50th anniversary and in recognizing the station's contributions to the community it serves. The station, its owners and its staff are truly deserving of our respect and admiration.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDENT LOAN SUNSHINE ACT OF 2007

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the Student Loan Sunshine Act of 2007, a bill that aims to protect students and families from the predatory practices of unethical student loan lenders.

This comes on the heels of an announcement made last week by the Attorney General of New York, expanding an ongoing investigation into the activities of lenders and their relationships with colleges and universities across the country.

The allegations are quite troubling and are worthy of the attention of every state as well

as the Federal government in the interest of protecting students and limited taxpayer funds.

At issue here, Mr. Speaker, is the practice of lenders buying their way into colleges and universities through excessive ''inducements,'' or what some might term bribery.

Over the last year stories have surfaced with lenders offering exotic vacations to employees of colleges as well as offering to run student aid offices during high volume times.

These activities often result in lenders securing a coveted place on a college's ''preferred lender list.''

While some may see this as not so troubling or not the business of government, I beg to differ. When these activities directly result in limited options for students and families in deciding how to pay for college, I believe it is not only our business but our responsibility to do something.

Preferred lender lists are, for the most part, a non-issue with some colleges and universities. These institutions have indeed done the work of looking for the best deal in the interest of students and families and can justify why lenders have a place on their preferred lender list.

But this is the exception rather than the rule.

Entry into a school's preferred lender list means more than just having a coveted spot and a near guarantee of business, it means there are opportunities for lenders to prey on students and families and offer them private loans.

This problem is exacerbated by the fact that students are taking out loans in record number and doing so before having exhausted all of their options with federal student loans.

Why is this a problem? Private loans carry interest rates as high as 19 percent—compared to federal loans that are offered at 6.8 percent.

Something must be done about the practices by lenders to limit choice for students as well as encourage students to take out high-interest and risky private loans before exhausting all of their borrowing options through the federal programs.

To begin the process of addressing this, I join my colleagues from the Education and Labor Committee, RUBEN HINOJOSA, TIM BISHOP, JOE COURTNEY and JOHN YARMUTH in introducing the Student Loan Sunshine Act. The legislation: Requires full disclosure of special arrangements that lenders and institutions of higher education have to offer loan products at the institution; Bans lenders from offering gifts worth more than $10 to college employees, including travel, lodging, entertainment, and in-kind services that lenders provide to college financial aid offices; Requires full disclosure of the reasons why an institution of higher education has selected a lender for its ''preferred lender'' list, including any special arrangements the lender has with the school; Encourages borrowers to maximize their borrowing through the government's loan programs before taking out alternative loans and direct-to-consumer loans with higher interest rates.

The legislation has also been introduced by Senators EDWARD KENNEDY and RICHARD DURBIN in the Senate.

It is clear that we need to take steps to address the complex activities of lenders and their relationships with institutions. The Student Loan Sunshine Act is a necessary first step in starting the dialogue at the national level.

HONORING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, the theme of the 33rd annual Catholic Schools Week is ''Good News in Education,'' and there is much good news to share. There are over 7500 Catholic schools nationwide educating over 2 million students. Catholic high schools have an impressive graduation rate, with 97 percent of students going to college. Chicago boasts the second largest Catholic school system in the country, with 102,000 students and 5,400 teachers in 258 schools. In Chicago, as in other urban areas, Catholic schools play an important role in providing quality academic training to children and youth.

Yet, Catholic schools do more than educate, they emphasize discipline and service—two critical elements to raising responsible youth. In a society where many individuals place primacy on their personal needs, Catholic schools focus on preparing students to contribute to society by considering the needs of others. The close involvement of parents, a cornerstone of Catholic education, makes clear that education is not something that occurs only within the school house.

From Chicago to across this nation, Catholic schools have provided education and service to those who have been traditionally left behind in our society. They have taken in poor and neglected children and released to the nation leaders and champions. For this I want to commend the Catholic school system in America. It is a beacon of hope to neighborhoods and communities throughout the nation.

Catholic schools, however, like all other components of education, Madam Speaker, are facing difficult times. I would hope that as the year goes on and as we discuss and debate education, we commit to putting as many resources into education as we possibly can, ensuring the vitality of the institution, knowing that the investment secures the success of the future generations.

So I graciously thank our teachers, counselors, nuns, and priests in our Catholic schools for their years of dedicated service. I offer heartfelt appreciation for their enormous dedication to our nation's children, and I urge them to continue to strive for excellence as they prepare our young people's hearts and minds to lead the nation.

Again, I salute the Catholic schools for their outstanding contributions, and I would like to recite for the record those in my district, which are as follows:

Chicago Jesuit Academy, Divine Infant Jesus School, Divine Providence School, St. Bernardine School, St. Edmund School, St. Jerome School, St. Stanislaus Kostka, St. Elizabeth School, St. Helen School, Children of Peace School, Santa Lucia School, St. Pius V School, St. Therese School, Visitation School, St. Domitilla School, Ascension School, St. Giles School, St. Luke School.

St. Vincent Ferrer School, Old St. Mary's, St. Angela School, St. Malachy School, St. Nicholas Cathedral, San Miguel-Comer Campus, Frances Xavier Warde, Our Lady of the Westside, St. Catherine/St. Lucy, Immaculate Conception School, Archbishop Quigley Preparatory, Fenwick High School, Holy Trinity High School, St. Ignatius College Prep., St. Joseph High School, Trinity High School.

TRIBUTE ON THE RETIREMENT OF JUDGE DIANE KARPINSKI

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Judge Diane Karpinski of Ohio's 8th District Court of Appeals who is retiring after a long and illustrious career. Actually, Judge Karpinski has had two careers. After earning both bachelor's and master's degrees in English from Ohio State University, she taught for 19 years, first at Ohio State and later at Cleveland State University. Then, upon graduation from Cleveland-Marshall College of Law in 1980, Judge Karpinski worked for thirteen years as an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Ohio, trying more than 1600 cases at the trial level and practicing extensively in the appellate courts of five different districts in northern Ohio and at the Ohio Supreme Court. She was elected in 1995 to a six-year term as judge in the Court of Appeals of the 8th District of Ohio and subsequently re-elected to a second term. She was appointed as a visiting judge on the Ohio Supreme Court for a series of significant cases on automatic license suspension.

Judge Karpinski has demonstrated a strong commitment to her professions, first as a teacher and also as an attorney. Active in the Cuyahoga County Bar Association, she served on its Certified Grievance and the Court of Appeals Committees. Since 1998 she has been a Trustee of the Cuyahoga Bar. She is also a member of the Cleveland Bar Appellate Court Committee. In 2001, she was the first to chair a new committee of the Ohio State Bar Association: On the Independent Judiciary and Unjust Criticism of Judges. Because of her dual professions, she is often invited to lecture on appellate writing.

Judge Karpinski values her community and her Polish ethnic heritage. With her two sisters, Mercedes Spotts and Gloria Joy Battisti, she was a founding trustee of the East Side Catholic Shelter for the Homeless. For years she has sung in Our Lady of Peace Church Choir, and for one summer was its interim organist. After studying Polish at the Alliance of Poles for three years, she joined a team of teachers who traveled to Gdansk to teach English in the summer of 1993. Continuing her mother's interest in ethnic affairs, especially in the Cleveland Cultural Garden Federation, Judge Karpinski volunteered her services as its counsel. She was a long-time member of the American Polish Women's Club, has chaired the Budget and By-Laws Committees at Alliance of Poles Conventions, and served as Treasurer of Group 88 of the Polish Women's Alliance. For two years she was a judge for the Polonia Foundation Scholarship Committee and currently is a member of the Foundation Board.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in recognizing the great accomplishments of Judge Diane Karpinski and her tremendous commitment to the people of Northeast Ohio. Let us wish her tremendous success in her

upcoming third career as retired citizen, where she is sure to continue serving the people with energy, distinction, and talent.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 5, 2007

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 35—Supporting the goals and ideals of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. While we do not yet have a cure, and HIV/AIDS continues to consume the lives of Black people, their values and their worth here in the United States and in other parts of the world, we know Black AIDS Day can help to mobilize our communities to help shift and turn this epidemic around.

In the past decades and sadly still today, HIV infection rates continue to escalate at an alarming pace among Black men and women as shown by reports year after year. Although Blacks make up around 13 percent of the population of the United States, they represent 49 percent of the total AIDS cases reported in this country, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Sixty-four percent of all American women living with HIV/AIDS are black, and this disease has become the leading cause of death for black women ages 25 to 34. Every day, 72 African Americans are infected with HIV in the U.S.

While poverty plays a role and access to health care and lack of information are factors, we cannot deny that the main reason for this plague is the silence, the closed-mouth social conservatism, of a people still ill at ease discussing sexuality, homosexuality, drug use and other realities. Instead, we mouth piety, prayers and platitudes.

We now recognize National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, as declared six years ago by the Community Capacity Building Coalition, an affiliate of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and we cannot remain still. We must work together to ensure that programs for prevention remain adequately funded and that programs such as Ryan White CARE Act can be used for early detection of HIV so we can use all tools available to us to fight this epidemic. Everyone should be encouraged to get tested for HIV, learn more about the disease and how it is transmitted, seek medical advice if infected, and become involved in local community efforts to educate people and fight this disease.

It is also important that Blacks are at the forefront of clinical research to achieve culturally appropriate results for treatment in our communities. Some of the biggest challenges we face, particularly in the Black community today are the misperceptions of and lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS, and fear related to clinical research.

I encourage my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus and the rest of Congress to stay committed in their effort in whatever way possible to combat this epidemic which has taken too many lives, too early, and unnecessarily.

INTRODUCTION OF ROCKY FLATS SPECIAL EXPOSURE COHORT ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I am today again introducing a bill to make it more likely that red tape and missing documents will not frustrate Congress's attempt to provide compensation and care for some nuclear-weapons workers made sick by on-the-job exposure to radiation.

The bill is cosponsored by my colleague from Colorado, Mr. PERLMUTTER. I appreciate his support and that of Senator KEN SALAZAR, who is introducing a similar bill in the Senate.

The bill would revise the part of the Energy Employees Occupational Injury Compensation Act (''the Act'') that specifies which covered workers are part of what the law designates as the ''Special Exposure Cohort.''

The revision would extend this ''special exposure cohort'' status to Department of Energy employees, Department of Energy contractor employees, or atomic weapons employees—all terms defined by the current law—who worked at the Rocky Flats site, in Colorado, for at least 250 days prior to January 1, 2006.

The result would be to help provide the Act's benefits to any of those workers who contracted a radiation-linked cancer specified in the Act after beginning employment at Rocky Flats.

As the law now stands, before a Rocky Flats worker suffering from a covered cancer can receive benefits, it must be established that the cancer is as likely as not to have resulted from on-the-job exposure to radiation.

That sounds like a reasonable requirement—and it would be appropriate for Rocky Flats if we had adequate documentation of radiation exposures for the years when it was producing nuclear-weapons components as well as for the more recent time when DOE and its contractors have been working to clean it up and prepare it for closure.

However, in fact there were serious shortcomings in the monitoring of Rocky Flats workers' radiation exposures and in the necessary recordkeeping—to say nothing of the slowness of the current administrative process for making the required determinations concerning links between exposure and employment.

So there is a risk that a significant number of Rocky Flats workers who should be able to benefit from the Act will not obtain its benefits in a timely manner or will be denied them entirely.

The bill would prevent this miscarriage of justice, by recognizing that Rocky Flats workers have been plagued by the same kinds of administrative problems that entangled workers at some other locations—administrative problems that were addressed through inclusion in the Act of the provisions related to the ''Special Exposure Cohort.''

My understating of the need for this bill came from meeting with Rocky Flats workers and their representatives and by consulting experts. I have particularly benefited from the great experience and expertise of Dr. Robert Bistline. Dr. Bistline has served as Program Manager of the Energy Department's Oversight of Radiation Protection Program at the Rocky Flats field office and has few if any peers in terms of his understanding of the problems addressed by the bill.

In particular, the bill reflects these aspects of Rocky Flats history—

Many worker exposures were unmonitored over the plant's history. For some, estimated doses were assigned, and radiation exposures for many others are missing. As a result, there are at best incomplete records and many inaccuracies in the exposure records that do exist.

No lung counter for detecting and measuring plutonium and americium in the lungs existed at Rocky Flats until the late 1960s. Without this equipment the very insoluble oxide forms of plutonium cannot be detected and a large number of workers had inhalation exposures that went undetected and unmeasured.

Exposure to neutron radiation was not monitored until the late 1950s and most of those measurements through 1970 have been found to be in error. In some areas of the plant the neutron doses were as much as 2 to 10 times as great as the gamma doses received by workers but only gamma doses were recorded.

As a result of these and other shortcomings, some Rocky Flats workers have been denied compensation under the Act despite having worked with tons of plutonium and having known exposures leading to serious health effects.

Since early in my tenure in Congress I have worked to make good on promises of a fairer deal for the nuclear-weapons workers who helped America win the Cold War. That was why enactment and improvement of the compensation Act has been one of my top priorities. I saw this as a very important matter for our country—and especially for many Coloradans because our state is home to the Rocky Flats site, which for decades was a key part of the nuclear-weapons complex.

Now the site's military mission has ended and the last of the Rocky Flats workers have completed the job of cleaning it up for closure. And just as they worked to take care of the site, we in Congress need to take care of them and the others who worked there in the past.

That was the purpose of the compensation act. I am very proud that I was able to help achieve its enactment, but I am also aware that it is not perfect. The bill being introduced today will not remedy all the shortcomings of the current law, but it will make it better.

For the benefit of our colleague, I am attaching an outline of the bill's provisions.

OUTLINE OF ROCKY FLATS SPECIAL COHORT BILL

Section 1: Short Title, Findings, and Purpose

Subsection (a) provides a short title, ''Rocky Flats Special Cohort Act.''

Subsection (b) sets forth several findings regarding the need for the legislation.

Subsection (c) states the bill's purpose: ''to revise the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Act of 2000 to include certain past Rocky Flats workers as members of the special exposure cohort.''

Section 2: Definition of Member of Special Exposure Cohort

Subsection (a) amends section 3621(14) of the Energy Employees Occupational Injury Compensation Act (EEOICPA). The effect of the amendment is to provide that a person

employed by the Department of Energy or any of its contractors for an aggregate of at least 250 work days at Rocky Flats before January 1, 2006 would be a ''member of the Special Exposure Cohort.'' Under EEOICPA, a member of the special exposure cohort suffering from one of the cancers specified in the Act is covered by the Act if the cancer was contracted after the person began employment at a covered facility.

Subsection (b) provides that someone employed by the Energy Department or any of its contractors for an aggregate of at least 250 work days at Rocky Flats before January 1, 2006 may apply for compensation or benefits under EEOICPA even if the person had previously been denied compensation or benefits under the Act. This is to make clear that the subsection (a)'s change in the law will apply to people who had applied previously.

COMMISSION TO STUDY THE POTENTIAL CREATION OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN LATINO ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 512, a bill introduced by my good friend, Rep. XAVIER BECERRA (D–CA), expressing Congressional support for the establishment of a commission to study the potential creation of a National Museum of the American Latino.

As a Hispanic American and a former chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, I know the importance of creating a museum to honor and preserve the history of Latino Americans. We need to celebrate the diverse history, art, music, and literature of the Latino culture. We also need to make strides in increasing public awareness of the important contributions that Latino Americans have made in the United States. The establishment of this commission and subsequent museum would be an important step towards reaching this goal.

Mr. Speaker, as you are well aware, according to the United States Census Bureau, Hispanic Americans constitute fourteen percent of the total United States population and are the largest growing minority with a current population of 41.3 million Americans. In fact, the 16th Congressional District of El Paso, Texas is eighty-two percent Hispanic American. El Pasoans have a rich history which contributes to the tapestry of American culture.

The establishment of a National Museum of the American Latino is important to my constituents and Hispanics across the nation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in supporting this important bill.

CONGRATULATING LORRAINE C. MILLER ON HER APPOINTMENT AS CLERK TO THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Lorraine Miller on her years of outstanding service and much deserved appointment as Clerk to the U.S. House of Representatives. I have known Lorraine Miller a number of years, and am certain that she will prove to be an outstanding Clerk.

On February 15, 2007, Lorraine Miller will be sworn in as the 35th Clerk of the House, and notably the first African-American Clerk. In this position she will be responsible for the legislative operations of the House floor, the voting system, oversight, and supervision of more than 100 staffers.

A native of Forth Worth, and a fellow Texan, Lorraine Miller began her career with the U.S. House with the office of then Majority Leader, Jim Wright. Following her service with Speaker Wright, she went onto serve on the staffs of Speaker Foley and Congressman JOHN LEWIS. In addition, during the Clinton Administration she served as Deputy Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs for the House. She has also held high-level positions at the Federal Communications Commission and the Federal Trade Commission. Currently, Lorraine Miller serves as a Senior Advisor to Speaker PELOSI, and president of the Washington D.C. chapter of the NAACP.

Lorraine Miller has dedicated her career to public service and I can think of no one better to serve as Clerk. I am certain that she will serve the House with distinction. The recognition she is receiving is imminently well deserved, and I wish her all the success in the years ahead.

HERMOSA BEACH TURNS 100

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, many congressional districts have fine beaches, but the town of Hermosa Beach in my district is the official birthplace of surfing in California.

Originally purchased in 1900 by the Hermosa Beach Land and Water Company, the area consisted of little more than giant sand dunes and grain fields. It has since developed into a serene beach community with a population of over 18,000 residents, hundreds of shops, fine restaurants and a quiet, laid-back beach atmosphere.

Hermosa Beach celebrates its centennial this year, and will observe this most important milestone with a series of events, including a ribbon cutting-ceremony for the newly expanded Museum of the Hermosa Beach Historical Society; a luncheon in honor of longtime Hermosa Beach residents; a car show displaying automobiles from each decade, and the on-going ''100 Acts of Beautification'' Project—chaired by Public Works Commissioner and former member of my staff Michael DiVirgilio.

Hermosa Beach is the site of the Surfer's Walk of Fame, where the sport's pioneers and innovators are honored. I am a proud member of the Congressional Surfer Caucus and display my local ''Jane's'' surfboard in my Washington office. As the Beach Boys sang in 1963, ''Catch a wave and you're sitting on top of the world / Don't be afraid to try the greatest sport around.''

Jazz music is also a key component of Hermosa Beach's culture. In the 50's and 60's, the Lighthouse Cafe on Pier Avenue was the premier jazz club in the Los Angeles area. It attracted fans and performers from all over the world, including some of the foremost interpreters of the West Coast school of cool jazz like Chet Baker and Gerry Mulligan. The Hermosa Beach Jazz Walk is a living, breathing standing ovation to those legendary artists who enriched the region with their mellow sounds. This historic musical heritage is celebrated each year with the Annual Jazz Stroll Dedication and concert.

But Hermosa Beach is much more than the sum of its remarkable parts, it is also home to many hardworking, talented and conscientious individuals and families. I am thinking of people like the kids from Hermosa Valley School—now college age!—who joined me in Manhattan shortly after 9/11 to present a memorial quilt at the New York Firefighters Museum, or civic leaders like retiring Mayor Sam Edgerton, Councilmember and former Mayor J.R. Revitzsky, the police and firefighters, and so many others whose thoughtful planning and vision have allowed the city to flourish year after year.

It is an honor for me to represent this remarkable coastal community, and a privilege to celebrate 100 years of Hermosa Beach history.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, on Monday, February 5, I was unavoidably detained in Colorado and so was not present for two votes:

Rollcall No. 74, on passage of H. Res. 94—Supporting the goals and ideals of National Consumer Protection Week; had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

Rollcall No. 75, on passage of H. Con. Res. 35—Supporting the goals and ideals of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day; had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO THE ORGANIZATION OF CHINESE AMERICANS

HON. JASON ALTMIRE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 7, 2007

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, I would like to wish the membership of the Organization of Chinese Americans a healthy and happy New Year for the year 4705, the year of the pig.

The New Year is a time for reflection and thanksgiving for the joys of life and loved ones and I am thankful for the richness that this organization brings to my region. Chinese Americans have made great contributions to western Pennsylvania and to our Nation as a whole and I am honored for this opportunity to wish them a wonderful year in 4705.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in wishing the members of the Organization of Chinese Americans a very happy and prosperous New year.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, February 8, 2007 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY 9

9:30 a.m.
Armed Services
To receive a briefing on the Department of Defense Inspector General's report on the activities of the Office of Special Plans prior to the war in Iraq; to be followed by a closed session in SR–232A.
SR–222

FEBRUARY 12

2:30 p.m.
Energy and Natural Resources
Energy Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine recommendations on policies and programs to improve the energy efficiency of buildings and to expand the role of electric and gas utilities in energy efficiency programs.
SD–366

FEBRUARY 13

9:45 a.m.
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
To hold hearings to examine challenges and opportunities relating to rural development.
SR–328A

10 a.m.
Budget
To hold hearings to examine the President's Fiscal Year 2008 budgetary proposals for the Department of Health and Human Services.
SD–608

Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine the ''Stern Review of the Economics of Climate Change'' examining the economic impacts of climate change and stabilizing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.
SD–106

Environment and Public Works
To hold hearings to review and report the recommendations of the United States Climate Action Partnership Report.
SD–406

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings to examine The Healthy Families Act, focusing on safeguarding Americans' livelihood, families and health with paid sick days.
SD–430

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the Homeland Security Department's budget request for Fiscal Year 2008.
SD–342

Appropriations
Interior and Related Agencies Subcommittee
To hold oversight hearings to examine the Outer Continental Shelf oil and natural gas royalty management by the Department of the Interior.
SD–124

Small Business and Entrepreneurship
To hold hearings to examine alternatives for easing small business health care costs.
SR–428A

FEBRUARY 14

10 a.m.
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the semi-annual monetary policy report to the Congress.
SD–106

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Business meeting to consider Mental Health Parity Act of 2007, Head Start for School Readiness Act, and any pending nominations.
SD–430

Judiciary
To hold hearings to examine judicial security and independence.
SH–216

Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Trade, Tourism, and Economic Development Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine overseas sweatshop abuses, focusing on their impact on U.S. workers and the need for anti-sweatshop legislation.
SR–253

2:30 p.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Fisheries and Coast Guard Subcommittee
To hold an oversight hearing to examine recent setbacks to the Coast Guard Deepwater Program.
SR–253

FEBRUARY 15

9:15 a.m.
Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Ryan C. Crocker, of Washington, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Iraq, and William B. Wood, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.
SD–628

9:30 a.m.
Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the current and future readiness of the Army and Marine Corps; there is a possibility of a closed session in SR–222 following the open session.
SH–216

Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Aviation Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine the Administration's proposal to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (Part 1).
SR–253

Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2008 for the Department of the Interior.
SD–366

10 a.m.
Finance
To hold hearings to examine the Administration trade agenda for 2007.
SD–215

FEBRUARY 28

2:30 p.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Science and Space Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine the President's budget for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).
SR–253

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

House Committees ordered reported 16 sundry measures.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1655–S1730

Measures Introduced: Fifteen bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 510–524, and S. Res. 74–75. **Pages S1709–10**

Measures Passed:

Congratulating Super Bowl Champions Indianapolis Colts: Senate agreed to S. Res. 75, congratulating the Indianapolis Colts on their victory in Super Bowl XLI. **Page S1726**

Casey Nomination: Senate began consideration of the nomination of General George W. Casey, Jr., to be Chief of Staff, United States Army. **Page S1684**

A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the nomination at approximately 11 a.m., on Thursday, February 8, 2007; that there be 30 minutes of debate time remaining on the nomination with the time equally divided and controlled between Senators Levin and McCain, or their designees; and that upon the use, or yielding back of time, Senate vote on the confirmation of the nomination. **Pages S1726–27**

Continuing Appropriations: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that Senate begin consideration of H.J. Res. 20, making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2007, following the vote on the confirmation of the nomination of General George W. Casey, Jr., to be Chief of Staff, United States Army. **Pages S1726–27**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

J. Michael McConnell, of Virginia, to be Director of National Intelligence.

19 Air Force nominations in the rank of general.

1 Army nomination in the rank of general.

1 Navy nomination in the rank of admiral.

Routine lists in the Air Force. **Page S1730**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

2 Army nominations in the rank of general.

1 Marine Corps nomination in the rank of general.

1 Navy nomination in the rank of admiral.

Routine lists in the Air Force, Army. **Pages S1727–30**

Messages from the House: **Page S1709**

Messages Referred: **Page S1709**

Executive Communications: **Page S1709**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page S1710**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S17110–17**

Additional Statements: **Page S1708**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S1717–18**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S1718**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m., and adjourned at 6:59 p.m., until 10 a.m., on Thursday, February 8, 2007. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S1726.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

FARM BILL PROPOSAL

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the Department of Agriculture farm bill proposal, after receiving testimony from Michael Johanns, Secretary of Agriculture.

LENDING PRACTICES AND HOME FORECLOSURES

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine predatory lending practices and home foreclosures, after

receiving testimony from Jesse L. Jackson, Sr., Rainbow PUSH Coalition, and Delores King, both of Chicago, Illinois; Harry Dinham, National Association of Mortgage Brokers, McLean, Virginia; Jean Constantine-Davis, AARP Foundation, Hilary Shelton, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and Douglas G. Duncan, Mortgage Bankers Association, all of Washington, D.C.; Martin Eakes, Center for Responsible Lending and Center for Community Self-Help, Durham, North Carolina; and Amy Womble, Pittsboro, North Carolina.

BUDGET: FISCAL YEAR 2008

Committee on the Budget: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the President's Fiscal Year 2008 budget proposal, after receiving testimony from Robert J. Portman, Director, Office of Management and Budget.

CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine climate change research and scientific integrity, after receiving testimony from William Brennan, Acting Director, U.S. Climate Change Science Program, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce; Richard A. Anthes, University Corporation for Atmospheric Research, Boulder, Colorado, on behalf of the National Academies; Rick Piltz, Government Accountability Project, Washington, D.C.; F. Sherwood Rowland, University of California, Irvine, Departments of Chemistry and Earth System Science; Thomas R. Knutson, Princeton, New Jersey; and James R. Mahoney, Ashburn, Virginia.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2008 for the Department of Energy, after receiving testimony from Samuel W. Bodman, Secretary of Energy.

GLOBAL WARMING AND WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Subcommittee on Private Sector and Consumer Solutions to Global Warming and Wildlife Protection concluded a hearing to examine global warming and wildlife, focusing on informing the Committee and the United States Senate on issues related to these issues, after receiving testimony from Roger Mann, College of William and Mary Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Gloucester Point; David H. Stalling, Trout Unlimited, Missoula, Montana; A. Lee Foote, University of Alberta, Alberta, Canada; Brendan P. Kelly, University of Alaska, Fairbanks; Thomas E. Lovejoy, H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics, and the Environment, Washington, D.C.

BUDGET

Committee on Finance: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the President's Fiscal Year 2008 budget proposal for the Department of Health and Human Services, after receiving testimony from Michael O. Leavitt, Secretary of Health and Human Services.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: On January 24, 2007, Committee announced the following subcommittee assignments for the 110th Congress:

Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations: Senators Levin (Chairman), Carper, Pryor, Obama, McCaskill, Tester, Coleman, Coburn, Domenici, Warner, and Sununu.

Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia: Senators Akaka (Chairman), Levin, Carper, Pryor, Landrieu, Voinovich, Stevens, Coburn, and Warner.

Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security: Senators Carper (Chairman), Levin, Akaka, Obama, McCaskill, Tester, Coburn, Stevens, Voinovich, Domenici, and Sununu.

Ad Hoc Subcommittee on State, Local, and Private Sector Preparedness and Integration: Senators Pryor (Chairman), Akaka, Landrieu, Obama, McCaskill, Tester, Sununu, Voinovich, Coleman, Domenici, and Warner.

Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Disaster Recovery: Senators Landrieu (Chairman), Carper, Pryor, Stevens, and Domenici.

Senators Lieberman and Collins are ex officio members of each of the Subcommittees.

ELECTRONIC VOTING

Committee on Rules and Administration: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the hazards of electronic voting systems, focusing on the accuracy, reliability, and security of voting machines and technology, including proposals for a voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT), after receiving testimony from Senator Nelson (FL); Representative Holt; Conny B. McCormack, Los Angeles County, Norwalk, California; David J. Becker, People for the American Way, and Warren Stewart, VoteTrustUSA, both of Washington, D.C.; Britain J. Williams, Kennesaw State University, Tucker, Georgia; Dan S. Wallach, Rice University, Houston, Texas; Connie Schmidt, Election Consulting Services, Spring Hill,

Kansas; and Michael Waldman, New York University School of Law Brennan Center for Justice, New York, New York.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 41 public bills, H.R. 866–906; 2 private bills, H.R. 907–908; and 8 resolutions, H.J. Res. 23; H. Con. Res. 60; and H. Res. 133–138 were introduced.

Pages H1342–44

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H1344–45**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 365, to provide for a research program for remediation of closed methamphetamine production laboratories (H. Rept. 110–8) and

H. Res. 133, providing for consideration of the bill H.R. 547, to facilitate the development of markets for alternative fuels and Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel fuel through research, development, and demonstration and data collection (H. Rept. 110–9).

Page H1342

Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the guest Chaplain, Rev. Kenn Hucks, Pastor, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lebanon, Tennessee. **Page H1275**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act of 2007: H.R. 365, to provide for a research program for remediation of closed methamphetamine production laboratories, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 426 yeas to 2 nays, Roll No. 78; **Pages H1278–84, H1302**

Recognizing the work and accomplishments of Mr. Britt "Max" Mayfield, Director of the National Hurricane Center's Tropical Prediction Center upon his retirement: H. Res. 72, to recognize the work and accomplishments of Mr. Britt "Max" Mayfield, Director of the National Hurricane Center's Tropical Prediction Center upon his retirement; **Pages H1284–86**

Commending the University of Nebraska-Lincoln volleyball team for winning the NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship: H. Res. 99, amended, to commend the University of Nebraska-Lincoln volleyball team for winning the NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Championship; **Pages H1286–88**

Recognizing the African American spiritual as a national treasure: H. Res. 120, to recognize the African American spiritual as a national treasure, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 426 yeas with none voting "nay," Roll No. 79; **Pages H1288–91, H1302–03**

Providing for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 through July 31, 2007: Concur in Senate amendments to H.R. 434, to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 through July 31, 2007—clearing the measure for the President; **Pages H1291–92**

Recognizing and honoring Benny Parsons and expressing the condolences of the House of Representatives to his family on his death: H. Res. 69, to recognize and honor Benny Parsons and to express the condolences of the House of Representatives to his family on his death; **Pages H1292–93**

Congratulating the National Football League champion Indianapolis Colts for winning Super Bowl XLI: H. Res. 130, to congratulate the National Football League champion Indianapolis Colts for winning Super Bowl XLI and for bringing the City of Indianapolis and the State of Indiana their first Lombardi Trophy; **Pages H1293–97**

Amending the Antitrust Modernization Commission Act of 2002, to extend the term of the Antitrust Modernization Commission and to make a technical correction: H.R. 742, to amend the Antitrust Modernization Commission Act of 2002, to extend the term of the Antitrust Modernization Commission and to make a technical correction; **Pages H1297–99**

Gerald W. Heaney Federal Building and United States Courthouse and Customhouse Designation Act: H.R. 187, to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse and customhouse located at 515 West First Street in Duluth,

Minnesota, as the "Gerald W. Heaney Federal Building and United States Courthouse and Customhouse"; **Pages H1299–H1300**

Repealing a prohibition on the use of certain funds for tunneling in certain areas with respect to the Los Angeles to San Fernando Valley Metro Rail project, California: H.R. 238, to repeal a prohibition on the use of certain funds for tunneling in certain areas with respect to the Los Angeles to San Fernando Valley Metro Rail project, California; and **Page H1300**

Recognizing and honoring the lifetime contributions of Rafael Jose Diaz-Balart on the dedication of the Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall at the Florida International University College of Law: H. Res. 131, to recognize and honor the lifetime contributions of Rafael Jose Diaz-Balart on the dedication of the Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall at the Florida International University College of Law. **Pages H1304–06**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:50 p.m. and reconvened at 1:34 p.m. **Page H1299**

Suspension—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure which was debated on Tuesday, February 6:

American River Pump Station Project Transfer Act of 2007: H.R. 482, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to transfer ownership of the American River Pump Station Project, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 425 yeas with none voting "nay," Roll No. 80. **Page H1303**

Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House of Representatives to the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: Representative Levin, Chairman. **Page H1316**

Amendments: Amendments ordered printed pursuant to the rule appear on page H1345.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1302, H1302–03, H1303. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 8 p.m.

Committee Meetings

HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Homeland Security held a hearing on Using Risk to Determine Homeland Security Investments. Testimony was heard from William Jenkins, Director, Homeland Security and Justice Issue Team, GAO; and a public witness.

NATIONAL DEFENSE BUDGET REQUEST

Committee on Armed Services: Held a hearing on the Fiscal Year 2008 National Defense Budget Request from the Department of Defense. Testimony was heard from the following officials of the Department of Defense: Robert M. Gates, Secretary; and GEN Peter Pace, USMC, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT FY 2008 BUDGET

Committee on the Budget: Held a hearing on the Treasury Department Fiscal Year 2008 Budget. Testimony was heard from Henry M. Paulson, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury.

STRENGTHENING AMERICA's MIDDLE CLASS—ECONOMIC SOLUTIONS

Committee on Education and Labor: Held a hearing on Strengthening America's Middle Class: Finding Economic Solutions to Help America's Families. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FOREIGN INVESTMENTS IN THE U.S.

Committee on Financial Services: Held a hearing entitled "Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS), One Year After Dubai Ports World." Testimony was heard from Clay Lowery, Assistant Secretary, Department of the Treasury; former Representative Steve Bartlett of Texas; and public witnesses.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS BUDGET

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Held a hearing on International Relations Budget for Fiscal Year 2008. Testimony was heard from Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State.

HOMELAND SECURITY DEPARTMENT CHALLENGES

Committee on Homeland Security: Held a hearing entitled "An Overview of Issues and Challenges Facing the Department of Homeland Security." Testimony was heard from the following officials of the GAO: David M. Walker, Comptroller General; and Norman Rabkin, Managing Director, Homeland Security and Justice; and Richard L. Skinner, Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on the Judiciary: Ordered reported the following bills: H.R. 545, Native American Methamphetamine Enforcement and Treatment Act of 2007; H.R. 137, amended, Animal Fighting Prohibition Enforcement Act of 2007; and H.R. 740, To amend title 18, United States Code, to prevent caller ID spoofing.

COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION

Committee on Natural Resources: Met for organizational purposes.

The Committee also approved an Oversight Plan for the 110th Congress.

IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Held a hearing entitled "Iraqi Reconstruction: Reliance on Private Military Contractors and Status Report." Testimony was heard from Tina Ballard, Assistant Under Secretary, Procurement and Policy, Department of the Army; and public witnesses.

ADVANCED FUELS INFRASTRUCTURE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ACT; OVERSIGHT PLAN

Committee on Rules: Granted, by a voice vote, an open rule providing 1 hour of general debate on H.R. 547, Advanced Fuels Infrastructure Research and Development Act, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Science and Technology. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill except those arising under clauses 9 or 10 of rule XXI. The rule makes in order the Committee on Science and Technology amendment in the nature of a substitute now printed in the bill as an original bill for the purpose of amendment. The amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered for amendment by section with each section considered as read. The rule authorizes the Chair to accord priority in recognition to Members who have pre-printed their amendments in the Congressional Record. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Testimony was heard from Chairman Gordon; and Representatives Hall of Texas, Burgess and King of Iowa.

The Committee adopted an Oversight Plan for the 110th Congress, and authorized its transmission to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Committee on House Administration.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES; OVERSIGHT PLAN

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Ordered reported the following bills: H.R. 720, Water Quality Financing Act of 2007; H.R. 569, Water Quality Investment Act of 2007; H.R. 700, Healthy Communities Water Supply Act of 2007; H.R. 798, To direct the Administrator of General Services to install a photovoltaic system for the headquarters building of the Department of Energy; H.R. 799, amended, Appalachian Regional Development Act Amendments of 2007; H.R. 802, amended, Maritime Pollution Prevention Act of 2007; H.R. 342, amended, To designate the United States courthouse located at 555 Independent Street, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, as the "Rush Hudson Limbaugh, Sr., United States Courthouse;" H.R. 399, To designate the United States Courthouse to be constructed in Jackson, Mississippi, as the "R. Jess Brown United States Courthouse;" H.R. 429, To designate the United States courthouse located at 225 Cadman Plaza East, Brooklyn, New York, as the "Hugh L. Carey United States Courthouse;" H.R. 430, amended, To designate the United States bankruptcy courthouse located at 271 Cadman Plaza East, Brooklyn, New York as the "Conrad Duberstein United States Bankruptcy Courthouse;" H.R. 478, To designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 101 Barr Street in Lexington, Kentucky, as the "Scott Reed Federal Building and United States Courthouse;" H.R. 544, To designate the United States courthouse at South Federal Place in Sante Fe, New Mexico, as the "Santiago E. Campos United States Courthouse;" and H.R. 584, amended, To designate the headquarters building of the Department of Education in Washington, D.C., as the Lyndon Baines Johnson Federal Building.

The Committee approved an Oversight Plan for the 110th Congress.

OMB FY 2008 BUDGET REQUEST

Committee on Ways and Means: Held a hearing on the President's Fiscal Year 2008 for the OMB. Testimony was heard from Ronald J. Portman, Director, OMB.

SUBCOMMITTEE ORGANIZATION

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Social Security met for organizational purposes.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2007

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation, Treasury, the Judiciary, and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine the President's budget request for Fiscal Year 2008 for the Department of Transportation, 9:30 a.m., SD–138.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: business meeting to consider an original bill entitled "Public Transportation Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007", Time to be announced, S–216, Capitol.

Committee on the Budget: to hold hearings to examine the President's Fiscal Year 2008 budget and revenue proposals, 10 a.m., SD–608.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: to hold hearings to examine the present and future of public safety communications, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold hearings to examine issues relating to labor, immigration, law enforcement, and economic conditions in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, 9:30 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine the President's foreign affairs budget; there is a possibility of a business meeting to consider the nomination of John D. Negroponte, of New York, to be Deputy Secretary of State, 9:15 a.m., SD–106.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: to hold hearings to examine No Child Left Behind reauthorization, focusing on strategies that promote school improvement, 10 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Indian Affairs: business meeting to consider S. 322, to establish an Indian youth telemental health demonstration project, S. 375, to waive application of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act to a specific parcel of real property transferred by the United States to 2 Indian tribes in the State of Oregon, S. 398, to amend the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act to identify and remove barriers to reducing child abuse, to provide for examinations of certain children, and S. 481, to recruit and retain more qualified individuals to teach in Tribal Colleges or Universities; to be followed by an oversight hearing on diabetes in Indian Country, focusing on the Special Diabetes Program for Indians, 9:30 a.m., SR–485.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider S. 188, to revise the short title of the Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006, S. 214, to amend chapter 35 of title 28, United States Code, to preserve the independence of United States attorneys, S. 316, to prohibit brand name drug companies from compensating generic drug companies to delay the entry of a generic drug into the market, S. 236, to require reports to Congress on Federal agency use of data mining, S. Res. 36, honoring women's health advocate Cynthia Boles Dailard, S. Res. 37, designating March 26, 2007 as ''National Support the Troops Day'' and encouraging the people of the United States to participate in a moment of silence to reflect upon the service and sacrifice of members of the Armed Forces both at home and abroad, and the nominations of Marcia Morales Howard, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida, Nora Barry Fischer, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania, Norman Randy Smith, of Idaho, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, John Alfred Jarvey, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Iowa, and Sara Elizabeth Lioi, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, on Food Safety: Shedding Light on a Broken System, 1 p.m., 2362A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Homeland Security, on Secretary of Homeland Security, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs, on oversight of Assistance Programs in Iraq, 2 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Seapower and Expeditionary Forces, hearing on acquisition oversight of the U.S. Navy's Littoral Combat System, 3 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and Labor, Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor and Pensions, hearing on Strengthening America's Middle Class Through the Employee Free Choice Act, 10:30 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, hearing on the Department of Energy's Budget for Fiscal Year 2008, 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, hearing on The Escalating Crisis in Darfur: Are There Any Prospects for Peace? 10:30 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, hearing entitled ''Management of Massive Homeland Security Contracts: Deepwater and SBInet,'' 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science and Technology, hearing on The State of Climate Change Science 2007: The Findings of the Fourth Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Working Group I Report, 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, hearing entitled ''The Small Business Administration's Budget for Fiscal Year 2008,'' 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, hearing entitled ''FY 2008 President's Budget Request for Department of Transportation and Environmental Protection Agency,'' 2 p.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, hearing on the VA's budget request for Fiscal Year 2008, 9:30 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, hearing on the President's budget proposals for the Department of Health and Human Services, 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Next Meeting of the **SENATE**

10 a.m., Thursday, February 8

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: After the transaction of any morning business (not to extend beyond 60 minutes), Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of General George W. Casey, Jr., to be Chief of Staff, United States Army, and after a period of debate, vote on confirmation of the nomination; following which, Senate will begin consideration of H.J. Res. 20, Continuing Appropriations.

Next Meeting of the **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

10 a.m., Thursday, February, 8

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Consideration of H.R. 547—Advanced Fuels Infrastructure Research and Development Act (Subject to a Rule).

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Altmire, Jason, Pa., E293
Bono, Mary, Calif., E284
Carney, Christopher P., Pa., E284
Castle, Michael N., Del., E289
Conyers, John, Jr., Mich., E279, E292
Cuellar, Henry, Tex., E284
Davis, Danny K., Ill., E291
Farr, Sam, Calif., E281
Granger, Kay, Tex., E289
Graves, Sam, Mo., E279, E281, E283, E286
Harman, Jane, Calif., E281, E293
Herseth, Stephanie, S.D., E290
Hoekstra, Peter, Mich., E287
Jackson-Lee, Sheila, Tex., E279
Johnson, Eddie Bernice, Tex., E293
Kucinich, Dennis J., Ohio, E291
Lewis, John, Ga., E282
Matsui, Doris O., Calif., E290
Miller, George, Calif., E290
Murphy, Patrick J., Pa., E277, E280
Paul, Ron, Tex., E287
Rangel, Charles B., N.Y., E278, E280, E283, E285
Reyes, Silvestre, Tex., E293
Rogers, Mike, Ala., E290
Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana, Fla., E284
Slaughter, Louise McIntosh, N.Y., E286
Tiahrt, Todd, Kans., E287
Udall, Mark, Colo., E277, E280, E282, E285, E292, E293
Velázquez, Nydia M., N.Y., E284
Walsh, James T., N.Y., E277, E279

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